

Gilles Deleuze and A W Moore: non-human constructivism or anthropocentric narrative in metaphysics<sup>1</sup> [Draft of December 2014]

Abstract

In this paper I argue against A W Moore's claim that metaphysics needs to be anthropocentric. The arguments will be based on Gilles Deleuze's philosophy. The point is to explain why his metaphysics has an ambiguous position in Moore's work on the history of metaphysics. The main focus of the argument is to question the grounds for the necessity of an anthropocentric aspect on the basis of Deleuze's arguments for discontinuous change in conceptual frames. The paper will also raise points about different ways of thinking about the danger of metaphysics in relation to anthropocentrism and in relation to the opposition between Deleuze and Moore. I will conclude with some suggestions, based on Deleuze's work on Foucault, as to why the anthropocentric aspect might be a bad choice, once it is shown to lack necessity.

Introduction: the ends of anthropocentrism

Despite their well-known dispute over the respective importance of pleasure and desire in explaining drives, Michel Foucault had a long-lasting influence on Gilles Deleuze. (Deleuze 2003a, Deleuze 2003b) I draw attention to this connection in order to make some initial remarks in the discussion of Moore's appeal to anthropocentric necessity in his account of the evolution of modern metaphysics, a study which culminates in an ambivalent yet also generous and perceptive interpretation of Deleuze's philosophy. The remarks are pointers to the context and reach of the opposition between Moore and Deleuze.

First, Deleuze and Foucault's disagreement can be seen as a proxy for a longer debate over the legacy of figures from the history of philosophy. I will claim that the connection between interpretation and contemporary debates is also implied by Moore's work on Deleuze. It is not only Moore's reading of Deleuze that is in play, but also Moore's interpretations of historical and recent figures.

Second, following the idea of the ends of metaphysics, in the sense of aims, the opposition between Deleuze and Moore is anything but a mere quarrel in the history of ideas. In distinctive ways they are both moral philosophers, in the wide sense of seeking philosophical directions for moral and political questions. Like Sartre, another strong influence on Deleuze, or like Bernard Williams, perhaps the most resonant moral voice in Moore's book, both philosophers situate the moral and political aim, the search to live well together, right at the heart of what many see as the most abstract and

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disengaged of philosophical pursuits. For them, metaphysics is not only preparation for lived action. Metaphysics is already lived action in its ideas and their consequences.

Just as an unreasonable treaty sets the way towards future conflict, the preliminary moves of metaphysical modelling, and the later arguments over the validity, power, truth and consistency of those moves, have direct implications for engagement with the world. Moore's distance from Deleuze, after many points of convergence, is therefore no detached exercise but rather the careful identification and dissection of moral and political divergence. So which features of each metaphysical system lead to far-reaching disagreements around values and action?

The appeal to metaphysical systems leads to my third remark. It could be claimed that Moore's book is a work of philosophical history, with an angle and sets of interpretations certainly, but nonetheless history rather than novel system-making. On this point, my study follows from Deleuze's approach to Foucault and from Deleuze's other studies of philosophers, scientists and novelists. A line of thought does not have to name itself as metaphysics or even bear recognised marks of metaphysical system-building to be such a system, indeed sometimes it is exactly the opposite. Moore is doing metaphysics, not history.

Deleuze is interested in presupposed and implied systems of thought. Following his preferred methodological move of disjunctive synthesis he divides and yet also merges two types. On the one hand, he names the well-formed and common sense versions of such metaphysical contexts 'images of thought'. (Deleuze 1968) These are the emergent consensus of post-philosophical common sense, for instance around the self-evidence of a set of rights or the compelling nature of a set of intuitions. On the other hand, when writing on Foucault, Deleuze advocated dynamic and intense metaphysical processes, creative maps for future thought, philosophical diagrams which change and disturb the way we think: 'Foucault's oeuvre reconnects to the great works that have changed what thinking signifies for us.' (Deleuze 1986, 128)

This allows for a first stab at the definition of Deleuze's constructivism. It is to build a metaphysical system through a series of concepts which maximise the dynamic explanatory and transformative power of metaphysics while resisting an inevitable decay into images of thought. It is a construction between dynamic process and stasis which combines an explanation of the real and an attempt to transform it. Deleuze and Guattari worked closely on this idea when writing *What is Philosophy?* This can be seen in their concern to show how philosophical concepts must take account of history, as a condition for philosophy, yet also work outside history in order to change it: 'But becoming is the concept itself. It is born in history, and falls back to it, but is not of it.' (Deleuze and Guattari 1991, 106)

Moore's judgements about evolution in metaphysics lend greater weight to innovation rather than conservation. Conservative and inflexible aspects of philosophical systems are frequently the focus for his critical remarks in favour of novelty: 'The significant issue – here yet again as in Wittgenstein – is not what metaphysical rationale there is for correcting the use to which we put the concepts we already have, but what metaphysical rationale there may be for having new concepts.' (Moore 2012, 367-8)

This commitment to innovation sets the scene for the ambiguous stance towards Deleuze, because he takes evolution too far from Moore's principles around humanistic orientation in metaphysics. Critical questions for Deleuze's metaphysics then follow from Moore's demand for anthropocentric narrative. These matter all the more because Moore's ambivalence towards Deleuze isn't resolved in *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics: Making Sense of Things*. Instead, the clash with Deleuze becomes an entry point for the anthropocentric conclusion to the book. So which features of Deleuze's metaphysics push Moore into this major opposition and concluding statement of principle?

My final remark reverses this question and addresses it in a different way to Moore. In his book on Foucault, Deleuze develops a long and difficult study of the limits of, forces around and end of the idea 'Man'. Foucault's genealogy and archaeology underpin the argument that the human appears at a specific time in philosophy and other disciplines. He speculates that it is on the verge of disappearing: 'The archaeology of thought shows easily that man is a recent invention. Perhaps it also shows that this invention is close to an end.' (Foucault 1966, 398)

The human is not a disinterested basis for philosophical investigation. It is the locus for an exercise of forces shaping worlds and ideas. In the 'Annexe' to Deleuze's *Foucault*, Foucault's statement about the invention of man becomes the following claim by Deleuze: 'Man [*l'Homme*] has not always existed, and will not always exist.' (Deleuze 1986, 131) How then does Deleuze's philosophy lead to a critique of Moore's choice of anthropocentrism, on the basis of the historicity of the idea of 'Man' and of the forces involved in shaping and acting upon it?

### Moore's anthropocentrism

The main passage from Moore I will address first is on page 603 of *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics*; two pages from the end. It follows critical points made against 'natural-scientific sense-making' and more broadly against empirical and scientific types of sense-making, as set out for instance by Hume and by Collingwood in relation to an empirical science of history. For Moore, metaphysics is not a science of man. This determines a distinction between kinds of 'humanistic aspect', between the humanistic in sciences and as metaphysical practice.

The distinction can be understood in two complementary ways. First, it is about where different disciplines situate the humanistic aspect. For the empirical sciences, it is the human as the object of scientific study. The sciences are anthropocentric through their field but remain scientific in method. For metaphysics, it is about making sense as human, where the human is the subject of an activity as well as its product. Metaphysics is anthropocentric in its approach because the human is self-consciously forged and questioned in metaphysical sense-making. The significant feature of this distinction is therefore between the reflexive and creative aspect of metaphysics and the transitive and empirical aspect of the sciences.

Second, the distinction is driven by the most important question of Moore's book, the question of 'who 'we' are?' (2012, 603) This question directs the activity of metaphysics as sense-making. We

can ask the question 'What is the human?' where the question is posed by sciences about an external field. We can also ask a question creatively and self-critically. Who are the 'we' of metaphysical sense-making and who shall 'we' be? The human is created alongside an assessment of the human in past and current metaphysics. The quotes around 'we' are therefore pivotal for Moore's argument. They emphasise the direction of the enquiry: back on those asking the question. They also put the 'we' in question and thereby condition the enquiry as an open-ended and collective sense-making.

Moore's use of 'anthropocentric' and 'we', rather than 'human', 'human subject' or 'Man', gives his position reflexive openness in the direction and character of enquiry. It avoids predetermined essences, conclusive theories, or even dominant hypotheses. The 'we' remains work to be done through the activity of sense-making. Moore's 'humanistic' describes an orientation rather than the stronger creed and set of norms implied by 'humanist', 'humanism' and 'anthropocentrism'.

An established definition of the human involves fixity, even if temporary, which leads to accusations of exclusions or dogmatism, for example in the dominance of male over female in historical definitions of human qualities (Man), or in the insistence on independence from the animal realm (*rational* animal). Moore avoids metaphysical presuppositions for his anthropocentrism, since his thinly and provisionally defined 'we' avoids metaphysically loaded terms such as 'subject' and 'human'. Nonetheless, the positive use of anthropocentric still draws Moore away from Deleuze's intellectual environment in French post-structuralism.

When a major colloquium was organised in 1980 around Jacques Derrida's work, the theme was a critique of anthropocentrism through the idea of 'the ends of man'. The directors of the Cerisy colloquium, Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, introduced it thus: 'Such a question, the question of ends – with the questioning of humanism, or more precisely of anthropocentrism that it implies – has a precise provenance far anterior to our times (which does not mean to our "epoch"). This is the question of destination, of the *Bestimmung* of man, as articulated in Idealism or just as well in Hölderlin starting from Kant.' (Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe 1981, 12) Anthropocentrism is an historical problem for metaphysics. It implies questions about the destination or destiny of man.

The underlying concern is to address the potential for violence in appeals to the ends of man. This worry is political and moral around the history of destiny, purpose and destination as used to justify violent exclusions and persecutions. Can anthropocentrism avoid ideas of the ends and destinies of some humans to the exclusion of others? The worry is also around the relation of man to animals and to nature. Can anthropocentrism avoid privileging humans above other animals and nature once the ends of man become the destiny of the world? When Derrida deconstructs ideas of the human in Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger he notes they were committed to a critique of human essences, properties and predicates. However, they also returned to them in new versions of humanism.

Anthropocentrism exhibits the violent potential of metaphysical thought because it can justify exclusion and violent behaviour towards the non-human. Historically, the non-human has included groups we now consider fully human. Some of our most fierce current debates are still around the boundaries of human life and species. We should therefore question every anthropocentrism. What

are its definitions of the human? Where might they lead? Do they invoke new ideas of human destiny and exceptional status? Should we have done with them for that reason?

In *The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics* Moore studies Derrida's *Margins*, the book containing the essay 'The ends of man'. He does not address how Derrida's deconstruction of anthropocentrism might apply to his adoption of the term. The final two sentences of Derrida's essay are deliberately fateful: 'We are perhaps between two awakenings [*veilles*: to be on guard and to be on the eve of something] which are also two ends of man. But who, we?' (Derrida 1972, 164) For Derrida, the deconstruction of metaphysics must guard against anthropocentrism, even in the question of 'Who 'we' are?'

The appeal to 'we' is also a reminder of the form of republican and independence declarations ('*Les Représentants du Peuple Français...*' 'We hold these truths to be...'.) It raises three critical points associated with such declarations: on the existence of a referent for 'we', on the legitimacy to declare, and on the legitimacy and form of what the declaration imposes on others in the guise of universality. Who is the 'we' making this declaration? Do they have the right to declare for all? What are they asking of others and should they do so?

Jean-François Lyotard studies this use of the first person plural in *The Differend*. His investigation combines Wittgensteinian linguistic analysis of declarations of rights, discussion of legitimation and obligation in Kant, the study of violence in prescriptive statements, consideration on how the 'we' can be divided in death, and analysis of anthropological critiques of humanism based on narratives, following André Marcel d'Ans' study of the Cashinahua indigenous peoples of Brazil and Peru (the Huni Kuin, or 'real men'). (d'Ans 1978)

In declarations about rights there is an assumption of identity of 'we' between the statements of norms ('we declare that these are the rights') and their prescription ('we must follow these norms'). According to Lyotard, there is no such identity, because the appeal to 'we' masks a shift from 'we declare' to 'you must'. If the declaration demands death, the tension between normative and prescriptive statements reaches breaking point and dissolves the 'we' from 'we declare that we must die' to 'you must die', for instance, when a ruling class avoids a draft or when a subset of humanity suffer for the whole.

In order to avoid this break, a narrative is written around death so we can speak of a 'beautiful death', thereby reuniting the broken community. Yet narratives of the beautiful death and of the 'real men' sacrificed in it demonstrate some of the most divisive modes of anthropocentric narration about a common 'we' or people, because the opposition against which men die becomes that which must be excluded, for instance, when the enemy, the oppressed or the colonised are demonised as subhuman.

To counter this division those who die are returned to one people in the celebration of the beautiful death. We can see how this might happen in memorials for soldiers from all sides of a conflict or for freedom fighters celebrated in the birth of a new nation. We can also see how the problem of exclusion might be solved through a reconciliation of different sides in a shared narrative of peace

and forgiveness. Deaths become a sacrifice for the common good, for the new 'we' and for new prescriptions around unity.

*The Differend* is Lyotard's effort to write a post-Holocaust philosophy. A 'differend' is a conflict which does not allow for such reconciliations because the wrong suffered allows no common measure or narrative. There are deaths where the unified 'we' cannot be narrated, where the idea of a sacrifice for common humanity is impossible. There are also historical and present cases where the beautiful death and its narration are still reserved only for chosen ones and where other deaths are said to be of lesser or non-humans (for instance, in conflicts where only some deaths are counted, or in economic systems where some deaths count less than others). The 'we' is supposed to work thanks to a founding universality, but according to Lyotard it functions thanks to founding exceptions. (Lyotard 1983, 156)

In response to these doubts it could be argued that Moore's guiding question leaves the 'we' to be determined, so metaphysics can work out how to make sense of 'we' in novel ways so long as they follow the anthropocentric criterion. His emphasis on innovation alongside this lack of determination is therefore important because it allows us to move beyond mistaken and damaging definitions of the 'we'. Moore's open and creative position would therefore be immune to concerns about moral and political violence and exclusions. It would be reason for vigilance about the dangers of anthropocentrism while remaining anthropocentric. Perhaps that's what Derrida means by staying on guard.

However, a close reading of Moore's statements on the anthropocentric and humanistic aspects of his work reveals positive content for the human. This content follows from arguments for the necessity of an anthropocentric approach:

[Metaphysics] does nonetheless have a humanistic aspect; and it needs to be true to that aspect. Metaphysics may not be anthropological; but it does need to be anthropocentric. That is, it needs to be from a human point of view. It needs to be an attempt to make the sort of general sense of things that we its practitioners can appropriate as distinctively ours. Only then can it involve the kind of self-consciousness that it should. Only then can it enjoy the kind of importance that it should. Importance, where human beings are concerned, is importance to human beings. (Moore 2012, 603)

These arguments stipulate what metaphysics must do in order to achieve what it should. It 'needs to be true to' a humanistic aspect and 'needs to be anthropocentric'. It needs to make a general sense for a 'we' to be able to appropriate as belonging 'distinctively' to them. Without these necessary conditions, metaphysics will not involve a self-consciousness that it 'should' have. It will not 'enjoy the kind of importance that it should'.

The conditions are necessary due to the kind of importance Moore wants for metaphysics. It must matter to human beings. It therefore needs to take a human point of view. For Moore, metaphysics can go awry when it fails to be self-conscious and to take a reflective stance with respect to what it implies for humans. For the proposition 'Importance, where human beings are concerned, is importance to human beings' to be more than tautology, self-consciousness and human point of

view must be added to importance. Where self-conscious humans are concerned, importance requires a human point of view. Metaphysics matters when it makes sense of what it is to be human from a human point of view.

Yet this essential role for self-consciousness, in the sense of self-critical review and narrative, and for a human point of view in relation to importance is not obvious in other uses. Love is important, but we do not need to be critically self-conscious about it, to narrate it, or take it from a human point of view for it to be important for us. Dance, music and poetry express love with no essential requirement for self-conscious critical review or reference to a humanistic narrative in the art-object. They can communicate it directly or through affects, the body and the unconscious. Narration over time and critical review occur later in critical commentary on the art-form, but this only arises because the art-work has already struck us important. So why prioritise self-consciousness and human perspective in the determination of the importance of metaphysics if, like love, it can be important without them?

We can understand Moore's argument for the necessity of an anthropocentric perspective further through his conception of violence in metaphysics. In the examples from Derrida and Lyotard, metaphysics is violent because it makes dangerous distinctions and valuations around the boundary between the human and the non-human, and because it relies on an illusory 'we'. For Moore, violence in metaphysics comes from a lack of self-consciousness and human perspective which lead to damage for metaphysics and beyond it: 'The failure in some of these cases is a failure of due self-consciousness.' (Moore 2012, 602)

These points and earlier remarks about non-humans, violence and exclusion are decisive for the argument about metaphysics separating Moore and Deleuze. This is because they reveal a set of presuppositions about metaphysics stemming from Moore's anthropocentrism. Moore views the practice of metaphysics as needing to be self-consciously critical and creative around sense for humans. Deleuze's metaphysics prioritises unconscious events, violent encounters with the non-human, sense as independent of human-centred meaning and ways we can become non-human in order to find means of escaping from the violence endemic to anthropocentrism.

This does not mean metaphysics does not involve self-consciousness, meaning and human factors for Deleuze. It is rather that these are secondary to primary requirements for importance, which he calls 'interest'. Metaphysics should not be about the true, but about the interesting. However, interest comes from encounters which are not encounters for the human, but rather encounters which force us out of a given conception of the human without having to go through the mediation of a self-conscious assessment or the idea of a shared 'we' or to return to a revised understanding of that 'we'. Interest is not about sense as meaning, but rather a matter of sense as intensity, the way significance strikes us forcefully prior to signification. Love is a transformative encounter with others which operates on a subconscious level.

Doesn't the distinction between human importance and non-human interest miss Moore's point? He could well concede everything to Deleuze and yet still insist on the necessity of a subsequent reflection from a human point of view on affects, love and the unconscious. Moore could then be making a point about performative contradiction, as described by Habermas in his theory of

communicative action. (Habermas 1985) To write metaphysics for other humans is necessarily to assume that they can make rational sense of it, even when questioning human rationality and its merits. The rational argument is addressed to the ability for self-conscious reflection and the addressor and addressees share some human perspective.

Yet Moore's argument is about metaphysics in particular and about importance rather than any possible communication. He is making a point about the distinctiveness of metaphysics, whereas the idea of a performative contradiction applies to any form of communication that implicitly assumes the addressee is capable of understanding it and responding rationally to it. The opposition between Deleuze and Moore is not about the nature of communication but about the importance of metaphysics. To understand the dispute around anthropocentrism we have to go deeper into the difference between interest and importance, independent of any assumption that either concept implies a human addressee for communication.

### Evolution and metaphysical limitation

That Moore's argument for an anthropocentric metaphysics is not a point about performative contradiction comes out most clearly when he develops his ideas about the necessity of human perspective in relation to Deleuze. It is not always the case that we should assume a human perspective. The anthropocentric requirement is open to change and even withdrawal as our conceptual frame changes: 'In particular we should be open to the possibility that our metaphysics will one day no longer need to be anthropocentric.' (Moore 2012, 604)

Moore is seeking to strike a balance between conservative tendencies in metaphysics, which inhibit the innovation required for it to make the best sense of things, and too much innovation, which endangers sense-making in the direction of a failing to make sense for us. This balance informs the direction of metaphysical creation because it allows for swings between extremes while explaining why the focus needs to be anthropocentric for now: '... we cannot oversee its becoming non-anthropocentric except by overseeing its evolution from something anthropocentric.' (p 604)

There are therefore different reasons why metaphysics needs to develop in one direction or another. These do not necessarily exclude one another. On the one hand, we can situate need in relation to a set of pressing problems outside metaphysics but with metaphysical roots. I have described some of these in Derrida's concerns about violence in metaphysics and Lyotard's worries about founding exclusions in the definition of any human 'we'.

Historically, we have been bad at defining the human without committing the most horrifying omissions. Presently, it is far from obvious an anthropocentric metaphysics is the right basis for addressing problems such as climate change and mass extinctions of other species in the anthropocene epoch. Maybe metaphysics needs to finally have done with the human and its propensity to define centres and peripheries, insiders and outsiders. Maybe metaphysics needs to be for 'it' or 'them' and not 'for us'.



On the other hand, the reasons for the development of metaphysics can be internal, in the sense of inbuilt limitations and potentials for metaphysical sense-making. Moore's point is that the anthropocentric requirement captures the state of metaphysics now. This can change, but only according to certain boundaries. He locates danger in metaphysics closely to its propensity to disregard the human perspective. The concern for anthropocentric metaphysics is related to the reason for his worry about this danger: the form of the evolution of concepts.

Limitations on evolution are the crux of the Deleuze and Moore opposition. Ideas about conceptual boundaries and about the nature of change are the reason for a deeper difference than its surface manifestation in anthropocentric necessity. The following passage from The Evolution of Modern Metaphysics explains the limitations on metaphysics set by evolution:

And evolution is the right word here. Nothing can happen in a metamorphic flash. Quite apart from whatever gradual transformation may have to be involved in our coming to embrace non-human possibilities beyond metaphysics, there is a gradual transformation that will certainly have to be involved in our coming to embrace them from within metaphysics. (Moore 2012, 604)

In this passage necessity is transferred to two strong claims: 'nothing can happen in a metamorphic flash' and 'gradual transformation will certainly have to be involved'.

These aren't pragmatic statements or empirical ones but rather follow from conceptual analysis: 'This is a conceptual point, not an anthropological point. There is a limit to how drastic and how rapid an upheaval of our sense-making can be while still counting as an upheaval of our sense-making.' (2012, 604) There has to be some continuity in sense-making for there to be an awareness of upheaval. Change in sense-making is therefore always gradual. The anthropocentric narrative needs to continue even if we can eventually arrive at a non-human metaphysics.

Metaphysically this conceptual argument is restrictive, independently of whether it is right or wrong. It limits metaphysical systems according to conceptual frames and evolution. The content of the system should not outrun the current conceptual frame beyond certain evolutionary boundaries. The metaphor demonstrating Moore's metaphysical commitment is in the negation of the 'metamorphic flash' with its denial of action at a distance, of jumps in space and time and of effects across or from nothingness.

Gradual change, with its requirement for intermediate stages and continuity, justifies the denial of flashes across nothingness. These commitments raise a more serious criticism of Moore's position. Could it be that his anthropocentrism about sense-making also binds him to gradual evolution in all spheres, where all models are limited because they need to accord with human sense-making and its requirement for gradual evolution? Would Moore want to insist that the requirement for gradual change applies to conceptual change in the natural sciences? The answer is no. The natural sciences are not subject to conceptual limitations because they have a different, empirical, methodology. But the natural sciences are not the arbiters of sense-making, where gradual evolution holds sway.

In his discussion of Quine, Moore retains the idea of gradual evolution in making sense of things, consistent with his anthropocentric perspective about sense, while also committing to the methods and principles of the natural sciences as determining the general character of reality. The sciences currently offer the best way of making sense of some things: 'Given that the natural sciences, in their current form, embody our best efforts hitherto to determine the general character of reality, they *must* be our point of departure for any further enquiry...' (2012, 311)

However, the natural sciences are not the only way of making sense of things, since fall outside the scope of Quine's naturalism: 'Quine is able to see the scientific way of making sense of things as the only way of making sense of things because he presupposes a narrow conception of what it is to make sense of things.' (2012, 326) When these two positions are combined, we arrive at Moore's claim for gradual evolution inspired by Neurath. Sense-making is necessarily gradual and there is space for it alongside the natural sciences: '[Two objections about the role of evidence] suggest that there is room after all for some non-scientific ways of making sense of the scientific way of making sense of things.' (2012, 326) Sense-making uses kinds of self-critical analysis and creativity that do not operate according to a narrow definition of evidence.

In his critique of David Lewis's naturalistic metaphysics, Moore develops the critique of Quine: '... it is precisely this distinctive self-consciousness that the naturalism at work in such metaphysics prevents it from replicating – at least when that naturalism assumes anything like the extreme form that it assumes in Quine's case.' (2012, 343) The self-consciousness of humanistic narrative is not available to scientific method and this leads to a loss of importance: 'In Lewis and other metaphysicians of his stripe, we find insight, invention, and illumination. But we also find evidence, it seems to me, of the debilitating power of their naturalism, which, by forcing their metaphysics into an inappropriately scientific mould, seriously restricts its impact.' (2012, 344)

In the discussion of Lewis, we find Moore's most impassioned defence of anthropocentric metaphysics. Again, he takes his cue from Williams' description of a 'humanistic discipline' that can 'listen to what it is saying'. Moore adds the ideas of narrative and the place of the human to the idea of self-consciousness. Together they justify the claim that metaphysics is in the service of humanity: 'To substantiate that claim, some story needs to be told about how understanding the place of humanity in the larger scheme of things could in turn help humanity to live in that place.' (p 343) Self-consciousness is not an isolated reflexivity, but rather a collective and critical self-examination through narratives situating a 'we'.

It is possible to question this critique of Lewis on its own terms, since his work on concepts as varied as identity, modal realism, pain, counterfactuals and science fiction seem to fulfil Moore's criteria. Lewis gives an account of our place in the world and that account leads to moral guidance too, if by moral guidance we understand, for example, having criteria for how madmen and Martians might be in pain: 'The madman is in pain in one sense, or relative to one population. The Martian is in pain in another sense, or relative to another population.' (Lewis 1983, 128) So though Moore is correct to identify Lewis's naturalistic methodology as counter to certain kinds of narrative of our place in the world, it is not the case that Lewis's work fails to offer a competing account which could work as humanistic discipline. What I want to argue, though, is something different. It is not whether a given

philosopher is humanistic enough. It is that it is damaging for metaphysics to insist that it should be humanistic at all.

### Continuity and discontinuity in eternal return

How can Deleuze oppose the claim to gradual evolution made by Moore given its conceptual basis? The answer is by having a different account of the nature of conceptual upheaval across different dimensions which removes the necessity for gradual change and for retrospective and self-conscious narrative of the change.

For Moore, conceptual evolution does not allow flashes because upheaval presupposes continuity and gradual change. For example, a friend might say to Moore 'Like a flash, everything changed in my life' and Moore would be able to demonstrate that this could not be the case. There are continuities underlying the judgement of change: 'You could not know that you had suffered such an upheaval without a sense and a narrative of loss and gain. Your self is like my conceptual narrative. It changes gradually, not all at once and unrecognisably. The upheaval presupposes a self-like perspective and a narrative about change. Indeed, you have just given one'.

In Deleuze's metaphysics the proposition 'There cannot be a sudden upheaval of our sense-making' needs to be approached through what it leads us to assume about reality and about sense-making. He argues that there can be sudden upheavals in some dimensions of reality while others remain continuous. Identified concepts and narratives, and selves, are prone to sudden upheaval, to tipping points, in relation to other dimensions.

If the self and sense-making are multi-dimensional, we can speak of the flash-like change in one dimension in relation to another that remains continuous. More significantly, any judgement about change not being gradual would depend on which dimension we gave priority to. Furthermore, judgements about illusions would follow from those priorities. An illusion would be to give priority to the wrong dimension in a judgement, for instance, about gradual change. After an event deeply altering our moods, we could claim that we are still the same from the point of view of job, family and home. Yet from the point of view of our moods we could claim that job, family and home have changed completely. *It all became hopeless in a flash...*

For Deleuze, a life changes in a flash when we go through a momentous event, but only as a relation between dimensions. In the dimension of intensities there can be continuous changes which relate to a conceptual dimension such that conceptual frames break and jump when intensities pass certain thresholds, for instance, when a conceptual frame suddenly loses interest for us because of a drop in the intensity of hope associated with. Concepts change gradually when viewed dispassionately, but in terms of our feelings for them they can fade very rapidly. For example, the meaning of revenge changes quite slowly, but its hold on us can drop suddenly at the news of terrible massacres or moving reconciliations. Gradual evolution is an incomplete and one-dimensional understanding of conceptual change which misses its relation to dimensions of intense changes in drives and investments.

When Deleuze hears of Moore's friend and of his response, he corrects it in the following way: 'Everything can change suddenly in a life. The unified single perspective and narrative are illusions set over a multiplicity of related and unstable dimensions that jump and flash. Sometimes a change in intensity means that the same narrative has changed all of a sudden, for instance, when a life is changed by a dramatic event'.

Deleuze does not deny continuity, but rather situates it in a different place to Moore. There is continuity of changes in intensity. Intensities are continuously shifting. They lead to dramatic change in discontinuous identities such as conceptual frames. This is a reversal of Moore's position, since for Deleuze there are breaks in conceptual frames connected by continuity of intensive changes. For example, as the light steadily dims over the city and a police car wails in the distance, suddenly our conceptual frame snaps from the secure and safe to the fearful and dangerous. The realm of actual concepts and objects is prone to tipping points in relation to a continuously shifting realm of intensive changes.

There are three sources for understanding Deleuze's account of dimensions: his philosophy of time, where past, present and future are dimensions of one another, his tri-partite distinction of reality into actual and virtual realms mediated by a surface of intensities, and his interpretation of Nietzsche's eternal return. Moore has a detailed account of the latter, but says very little about Deleuze's philosophy of time. However, before turning to Nietzsche, it is interesting to turn to Moore's discussion of dimensions in Deleuze.

When Moore discusses the actual and virtual in Deleuze and Bergson, he raises the possibility of jumps between dimensions: 'Thus consider a journey along one dimension that leads to some sort of limit. Continuation of the journey along that one dimension seems impossible. But perhaps it is not. Perhaps it is possible by climbing a second dimension and 'jumping over' the limit.' (2012, 563) The possibility of jumps via dimensions is true to Deleuze. We 'jump' on one dimension through its relation to another. However, for Moore, we jump by moving to another dimension and we do so as the continuation of a journey. But that's not Deleuze's point.

Deleuze's claim is that dimensions coexist. We do not jump between them, but rather jump in a dimension because of the effect of its relation to another. This means that we can have two different accounts of interruption and continuity that share the idea of dimensions. For Deleuze, a journey is interrupted in a dimension, even though it might appear to continue, for instance, when a life-story is altered all of a sudden because it is suddenly emptied of passion. For Moore, a journey that appears to meet an obstacle in one dimension can continue in a different form, for instance, when 'someone's ability to play the piano can extend beyond previous limits when accompanied by instances of a hitherto completely absent form of encouragement.' (2012, 562-3)

In his interpretation of Nietzsche, Moore is influenced by Deleuze's version of Nietzsche's eternal return. Instead of proposing an eternal return of the same world, Deleuze claims that the only thing that returns is difference, and difference returns to engulf sameness: '*The same does not return, the similar does not return*, but the Same is the return of that which returns, *that is, of the Different*, the

similar is the return of that which returns, *that is, of the Dissimilar*. Repetition in eternal return is the same, but insofar as it is only said of difference and of the different.’ (Deleuze 1968, 384)

Eternal return is the return of difference and this is the only process that remains the same. Sameness and resemblance never return, because difference returns to alter it. Note the layers of sameness and difference here. It is not that there is only difference and becoming, but rather that sameness has no continuity through time because it is constantly being changed by the return of difference. As you stare through the window a flood of changing intensities alters the picture before you and you with it. Existence is sameness eternally destroyed.

Moore agrees with Deleuze that eternal return is central to Nietzsche’s metaphysics. He also agrees that it is about change. However, he is ‘uncomfortable with the idea that eternal return is not the return of anything that is the same.’ (2012, 402) For Moore, eternal return is continual change in the interpretation of everything. By this he means that though past, present and future things return, they do so according to different perspectives:

In its continual generation of new perspectives eternal return allows for the continual generation of new evaluations and new interpretations. Through these, things in the world, including things that are past, can be continually transformed, so that, although they keep returning, they keep returning differently. They can be continually developed, continually cultivated, continually lived afresh. (2012, 404)

Everything returns but our perspectives are different. This means we require new ways of making sense of things as perspectives change. Moore’s account of eternal return is therefore consistent with his commitment to innovation in metaphysics through new ways of making sense and new ways of narrating our situation, self-consciously and continuously.

Continuous and eternal can apply to a process such that some process happens again and again, for instance in the continuous disruption of a meeting. They can also apply to things, such that something is said to be eternal, in the sense of unchanging, or to be continuous, in the sense of without break. The paradox in Nietzsche’s doctrine of eternal return is that if only difference returns then we appear to have no continuity of things, but if only the same returns, then we have no difference. In both cases, it is impossible to judge that there is an eternal return, since either things are completely different and all memory is erased, or things are completely the same and there is no way of telling them apart.

Moore’s solution turns on a distinction between things and perspectives. There is a continuous change of perspective which leads to a continuous cultivation of and development of evaluations and interpretation of things that are transformed by them. So there is not a complete return of difference, since things return and interpretations are continually developed, and there is not a complete return of the same, since things continuously appear under different interpretations and perspectives. Existence is sameness eternally reinterpreted.

Moore assumes that interpretations and evaluations are discontinuous, since we can distinguish them according to perspectives. This is where he places the return of difference. But he is also

assuming that interpretations are continuous, as shown by his use of the phrases 'continually developed' and 'continually cultivated'. There is therefore a contradiction between the continuous return of different perspectives and the continuity of interpretations. This is consistent, since were Moore to deny continuity to interpretations, he would also be contradicting the gradual change in concepts required by the arguments for anthropocentric narrative in metaphysics.

We can now be clear about the opposition between Moore and Deleuze. For Deleuze, the continuous return of changing intensities creates breaks in things, including interpretations and conceptual frames. Anthropocentric narratives are subject to dramatic breaks and we should not say that we are gradually making different sense of the human, but that the human continuously fails to mean the same for us at all. Such a break is an event. Moore's claim for the necessity of gradual evolution around concepts guided by self-conscious reflection therefore depends on an illusory continuity which downplays the effect of changes in intensity. There is no need for anthropocentric narrative because narratives only appear to change gradually. The appeal to an anthropocentric narrative is a choice, not a need.

Moore's argument for the need for an anthropocentric focus introduces a set of illusions and a set of limitations in metaphysics which have no necessity. In Deleuze's metaphysics, illusions are necessary since we cannot avoid committing to some each time we create a concept, but no particular illusion is necessary. This lack of need means anthropocentric narrative is not necessarily a bad choice. It means that it is a strategic choice. We have to weigh its benefits rather than accept that it is inevitably the right path to take.

#### Coda: Why anthropocentric metaphysics might be a bad choice

Anthropocentrism implies definitions of the human and of the destiny of man which have a violent past record. However, it could be responded that only through new narratives of what it means to be 'us' will it be possible to rectify and avoid exclusions, not only of other humans but of animals and natural forms. Deleuze addresses this response in a discussion of the end of man in the Annexe to *Foucault*.

The broad strokes of Deleuze's method are quite consistent throughout his work. They are to determine an underlying and persistent problem through the creation of new concepts which transform and adapt the problem to present demands while repositioning it with respect to its past and future. The strategic part is therefore to try to create the best set of concepts while avoiding the error of thinking that we have done away with the underlying problem.

Deleuze speaks of a question-problem complex. By this he means that we cannot access a problem directly but only through a set of questions which partly reveal and partly conceal it. Here are the questions Deleuze poses around the end of man:

But what does Foucault mean when he says we should not shed tears over the death of man? Has that form in fact been good? Has it enriched or even preserved the forces in man,

the forces of living, speaking, working? Has it spared existing humans of violent death? The question always asked is this: if the forces in man only compose a form by entering into relation with forces from the outside, which forces do they risk coming into relation with now and what form can come out of this as no longer God or Man? This is the correct way of posing the problem Nietzsche called "the overman" (Deleuze 1986, 138-39)

A form comes about due to forces that then define it. Man appears when ways of living, speaking and working react against the outside, defined in different ways as beyond man, for instance, God. According to Deleuze's reading of Foucault, Man appears in the nineteenth century as humans struggle to define themselves against finitude that comes from the outside, for example, against a nature that brings death to men. This is then followed by a later fight against finitude that comes from within. Men use forces of living, speaking and working to push back the boundaries of finitude. They seek to understand and preserve life, to deepen the power of language, to extend their dominion through work, and all of these are understood as essentially human forces.

Moore's appeal to anthropocentric narrative in metaphysics fits Deleuze's account of human forces. It has the double structure of a struggle against the outside, the making sense of things, which then becomes an internal struggle, self-conscious sense-making in metaphysics, where metaphysics listens to what it is saying. It defines man as the form which makes sense, narrates and reflects self-consciously. What Deleuze suggests is this might miss new external and internal forces associated with computing power, modern genetics and non-grammatical forms of writing that call for the end of man and the beginning of the overman, because of the way they challenge, threaten and involve new possibilities for what self-consciousness, sense, language and thought might mean.

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