

us to extend our love for particular individuals and smaller groups to larger groups of people.

Williams's view is similar to Hume's. Some of our particular benevolent desires are directed toward people we care about, for example, a daughter or friend, and are motivated by thoughts like "Mary needs help." Other benevolent desires are more general and impersonal concerns, motivated by thoughts like "someone needs help." Williams claims that the structure of the motivating thought in both cases is the same. Although altruism is not a rational requirement on action, Williams thinks that sympathetic reflection may move us from benevolent desires motivated by our love of particular individuals to more general altruistic dispositions.

Some feminist philosophers have argued that altruistic dispositions such as caring, compassion, and maternal love should be made the focus of morality. These philosophers claim that relationships should be at the heart of morality and that most of our relationships are not only intimate, but also involuntary. They argue that an ethics of care rather than an ethics of justice is appropriate for these types of relationships.

By contrast, philosophers in the Kantian tradition conceive of altruism as a rational requirement on action. They claim there is no need to postulate a benevolent desire to explain altruism. Kant's initial argument appeals to his requirement that we may only act on principles that we can will as universal laws. Willing a world in which everyone has a policy of not helping others, while knowing that you will need help, would be inconsistent, so we must will to help those who are in need. Kant also argues for a duty of beneficence on the basis of the requirement of treating humanity as an end in itself. He argues that you must treat the ends of others as you treat your own ends. You take your own ends to be good and worth pursuing, so consistency requires that you treat the ends of others as good and worth pursuing. This suggests that we have reason to help not only those in need, but anyone we are in a position to help.

Thomas Nagel follows Kant in thinking that the reasons of others directly provide us with reasons. Suppose someone wants you to stop tormenting him. How does that person's desire not to be treated that way give you a reason to stop? At an intuitive level, Nagel's argument appeals to the question: How would you like it if someone did that to you? You realize that if someone were tormenting you, you would not merely dislike what he was doing, you would resent it. Resentment is a response to the idea that someone has ignored a reason he has to not treat you badly. The reason in this case is your own desire

not to be tormented. You think your desire not to be tormented is a reason for your tormentor to stop. Since you think that your reasons provide direct reasons for others, you must also think that the reasons of others provide you with reasons. The argument turns on the idea that your reasons and the reasons of your victim are the same: they are the reasons of a person. According to Nagel, the argument works only because you have the capacity to view yourself as just one person among others. Although Humeans and Kantians disagree about whether to explain altruism in terms of particular desires or to view it as a rational requirement on action, they agree that the force of altruism springs from our common humanity.

*See also* Egoism and Altruism; Ethical Egoism; Friendship; Human Nature; Love; Sympathy and Empathy; Virtue and Vice.

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## AMPÈRE, ANDRÉ MARIE (1775–1836)

André Marie Ampère was a French physicist and philosopher; his main achievement in physics was the foundation of electrodynamics. He correctly recognized that Hans Christian Ørsted's discovery, in 1819, of the effect of electric current on a magnetic needle was merely a special case of the general correlation of electricity in motion with the rise of a magnetic field. His explanation of magnetism in terms of molecular electric currents was a bold anticipation of one feature of the later electron theory.

Shortly after Ampère's death his *Essai sur la philosophie des sciences* appeared with a biographical note by Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve and a warm appraisal by Émile Littré. Its subtitle, *Exposition analytique de toutes les connaissances humaines*, indicated that the main topic was the classification of sciences, in which Ampère was as much interested as his contemporary Auguste Comte. Ampère's main division of sciences into "cosmological" and "noological" was inspired by Cartesian dualism. The details of the classification, which also included "applied sciences"—medicine, agriculture, etc.—are now of only historical interest.

Far more interesting is *La philosophie des deux Ampères*, edited by J. Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire. The title is misleading because the only contribution of Ampère's son Jean Jacques is an introduction to the philosophy of his father. Besides this, the book contains some unfinished philosophical manuscripts as well as Ampère's letters to Maine de Biran, with whom he remained in personal contact and in correspondence until Maine de Biran's death in 1824. Ampère accepted the central idea of Maine de Biran's voluntaristic idealism that the true nature of the self is revealed in the introspective experience of effort. But unlike Maine de Biran, Ampère more cautiously differentiated what he called *emesthèse* (that is, consciousness of personal activity) from the sensation of muscular effort that can be induced by some external agency.

This was not the only instance of Ampère's remarkable gift for introspective analysis. In dealing with the association of ideas he distinguished two cases. The first is *commémoration*, or ordinary recall, when two associated ideas remain unaffected by their contiguity. The second is *concrétion*, when two ideas merge, for example, when the present perception of an object seen before blends with the recollection of its previous perception. But the main difference between Ampère and Maine de Biran concerned the problem of knowledge of the external world. Maine de Biran, under the influence of Immanuel Kant, denied any possibility of knowing things-in-themselves; Ampère, under the influence of Isaac Newton, John Locke, and his own scientific interests, believed in the possibility of knowing inferentially the relations between things-in-themselves. These "noumenal relations" are similar to Locke's primary qualities; they can be known when the general spatial, temporal, and numerical relations are divorced from the qualitative content (Locke's secondary qualities) of sensory experience. But unlike Locke, Ampère interpreted the impenetrability of matter dynamically, as being a

result of inextensive resistances (*résistances inétendues*) of which there is an indefinite number in each body. This view of matter as being a product of inextensive dynamic centers is thus closer to the dynamism of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Roger Joseph Boscovich, and Michael Faraday than to the traditional atomism of Newton. On the other hand, Ampère remained a Newtonian in his insistence on the reality of absolute space and time, which he interpreted theologically, again like Newton, as attributes of God. Equally Newtonian was his rejection of the Cartesian plenum.

**See also** Boscovich, Roger Joseph; Cartesianism; Comte, Auguste; Faraday, Michael; Kant, Immanuel; Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm; Littré, Émile; Locke, John; Maine de Biran; Newton, Isaac.

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## ANALOGY IN THEOLOGY

Religious discourse has been under scrutiny since ancient Greece when Anaxagoras said if oxen and dogs could paint, they would depict the gods in their own likenesses. The Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptures depict the divine being in vivid humanlike traits while conveying the divine otherness, mystery, immateriality, and eternity. Thus there are religious currents of anthropomorphism, of transcendentalism, of metaphor and symbolism, and of literalism about the being and nature of God. The Greek philosophical ancestry of Western culture presents the divine as immaterial, immutable, everlasting, perfect, and incomprehensible. Both the Platonic and Aristotelian