igin. Therefore the moral aspect of customs derives from the ethical element of religion. But if customary behaviour always had from the very beginning moral consequences, this did not happen because people understood the advantages of moral behaviour. It simply happened that religious sentiments attached man to something different from himself and made him dependent on these superior powers which symbolize the ideal. This unconscious altruism becomes incarnated in practices and remains there even when the religious idea disappears from them and these practices have become customs.

7.1.3 Morality

Morality, defined as the moral ideas and practices of the most civilized peoples, is apparent in many customs, but not in a pure form. It is mixed with many other elements. If we want to find the origin of this morality we need not look only at religious practices, but we must also take into consideration the social inclinations which are part and parcel of human nature itself. Such sentiments were quite feeble in the beginning and would have succumbed to egoism if religion had not supported them strongly. This does not mean that selfishness played no part in the evolution of morality. Disinterested behaviour was often caused by selfish motives. But gradually such motives became superfluous and at the same time allowed more room for altruism, which should, however, on no count be seen as a disguised or transformed form of egoism.

As the original sympathy attached itself exclusively to persons it must vary with them. History shows how this primitive inclination became more and more differentiated as the social context within which it manifested itself became differentiated. Eventually each social group and each category of people developed its own morality. But this is not the end of moral development, as a centripetal movement started long ago and goes on under our own eyes. As societies increased in volume, the ties which hold people together have stopped being personal. Concrete sympathy gives way to a more abstract form of attachment to the community itself to which one belongs as a member, i. e., to the mental goods and ideas and ideas which one has in common: art, literature, sciences, customs, etc. Members of the same community are no longer assisted and loved because and in so far as they know each other, but because all of them form together the base of their collective conscience. A strong egalitarian tendency breaks through, and with the separate class and caste moralities national moralities disappear as well to make way for a general human morality.

7.1.4 Summary

The historical analysis of moral ideas can be summarized in terms of elements and laws of evolution. 1) Formal elements: Everywhere moral ideas are expressed in the form of antithetical concepts to which judgements of approbation and disapprobation are attached. The goods which are given a positive moral value are those which give enduring satisfaction. It is this idea of duration which is expressed in religious beliefs about an afterlife. 2) Substantive elements: All moral life rests on feelings of fellowship and reverence from which derive social life and religious beliefs respectively. But they combine in innumerable ways and the whole complexity of moral ideas is the result of these combinations.

There are two general laws of moral evolution. 1) The law of the three stages: The first phase is characterized by great homogeneity and very simple and weak social inclinations. In the second period social sentiments become differentiated and moral ideas become separated from each other. The third stage is the time of synthesis and concentration. 2) The law of the heterogeneity of ends: Every act of volition produces effects which are not completely in agreement with its original motives. When we realize these unforeseen consequences they become the goal of other activities and give rise to new motives. However, again a discrepancy arises between motives and results and so on. Thus moral ideas were formed through the impact of causes which are unconscious of the