
Of Immanence and Becoming: Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy and/as Relational Ontology

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Abstract

Starting from the famous statement by Deleuze and Guattari in *What Is Philosophy?* that '[i]mmanence can be said to be the burning issue of all philosophy', this article explores their claim of an ontology of immanence and/as relational ontology in quantum terms. The theme of this special issue allows for a rereading of the terminology of different/ciation, which Deleuze developed in 'The Method of Dramatization' and *Difference and Repetition*, and I here relate it to the question of consistency of the plane of immanence, such as it is emphasised in the later work of Deleuze and Guattari. The article exemplifies the significance that the early issue of 'dramatization' as different/ciating passage has on an adequate understanding of both 'immanence' and 'becoming', and it shows their in/seperability for a relational ontology as onto-ethology. By making the Deleuze-Guattarian immanence resonate with Barad's (quantum) agential realism, the article zooms in on the specific quality of the 'passage' in order to do justice to the claim of a 'mature' philosophy that thinks immanence as immanent only to itself.

Keywords: immanence, constructivism, onto-ethico-epistemology, relational ontology, diffraction, Barad

We distinguish Ideas, concepts and dramas: the role of dramas is to specify concepts by incarnating the differential relations and singularities of an Idea.
(Deleuze 1994: 218)

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One of the very famous proclamations of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *What Is Philosophy?* states: ‘Immanence can be said to be the burning issue of all philosophy because it takes on all the dangers that philosophy must confront, all the condemnations, persecutions, and repudiations that it undergoes’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 45). From this charged definition of what characterises a ‘mature’ philosophy for them, which up to today gave rise to many engagements with Deleuze’s and Guattari’s oeuvre, the question still arises how to specifically envision the consistency of the ontological plane of this philosophical endeavour of radical immanence. The theme of this special issue allows me to connect Deleuze’s (and Guattari’s) philosophy as one that directs us towards an ethics (Braidotti 2006; Bogue 2007; Lorraine 2012; Smith 2012; Thiele 2008) to an interest in theorising further the consequential meaning of radical immanence as *relational ontology* (Barad 2007; Braidotti 2013; Haraway 2008; Tsing 2005). Exemplifying how ethics and (the method of) dramatization as onto-epistemological apparatus of immanence are in/separable in Deleuze’s (and Guattari’s) philosophy, and what kinds of effects this has for both ontology and ethics, this article focuses on the specific quality of the ‘passage’ based on what I formulate here as the *idea* of immanence to its *actualisation* as becoming (as ‘its’ concept).¹ It is this passage – incarnating the drama of ‘different/ciation’ – that I see as central for conceptualising adequately how the claim of and to immanence engenders a significant difference for what it means to do philosophy.

I. On Dramatization, Different/ciation, and the Relating of Virtual and Actual

Reading Deleuze’s published version of his presentation of ‘The Method of Dramatization’ before the French Society of Philosophy in 1967 and the (few) pages from *Difference and Repetition* that are devoted to this central Deleuzian ‘methodology’ in conjunction with Deleuze and Guattari’s later collaborations *A Thousand Plateaus* (in view of their concept of becoming) and *What Is Philosophy?* (in view of their idea of immanence),² one quickly realises the significance that the early issue of ‘dramatization’ has for both an adequate understanding of immanence and becoming and for their in/separability regarding a relational ontology as onto-ethology. So, what is at stake in the method of dramatization? How to conceive of the relation between ‘ideas’ and ‘concepts’ that interconnects with the relation of the virtual and the

actual? And how do both of these relations influence and characterise what philosophy as a philosophy of radical immanence implies?

In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze writes that '[i]deas are multiplicities: every idea is a multiplicity or a variety' (Deleuze 1994: 182); and in his presentation of 'The Method of Dramatization' (Deleuze 2004) this is specified further in that he argues that when 'the Idea' is approached as a multiplicity it means to no longer begin by assuming it as simple essence, such as (base) Platonism would have it. To take the Idea as a (simple) essence—a 'given' answering to the question 'What is X?'—also means to already imply that the actual—as always secondary to the idea—(will) represent(s) it imperfectly, that is, that the actual is 'inessential' and that therefore the idea must contradict itself: 'The question *what is this?* prematurely judges the Idea as simplicity of essence; from then on, it is inevitable that the simple essence includes the inessential, and includes it *in essence*, and thus contradicts itself' (Deleuze 2004: 95). Yet, if it is multiplicity as *differential relationality* ('the virtual' as Deleuze a little later in the text specifies) from where and with-in which thought emerges, then another relation becomes possible that describes the passage from the virtual (as Idea) to the actual (as 'incarnation' of the Idea): here it is 'to have the inessential include the essential. But the inessential includes the essential only *in case*' (96). It is not the oppositional relation—contradiction—between Idea and 'case' that is the result, but a procedure 'totally different from that of contra-diction [that] can be called *vice-diction*' (96). Vice-diction is then the procedure that does no longer oppose (the realm of) Ideas to (the realm of) things, and thereby retain hierarchies and contradictions between them. Rather, vice-diction acts transversally: it relates laterally rather than vertically, it correlates rather than opposes, and therefore, to say it in more Spinozian terms, the Idea is always—yet never exhaustively—*expressed* in and by its actualisation:

'[M]ultiplicity,' when used as a substantive, designates a domain where the Idea, of itself, is much closer to the accident than to the abstract essence, and can be determined only with the question *who? how? where and when? in which case?*—forms that sketch the genuine spatio-temporal coordinates of the Idea. (Deleuze 2004: 96)

The abstract, general and infinite ping-pong play between the One and the multiple as two separate realms, which will never attain the concrete (Deleuze 1994: 182), is replaced here with a much more constrained and concrete procedure—the questions 'who? how? where and when? in which case?' make this evident. And it is this different relating of

Idea (the One) and accident (multiple) that Deleuze makes the condition of the ‘drama’ (instead of the *logos*) that animates his philosophy of difference and repetition. Everything starts with multiplicity (as ‘difference in itself’) as a fully determined and real virtuality. Rather than hierarchically distributing the spatio-temporal field by severing what is differentiated from that from which it is differentiated, the virtual (idea as multiplicity) undergoes the drama of different/ciation via which it *at once* differentiates itself and is differentiated into or by what actualises, incarnates or expresses it.

The procedure of vice-diction as suggested by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* and presented in ‘The Method of Dramatization’ envisions therefore, on the one hand, a more intimate relation between idea/the virtual and case/the actual than the opposing forces of contradiction could ever permit. And yet, on the other hand, it is important to stress that this intimacy does not lead to the collapse of the ‘two floors’ (Deleuze 1992) – idea into cases inasmuch as virtual into actual (or vice versa) – nor that it reproduces them with-in a relation of resemblance. Nothing could be further from the idea of ‘difference in itself’ as the event of different/ciating. Deleuze’s choice to speak of ‘dramatization’ suggests already in the terminology that in order for this process of different/ciation to be set in motion *something always has to happen* so that any-thing comes into existence at all. ‘[T]he whole world is an egg’, Deleuze states at this moment and gestures therewith towards the spatio-temporal (*ontological*) dynamisms ‘beneath the actual qualities and extensities’ that actually ‘are the actualising, differentiating agencies’ (Deleuze 1994: 214; emphasis added; Deleuze 2004: 96). That such actualisation for Deleuze (and Guattari) is neither mere realisation nor takes place (from) within the logic of representation, is well known. Actualisation as a process of different/ciation is ‘creation’; it is a dis/continuous process of becoming.

I do not have the space here to dive deeper into further technical details of this procedure of different/ciation, by for example following more closely the philosophical trajectory of chapter IV in *Difference and Repetition* in which Deleuze explains the ‘adventurous character of Ideas’ (Deleuze 1994: 182) and moves his readers from the Kantian schema (caught up in the oppositional model of idea and concept) through the differential calculus (from Leibniz to Maimon) towards his own theorisation of the dynamic relation of virtual and actual as precisely this process of different/ciation.³ Yet, it is important to acknowledge here how central and alive this thought trajectory remains

up to the thought of ‘radical immanence’, which Deleuze and Guattari see in their later collaborations as the main task of philosophy today. For when they draw out ‘the plane of immanence’ in *What Is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35–60), it seems again vice-diction and not contradiction that alone leads them to ‘radical immanence’. They specify that ‘[w]hensoever immanence is interpreted as immanent “to” something, a confusion of plane and concept results, so that the concept becomes a transcendent universal and the plane becomes an attribute in the concept’ (44). Then an opposition of virtual to actual happens, because a transcendent One (idea) remains in place over and above All (multiple). Contrary to this, when virtual and actual are related as or with-in the creative process of different/ciation, ‘[i]mmanence is immanent only to itself and consequently captures everything, *absorbs All-One*, and leaves nothing remaining to which it could be immanent’ (45; emphasis added).⁴

II. The Problem of Immanence: ‘Philosophy is a Constructivism’

While everything seems to be sufficiently spelled out thus, the above exposition of the problematics of ‘passage’ from idea to case and/or its actualisation still could be read as echoing too much a separating or severing of space(s) between the virtual (idea as multiplicity) and the actual (cases and/or concepts). It, thus, still harbours the danger that the virtual in Deleuze (and Guattari) is understood as the realm *behind* the actual; a totality—however open—*from which* the actual emerges as realisation, or a quasi-transcendental *condition* of the actual. Yet, such philosophically recognisable ‘translations’ limit, if not misconstrue what must be seen as the most refreshing, even if also most intricate point in Deleuze’s (and Guattari’s) commitment to radical immanence.⁵ In order to figure out how and why they speak of philosophy as ‘a constructivism’, which creates ‘an unlimited One-All, an “Omnitudo” that includes all the concepts on one and the same plane’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35), it is essential to attend to the very specificity of the status of the idea of (the plane of) immanence in Deleuze and Guattari once more in detail.

An investigation into the specific status of immanence in Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophising brings about that immanence enters the scene always in a double role: on the one hand, immanence can be understood as *the specific philosophical idea* that Deleuze and Guattari aim to lay out with-in their philosophy as the plane that ‘creates concepts’; and

on the other hand—yet to be read as *simultaneously* or *at once*—(the plane of) immanence is *that which guides the whole philosophical undertaking* to begin with, since it is always/already that which ‘grounds’ everything that is to come.⁶ Philosophy as a constructivism the way Deleuze and Guattari present it in *What Is Philosophy?* has to be therefore thought as a paradox, and it is in this sense that they call immanence ‘a problem’ always in need of ‘a’ solution, and never a clearly circumscribed ideational frame from (within) which thought and/as truth emerge. The problem of and with immanence as radical immanence is this: what counts as a plane ‘on which’ some-thing is created is itself only ever constituted by the very act of this process of creation (actualisation as different/ciation). And yet, this process—because of different/ciation (and not representation)—again ‘is’ nothing other than the very plane ‘from which’ or ‘on which’ it happens:

Philosophy is a constructivism, and constructivism has two qualitatively different complementary aspects: the creation of concepts and the laying out of a plane. Concepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them. The plane envelops infinite movements that pass back and forth through it, but concepts are the infinite speeds of finite movements that, in each case, pass only through their own components. (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35–6)

The pre-eminent usage of folding movements (waves, (un)rolling, enveloping) in this passage brings to the fore precisely this entangled situation and also again what the above described ‘drama’ concluded of the relation between virtual (idea as multiplicity) and actual (cases and/or concepts): while undergoing the process of different/ciation is actualisation as creation (dis/continuous process of becoming), this process is not animated by clearly separable ‘forces’ or ‘actors’ but, as Deleuze already argues in *Difference and Repetition*, by spatio-temporal dynamisms continuously at work *beneath* the actualised occurrences. Therefore, the ‘actors’ of actualisation are not ‘subjective’ but ‘larval’, and in the last instance they are in/separable from the plane itself: ‘Dynamisms are not absolutely subjectless’, Deleuze writes in ‘The Method of Dramatization’ (Deleuze 2004: 97), but he spells out further in *Difference and Repetition* that ‘[t]here are indeed actors and subjects, but these are larvae, since they alone are capable of sustaining the lines ... It is true that every Idea turns us into larvae’ (Deleuze 1994: 219). This turn toward what animates or drives the different/ciation gestures already toward the concept of ‘becoming’, which will be discussed at the end of this article. Such a turn also has significant consequences for

philosophy as it makes an ‘ethico-onto-epistemological’ (Barad 2007) difference for philosophy to start with immanence. Before getting to this, a few more words on the problem of immanence as this paradox of constructivism itself.

So far it has been established that immanence is *at once* the idea from which all actualisation takes place *and* the process of actualisation itself that only ever creates or ‘cuts’ the plane.⁷ If this *double act* of immanence is seriously followed through, it is obvious that neither with Platonic ideations, Aristotelian entelechies or Euclidean geometrical means, nor with their modern philosophical ‘translations’ into Cartesian dualisms, transcendental a priori or simplistic vitalisms can we adequately envision and grasp the impact of the phenomenon of immanence on philosophy. Philosophy as a constructivism, as the movement of (the plane of) immanence demonstrates, lives *both* (by) a different temporality – no longer classically linear – *and* a different causality – no longer built on the assumption that it lies on either side of the spectrum, cause or effect, how things turn out ‘to be’.⁸ The introduction of immanence, therefore, produces the need for another ‘image of thought’, if immanence is not again reduced to being ‘related to something like a “dative”, Matter or Mind’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 44), succumbing to an ontological frame *in which* thought (and every-thing else) takes place.

Now, terminologies such as ‘transcendental empiricism’ (Deleuze 1994) or ‘chaosmosis’ (Guattari 1995) are certainly sufficient ways to reference Deleuze and Guattari’s manner of addressing such ‘new’ image(s) of thought. Yet, to me the very specificity of how to concretely envision the constructivist ontology of immanence and/as a plane of immanence immanent only to itself is still an ongoing ‘burning issue’. Too often these terminologies are used quickly in discussions of Deleuze and Guattari’s works, but in a way that explains away rather than properly accounts for the substantial transformative potential that they entail. And this is especially bothering if one aims to articulate the transformations from the ontological and epistemological to the ethical and political level that such philosophising engenders.⁹ It is to this purpose that I want to suggest introducing a different register – a quantum or quantised perspective – which can help to grasp more accurately the paradoxical ‘nature’, the duplicity of (the claim of) immanence that alone articulates immanence (as) immanent only to itself. Approaching (the plane of) immanence in quantum terms provides a line of flight to move beyond the so persistent spatio-temporal ‘frame’ of classical ontology with its still strong influence in today’s

(quasi-)transcendentalist philosophising. It allows to approximate in thinking what in Deleuze and Guattari is specified as the nonthought within thought, the prephilosophical status of the plane of immanence (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35–60).

III. Immanence and/as Diffraction: Ethico-Onto-Epistemological Entanglements

To concretise such a specification, I want to suggest here that it is possible to read the way immanence figures in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical endeavour as a *diffraction apparatus*, which as we can learn from the history of quantum physics also exposes the feature of double appearance. Especially Niels Bohr's demonstration of the diffraction problematics brought to the fore that the diffraction experiment both exemplifies and enacts the ontological entanglement (*Verschränkung*) of the 'what' that is in question—in the quantum physical realm it was aimed to respond to the question 'What is light? Wave or particle?'—with the 'how', that is, the significance of measurement (or actualisation as *different/ciation*) that only ever *decides* ('enacts') what 'is' 'in case' ('wave' or 'particle'). Calling immanence a diffraction apparatus that exemplifies the paradoxical entanglements that immanence immanent only to itself demands in Deleuze and Guattari's thought, takes here specifically recourse to Karen Barad's 'agential realism' (Barad 2007) which she develops from Bohr's intervention into quantum physics (yet moving further in philosophical terms) and which also in other regards resonates well with the philosophy of immanence. In a similar manner to Deleuze and Guattari's strong claim that the only ever 'mature' philosophy is one of radical immanence, Barad states that with the philosophy she suggests and that builds from the quantum physical phenomenon of diffraction and its metaphysical consequences, '*a crucial rethinking of much of Western epistemology and ontology*' (Barad 2007: 83) is possible, with major consequences also for the questions of ethics and politics.¹⁰

The so-called 'two-slit diffraction or interference experiment' became so central to quantum physics, because it exhibits 'complementarity' as onto-epistemological in/determinacy rather than categorical (ontological) essence and (epistemological) dualism.¹¹ With Barad, who allows these quantum physics insights to carry full onto-epistemological

weight in a more general philosophical manner, this becomes specified in the following way:

So, while it is true that diffraction apparatuses measure the effects of difference, even more profoundly they highlight, exhibit, and make evident the entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology of the world, including the ontology of knowing. *In fact, diffraction not only brings the reality of entanglements to light, it is itself an entangled phenomenon.* (Barad 2007: 73; emphasis added)

It is important not to (mis)judge the use of quantum insights for the here pursued question of a relational ontology of immanence as an overarching scientific claim in regard to issues belonging clearly to philosophy (the distinction of philosophy from the sciences and the arts in Deleuze and Guattari in *What Is Philosophy?* could be (mis)understood that way). To the contrary, the open discussion of the spatio-temporal ‘grounding’ that physics and/as ontology share, is a philosophically responsible manner of thinking that has the potential both to move the image of thought beyond the by now invisibilised but in no way less active frame of classical physics that influences especially ‘our’ logical thinking, and to address the critical issue of such common *metaphysical* invisibilisation itself.

For the discussion of the paradoxical consistency of immanence, two important features of and for immanence as radical immanence can be rephrased in such Baradian (or quantum or diffractive) terms. First, since also the phenomenon of diffraction is about processes of differentiation that no longer oppose that which differs and since it also investigates into the specific production of ‘patterns of difference’,¹² thinking with (quantum) diffraction can provide a new image of thought for the ‘passage’ that Deleuze proposes with his method of dramatization as relating Idea and actualisation (as concept or ‘case’), the virtual and the actual, or the One (as multiplicity) and the All (as singularities and not multiples). Deleuze states clearly that his thought is not after an abstract idea ‘in the heavens’, but about the processes of different/ciation *enlivened* by a ‘*who? how? where and when? in which case?*’. Thinking with diffraction allows emphasising concretely the ‘important’ (in the sense of mattering rather than truthful) *ethico-onto-epistemological entanglements* that only ever bring ‘the idea much closer to the accident’: ‘Diffraction is a matter of differential entanglements. Diffraction is not merely about differences, and certainly not differences in any absolute

sense, but about the entangled nature of differences that matter. This is the deep significance of a diffraction pattern' (Barad 2007: 381).

Second, because of this constellation in which 'the entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology of the world, including the ontology of knowing' (Barad 2007: 73) is exhibited, the *intra-active* nature of agency, inasmuch as causality and temporality, is given concrete shape so that Deleuze and Guattari's immanence can be shown as precisely this 'interleaved' plane where '[e]very plane of immanence is a One-All: it is not partial like a scientific system, or fragmentary like concepts, but distributive—it is an "each"' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 50).¹³ And in order to again avoid misunderstandings: the fact that Deleuze and Guattari in this passage distinguish the plane of immanence from any 'partial scientific system' should not be taken as failing my attempt to make it resonate with quantum thinking. The use of quantum physics suggested here is philosophical and with the insights of the entangled nature of matters, which diffraction has brought about in quantum physics, 'we learn about phenomena—about specific material configurations of the world's becoming' (Barad 2007: 91).

IV. *Ethos* of Becoming: Different/ciation as Intensification

Immanence acts as *multiplicity-idea*, always/already folded upon itself. This is why in Deleuzian and Guattarian terms it poses a problem (rather than representing 'the Truth') and is continuously in need of *a* solution.¹⁴ In order to grasp this complexity I argued that it might be productive to look at immanence as a diffraction grating, given that immanence can be said to be *at once* apparatus and object of investigation without ever producing a collapse of the one into the other ('complementarity'). Via this specific entangling or *intra*-weaving of onto-epistemological 'matters' (in its double sense of 'meaning' and 'matter' that the English language provides us with) I claimed that a 'mature philosophy' of radical immanence according to Deleuze and Guattari is approached.

Now, flattening the levels in the thought of radical immanence in such a way that the plane of immanence can be envisioned as quantum entanglement (in Barad's sense), the patterns of different/ciation become visible as 'configurations of the world's becoming' itself (plane of immanence).¹⁵ In the remainder of this article, I want to address this question of becoming as that concept in Deleuze and Guattari that incarnates the thought of radical immanence and therefore allows to further specify how their philosophising can be read as

an ethico-onto-epistemological endeavour. What I want to argue here is that the concept of becoming in its (heterogeneous) consistency in Deleuze's (and Guattari's) thought—onto-epistemologically as diffractive/different/ciating passage as described above and aesthetico-ethico-politically incarnated in the becoming-series of the *creative* 'imperatives' developed in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 2000)—complements the thought of radical immanence by—again—being in/separable from it. Becoming is that which incarnates, actualises and expresses immanence, yet without having any priority over it. Rather, to borrow words from Mackenzie and Porter's discussion of 'Dramatization as Method in Political Theory' (Mackenzie and Porter 2011), becoming can be said to only ever 'bring to life' immanence in the way that also 'dramatic performances can bring to life the characters and themes of a play script' (Mackenzie and Porter 2011: 483).¹⁶

Following the manner in which Deleuze and Guattari present the concept of becoming in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 'becoming' is said in accordance with the 'drama of different/ciation' to never represent or imitate an idea that is given in essence. It is not a relation of resemblance that gets created between the terms of becoming in question. Instead, as is specified early on in the becoming-plateau when *Willard's* becoming-animal is addressed, becoming 'is' a very peculiar enactment:

Becomings-animal are neither dreams nor phantasies. They are perfectly real. But which reality is at issue here? For if becoming animal does not consist in playing animal or imitating an animal, it is clear that the human being does not 'really' become an animal any more than the animal 'really' becomes something else. *Becoming produces nothing other than itself* ... What is real is the becoming itself, the block of becoming, not the supposedly fixed terms through which that which becomes passes. (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 238; emphasis added)

All becomings-..., as Deleuze and Guattari articulate them in *A Thousand Plateaus*, are only (about) the movements themselves; 'becoming produces nothing other than itself'—this is essential if the concept of becoming is to complement the thought of immanence as process of different/ciation that alone figures immanence (as) immanent only to itself. Becomings-... cannot be linked to either notions of progress or teleology and they also do not form subjective identities. Rather, it can again help to link our thinking to (quantum) interference and see the movements of becoming as *diffracting* the plane of

immanence and as its *intensification* ('drama' of different/ciation). We are therefore back again with 'The Method of Dramatization' and its specification of the '*who? how? where and when? in which case?*': actualising (the plane of) immanence is only ever a process of becoming when the 'what' in question intra-acts with the 'how to' – that is, how to become, for whom, when, in what ways, in which cases, and (especially) how much so – and that is always a precarious question of intensity. There is neither a universal becoming nor any general formula for becoming to follow. While 'all becomings are already molecular' (that is, there is no becoming-molar) and the point of becoming is also 'to emit particles that take on certain relations of movement and rest because they enter a particular zone of proximity' (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 272–3), radical immanence and/as utter in/determinacy (will) remain(s) its fate. Putting specific emphasis on becoming as such an ethico-onto-epistemological movement of intensification has a double reason, even though apart from being the first term in the title of the respective plateau – 'becoming-intense' – the term itself does not reappear throughout Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of the becoming-series. For one, it helps terminologically to avoid any categorical separation of the process of different/ciation from the plane of immanence 'from' or 'on' which it emerges (as 'its' becoming). And secondly, it also allows re-turning again our discussion to the early Deleuze of *Difference and Repetition*, where 'intensity' becomes the ultimate measure of difference as its 'individuating' power (and therefore as its 'becoming'):

In all these respects, we believe that individuation is essentially intensive, and that the pre-individual field is a virtual-ideal field, made up of differential relations. Individuation is what responds to the question 'Who?', just as the idea responds to the questions 'How much?' and 'How?'. 'Who?' is always an intensity. (Deleuze 1994: 246)

With these entangling (or diffractive) moves in-between different times and works it now is possible to read together the early Deleuzian thought of difference as the transformation of philosophy from logos to drama (question of knowledge) with the Deleuzian and Guattarian provocation of immanence as 'the burning issue of all philosophy' (question of ontology); and to link both of these with *A Thousand Plateaus* where Deleuze and Guattari not only conceptually align the question of multiplicity (idea) with becoming (concept) (stating that 'becoming and multiplicity are the same thing', since 'its [multiplicity]

variations and dimensions are immanent to it' [Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 249]), but where they also specify their thought of 'becoming' (or 'immanence') as incarnating *ethos*:

Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment.

That's easy to say? Although there is no preformed logical order to becomings and multiplicities, there are *criteria*, and the important thing is that they not be used after the fact, that they be applied in the course of events, that they be sufficient to guide us through the dangers. (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 251)

Becoming as intensification and as individuating power of difference in the above specified, always precarious sense, which, however, again only ever intensifies, diffracts or different/ciates 'difference in itself' as plane of immanence—this is the paradoxical movement, the zigzagging or the multi-directionality that a philosophy of and as radical immanence 'creates'. And if all of this is held together now—*at once*—then the intricate 'passage' that characterises immanence immanent only to itself and that this article treated in its diverse versions—virtual-actual, idea-concept, multiplicity-becoming, One-all—is to be called with Deleuze the phenomenon of 'indi-different/ciation (indi-drama-different/ciation)', since '[i]ndividuation is the act by which intensity determines differential relations to become actualised, along the lines of differentiation and within the qualities and extensities it creates' (Deleuze 1994: 246).

From here and in a last turn of my argument it matters also to add that the concept of becoming as incarnation of the idea of immanence for Deleuze and Guattari does not coincidentally 'end' as 'becoming-imperceptible' in the series of becomings... in *A Thousand Plateaus*. While this can be (and is) so easily misunderstood as a supposedly Deleuzian (and Guattarian) celebration of absolute deterritorialisation (and thereby misconstruing the—again—intricately entangled relation between the de- and the re- in Deleuze and Guattari), the authors of *A Thousand Plateaus* actually give a definition of what is meant instead. Becoming-imperceptible according to them is 'the immanent end of becoming, its cosmic formula', which, however, is not disappearance into nothingness in the sense of a dissolution into 'the ether' or something like it, but rather the highly specific demand of 'becoming everybody/everything (*tout le monde*)' which, they say, is 'to world (*faire*

monde), to make a world (*faire un monde*)' (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 279–80). And in order for this not to be misunderstood as not doing anything they state:

Not everybody becomes everybody [and everything: *tout le monde*–trans.], makes a becoming of everybody/everything. This requires much asceticism, much sobriety, much creative involution ... For everybody/everything is the molar aggregate, but *becoming everybody/everything* is another affair, one that brings into play the cosmos with its molecular components. (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 279–80)

What is it then that I see as the specific significance—in an ethico-onto-epistemological sense—of the passage between idea and concept, virtual and actual, immanence and becoming that makes a difference in Deleuze's (and Guattari's) philosophising? Instead of a thought based on Truth(s) (logos), theirs is one of concreteness, criteria and constellations (dramatization) in which not the discovery of essences is the incentive to do philosophy, but the continual problematising and providing of *a* solution to the posed problem (and there always is one), without ever envisioning an end to the immanent processes of becoming itself. And if concepts and ideas in Deleuze and Guattari are also a matter of specific consistency, and the passage from idea to concept is one of different/ciation or diffraction as intensification (and precisely not one of the good or bad copy or mirroring), then it can be argued that (the thought of) radical immanence—immanent to nothing but itself—neither saves us from our terrain or earthly conditions nor does it foreclose the possibility of real change and transformation of current conditions. In a Nietzschean sense, philosophy as such an *affirmative critical attitude* (*ethos*) entangles thought and life, and reminds us that '[m]odes of life inspire ways of thinking; modes of thinking create ways of living. Life *activates* thought, and thought *affirms* life' (Deleuze 2001: 66). Given that actualisations always only 'cut' the plane that at the same time extends them into spacetime-mattering (to speak with Barad again), *change and/as becoming is all there is*. Philosophy as ethico-onto-epistemology devotes itself to this emphasis on the immanent end of becoming as a continual worlding¹⁷ in which the Woolfian imperative of 'writing life'—'to saturate every atom' (quoted in Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 280, 329)—is the consistency aimed at, thereby transforming the boundaries of what classically was separated as the question of 'being' (ontology), 'knowing' (epistemology) and 'acting' (ethics).

Notes

1. Calling the method of dramatization an onto-epistemological apparatus in Deleuze's philosophical work and introducing a 'slash' (/) into in/separable already gestures to Karen Barad's quantum philosophy (Barad 2007), which in the course of this article will be a philosophical interlocutor to further specify what it means to do philosophy in a 'radically immanent' manner.
2. As stated in the annotations to the text in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953–1974* (Deleuze 2004, edited by David Lapoujade), 'The Method of Dramatization' was first published in *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie* (1967) and it 'takes up some of the themes from *Difference and Repetition* (Paris: PUF 1969), Deleuze's dissertation for his *Doctorat d'Etat*, which he was finishing at the time, under the direction of Maurice de Gandillac, and which he would defend early in 1969' (Deleuze 2004: 300). Therefore, it does not seem entirely correct that this presentation is, as Mackenzie and Porter claim, 'the defence subsequently published under the title "The Method of Dramatization"' (Mackenzie and Porter 2011: 488).
3. For most insightful readings of these dimensions in Deleuze's work, also discussing in detail the Riemannian mathematics, which influences Deleuze's (and Guattari's) philosophy, I refer the reader exemplarily to Simon Duffy's and Arkady Plotnitsky's works on Deleuze (and Guattari).
4. In a manner comparable to the return of the relation of virtual/actual in Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualisation of the plane of immanence, 'the whole world is an egg' also returns in their collaborative work by giving direction to the very central plateau in *A Thousand Plateaus* on 'How to create a Body without Organs' (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 149) – always a question of 'becoming'.
5. Such conceptual translation, speaking in my view still too much from a transcendental philosophical (Kantian) framework, I see for example in the otherwise very helpful presentations of the problem in Gasché 2014, Mackenzie and Porter 2011 or Voss 2013. Since the main goal of this article is to move towards another image of thought for 'radical immanence', my short evaluation here of these other discussions of the problem of immanence remains phrased in somewhat critical terms, although their readings are in no way incorrect. As said in the beginning, it is the very specificity of the 'passage' that I take issue with in this article, for which the engagement with 'dramatization' gives me the opportunity. I see this detail as quite central for an understanding of 'radical immanence' that accounts for its full transformational impact for philosophy.
6. For Deleuze's discussion of 'ground' and 'depth' as (un)grounding, see Deleuze 1994: 229–32.
7. I use 'cut' here as another terminological gesture toward Barad, whose terminology of 'cuts' as 'cutting-together-apart' is central in the development of philosophy as ethico-onto-epistemology (Barad 2010). But Deleuze and Guattari speak of the plane of immanence also as 'a section of chaos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 42).
8. Deleuze's (and Guattari's) philosophy not only shares the foundational rethinking of temporality and especially causality with quantum physics as this article argues, but at this point they seem to be also resonating well with foundational discussions of evolutionary biology and development psychology. See Oyama 2000a and 2000b.
9. For an inspiring recent collection of Deleuzian and Guattarian scholarship in this regard, see Braidotti and Pisters 2012. Especially relevant for the current discussion is part 1 in which the 'meta-methodological' level of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy is addressed. For another to me very relevant discussion

- of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism as a philosophy of immanence immanent only to itself in which also the dramatization of ideas is addressed, see Sauvagnargues 2009.
10. For 'resonances' between Barad's and Deleuze's (and Guattari's) philosophies, see Thiele forthcoming. For a rethinking of ethics from a Deleuzian perspective as 'ethos of diffraction', see also Thiele 2014.
 11. According to Barad, the main point of Bohr's insight of 'complementarity' in quantum mechanical and philosophical terms is that in contrast to Heisenberg's uncertainty principle 'what is at issue [for Bohr] is *not* that we cannot *know* both position and momentum of a particle simultaneously ... but rather that particles do not *have* determinate values of position and momentum simultaneously ... In essence, Bohr is making a point about the nature of reality, not merely our knowledge of it. What he is doing is calling into question an entire tradition in the history of Western metaphysics: the belief that the world is populated with individual things with their own independent sets of determinate properties' (Barad 2007: 19). See also chapter 7 of *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Barad 2007) for the quantum physical/theoretical details both in respect to the two-slit diffraction experiment and the issue of complementarity. For another in this context very suited interpretation of Bohr's 'complementarity', yet less far reaching in terms of possible ethico-political and ontological consequences, see Arkady Plotnitsky's *Niels Bohr and Complementarity: An Introduction* (2012) and his earlier study on *Complementarity: Anti-Epistemology after Bohr and Derrida* (1994).
 12. The notion of 'diffraction' does not only figure centrally in Barad's feminist/queer thought and as related to quantum physics. It was already introduced by Donna Haraway who suggests the metaphor of 'diffraction' as an alternative to 'reflection' for 'another kind of *critical consciousness* at the end of a rather painful Christian millennium, one committed to making a difference' (Haraway 1997: 273). While Barad draws a lot on Haraway's approach to diffraction in this alternative critical sense, for her 'diffraction is also more than a metaphor', so that she argues 'that there is a deep sense in which we can understand diffraction patterns—as patterns of difference that make a difference—to be fundamental constituents that make up the world' (Barad 2007: 72). A similar claim to a different 'criticality'—not based on 'reflection'—can also again be found in Deleuze when he says '[c]reation's all about mediators': 'What we should in fact do, is stop allowing philosophers to reflect "on" things. The philosopher creates, he doesn't reflect' (Deleuze 1995: 125, 122)
 13. Intra-action is a central term in Barad's agential realism, it '*signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies*' (Barad 2007: 33) and thereby speaks well to Deleuze's activating 'dynamisms', in which the question of agency is also one of entanglement ('larvae's'), so that any subject in its adult form—supposedly self-sustained and independent—would no longer be able to endure it (Deleuze 2004: 97). Barad defines intra-action further 'in contrast to the usual "interaction," which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction, the notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action' (Barad 2007: 33). For yet another linking to Deleuze and Guattari, does their theorising of 'haecceities' in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari 2000: 260–5) not speak of the very same modes of agency?
 14. As Isabelle Stengers writes in her exposition of *Cosmopolitics*, referring to Deleuze's reading of Leibniz in *The Fold*: 'Two floors are always needed, two floors that are inseparable but actually distinct because of the asymmetry of

their relations', from which then the task 'of the cosmopolitical Parliament is to determine, for every question, at each conjuncture, where the fold is folding' (Stengers 2011: 392).

15. For a justification to relate Barad's addressing of 'world' to Deleuze and Guattari's plane of immanence, see the chapter 'Conceptual Personae' in *What Is Philosophy?* in which the question of 'the new plane' and a 'belief in this world' and also '[w]hat is thought's relationship with the earth?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 61–83) is elaborated at length. For an insightful (re-)reading of Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophy of immanence as 'Earth-Thought', see also Gasché 2014: 90–106.
16. Of course, again, the opposite misunderstanding that there is then a fixed playscript *before* this enactment is also to be avoided. We must not forget Antonin Artaud's understanding of theatre that was so influential to Deleuze (and Guattari).
17. Not to be understood in a Heideggerian manner but in the way Haraway (2008) and Stengers (2011) use this terminology and make it figure in their cosmopolitics.

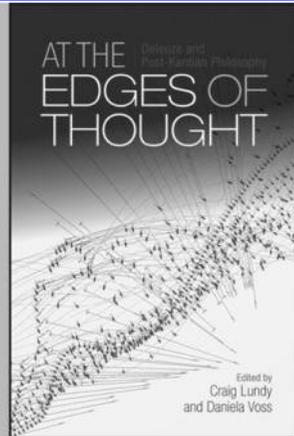
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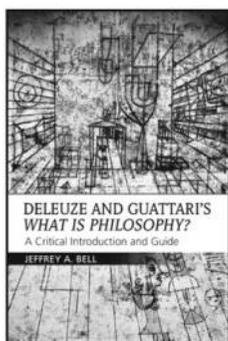
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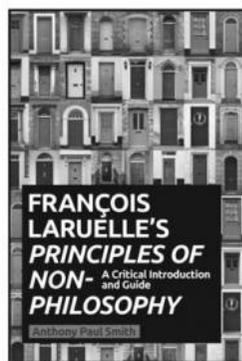
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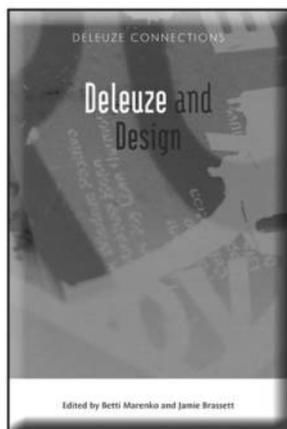
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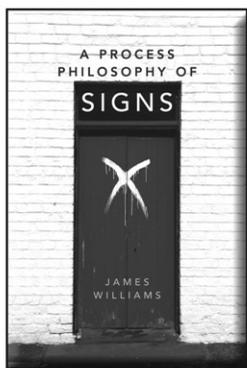
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