

## SECULAR OR HUMANISTIC MORALITY

A secular or humanistic morality is one that does not resort to arguments from the will of God, but relies entirely upon whatever true or false knowledge we may have about man and society.

A secular morality has several advantages over a religious one:

- . it does not reinforce the existing hostilities among the various religious communities but, on the contrary, it appeals to whatever is common to all men;
- . it does not rely on the supposed authority of texts written by members of the priestly caste: it replaces authority with experience;
- . since it does not rely on any sacred scriptures, it can be altered.

radical social changes make it imperative to modify some rules of conduct: it is plastic rather than rigid and, in particular, it allows for moral progress.

. It does not condone the killing of the members of a rival faith or of the faithless: the mere idea of a holy war is abhorrent to secular moralists.

. It does not require us to accept the alleged/<sup>moral</sup> authority of anyone in power, be he a <sup>u</sup>chrchman or a statesman. In other words, when humanist A tells person B that B ought to do C, the rightness of this piece of advice does not depend on who A is or what role A performs in the community. Hence B is free to argue with A or to refuse to follow his advice.