

Lexicon

Definitions and meanings

Hebrew vs. Jew

Weltanschauung

“Weltanschauung” straddles several English options—“worldview,” “outlook on life,” “philosophy of life,” “conception of the world,” even “comprehensive doctrine.” “Anschauung” evokes not just a ‘view’ but an intuitive, often pre-reflective grasp of reality, influenced by Kantian usage. Thus “worldview” can be too rationalized and cognitive, missing experiential, affective, and cultural dimensions; “outlook” sounds too casual; “ideology” is too narrow and political. In some authors, Weltanschauung is near-metaphysical (a global structure of meaning); in others, it can be sociological, religious, or psychological. The term’s scope varies—from individual orientation to collective cultural or epochal frameworks—making any single English equivalent riskier than context-sensitive paraphrase.

Compound of German “Welt” (world, cosmos, human life as a whole) + “Anschauung” (view, intuition, perception, contemplative seeing). “Welt” derives from Old High German “weralt/werolt” (age of man, human world), ultimately from Proto-Germanic *weraldiz (man + age). “Anschauung” comes from Middle High German “anschouwunge” (looking at, contemplation), related to the verb “anschauen” (to look at, behold) and linked in philosophical German (esp. Kant) to intuitive, non-discursive cognition. **The compound is attested in German from the 18th century and gains systematic philosophical prominence in the 19th century.**

Source: "weltanschauung" - Philopedia

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