After Gilles Deleuze’s death in November 1995, rhizomatic thought received a kind of attention that it had never previously obtained. Even the academic world seemed to become aware of the importance this thought had in the philosophical scene of the late twentieth century.

However, the academics have done a kind of courtly extraction. Gilles Deleuze has been welcomed into the nice reception room of university respectability, while Félix Guattari remains outside. He was not an academic and he associated with bad company so that in the literature devoted to rhizomatic thought, the name of Gilles Deleuze tends to be cited while Félix’s name is more or less deliberately forgotten. It matters little to me, and I lack the necessary titles to promote Félix’s reception by university professors. However, beyond the details of politeness and bibliographical precision, there is also an essential philosophical question.

Let’s be careful now: there is a Deleuze without Guattari, and a Guattari without Deleuze, and then there is the rhizomatic machine put in motion by the encounter between the two. And according to one of their statements that should not be taken lightly, since in each one of them there were already several people, the authors of these books were truly a crowd (cf. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 3).

In any case, if you want to understand the rhizomatic machine, you cannot underestimate Félix’s specific contribution.

Deleuze without Guattari moved through the entire history of Western philosophy in order to free the concept of the event from any metaphysical reduction. The irresponsible event, the light dance dear to his beloved Nietzsche, is Deleuze’s contribution to the rhizomatic machine.
Guattari without Deleuze constructed a philosophical style from his psychiatric practice, from his work as a political militant, and from his training in biology and pharmacology. Out of these resulted the molecular method of the ‘cut up’, of montage, of decomposition and recomposition, of combinatory creation. To the rhizomatic machine Guattari brought the concrete micromaterial of his inquiry.

The crystalline acuity of the Deleuzian philosophical razor combined with the Guattarian material swarm of bio-informational principles: this is the rhizomatic machine. If you leave out a piece of it, you cannot understand how it works.

**Deleuze without Guattari**

If we wish to consider Deleuze without Guattari, we must first ask ourselves how to enter into Deleuzian thought.

Deleuze thought is not a labyrinth. The labyrinth unfolds in a monoplanar space; in the labyrinth, one follows a route that might lead nowhere, but nonetheless one’s feet rest on solid ground. The relationship between high and low is guaranteed, at the very least. The labyrinth’s plane is not traversed by any other plane. Hence we cannot escape. There are no lines of flight on a mono-planar territory.

The territory that we call Deleuze is not a labyrinth, but rather a multi-planar territory.

One walks along the streets in a labyrinth but at a certain point, you are walking in another labyrinth, on another plane, as if in an Escher drawing.

How is it possible that language produces meaning? Deleuze asked. Language does not exactly function according to biunivocal responses or monoplanar references. Monoplanarity belongs to formal languages, the languages that conventionally reduce the semantic spectrum, eliminating the indefinite elements that come from the pragmatic context, from situations. But when language possesses a body, its mode of functioning is polysemic, ambiguous, enriched by the asperity of the non-verbal. And so how is it possible to communicate? In communication, there is always something more and something less than a simple semantic transfer.

We know that any sign refers to a signified that, in its turn, is the sign of other signifieds and so forth to infinity. So the process of interpreting signs should be an infinite process. But why, then, when I sense an imminent danger and I scream, ‘Careful, run away!’ , do the people who are with me start to run?