

Spatial Nomadology in Jack Kerouac's *Lonesome Traveler*: Kerouac as a Becoming-Nomad

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Abstract

This study demonstrates the prominence of nomadism as an antidote vis-à-vis capitalist systematization, in Jack Kerouac's *Lonesome Traveler* (1960), through scrutinizing spatial dialectics of smooth and sedentary milieus as theorized in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). It aims at problematizing Kerouac's travel narrative within nomadic framework by avouching that he seeks an atemporal 'new earth', a space beyond civilization and history. Through mobility and nomadic reasoning, Kerouac effectively provides a discursive critique of capitalism and history by deterritorializing sedentary spaces without reterritorialization and hence departing from ancestral transcendentalism. In other words, his existential conundrum of exile/return is based on his dissatisfaction with status quo and institutionalized state. Kerouac's portrayal of his new vision is tantamount with Deleuzeguattarian 'becoming-nomad' who subverts pontificated dogmas. By and large, the analysis of the work relies heavily on Deleuzeguattarian concepts: line of flight, rhizome, smooth/striated space, and becoming-nomad.

Keywords: Kerouac, nomadism, exile, capitalism, smooth, striated, space, atemporality.

Introduction:

Prior postmodernism, academia has often pivoted on discourse of time whilst mitigating the space's prominence. By subverting space/time relation, postmodern theoretical research has been emphasizing the consequence of space, inasmuch as "to a number of geographical theorists", it "indicates a sense of movement, of history, of becoming" (Thacker, p. 13). The inquiry about space started with Martin Heidegger's differentiation between space and place in "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" (1951) and it is carried on by Gaston Bachelard, in *The Poetics of Space* (1958), who coalesces between phenomenology and psychoanalysis to unveil the significance of occupying a given space. As for Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974), the theorist introduces 'social space', a concept that lays out inquiries of politics, society and history and adjoining them with space. David Harvey, in his turn, brought forth time-space compression while Michel Foucault suggests the concept of 'heterotopia' and sporadically comments on space and geography. Add to that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari who, in a manner of speaking, reassert the prominence of space in relation to nomadism insofar as to generate a postmodern discourse that subverts the static spaces and geographical lines.

Along theoretical framework, literature is another discipline that manifest space, particularly in Beat writers' literary works which are incessantly known for their travel writings and adventurous cross travelling, notably Jack Kerouac's travel narrative. Jean-Louis Lebris de Kerouac, known as Jack Kerouac, (1922-1969) is an American writer and the leader of the Beat Generation in the postwar era. He is distinguished for his spontaneous writing and stream-of consciousness narrative. This paper sheds light on Kerouac's travel and spatial writings, in *Lonesome Traveler* (1960), that may be seen as a Deleuzeguattarian war machine in a capitalist postwar America. In so doing, there will be particular reference to Deleuzeguattarian concepts of space and mobility, mainly striated and smooth spaces, line of flight, and rhizome.

There are scarce scholarly works that swivel on Kerouac's modern nomadism and mobility, such as Victoria A. Elmwood's "The White Nomad and the New Masculine Family in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*" (2008), an essay that connects the Beat members with the white nomad using Kerouac's *On the Road* as a primary text. Elmwood, however, does not particularly refer to Deleuzeguattarian nomad in order to conduct gender study in *On the Road*. Gregory Blair's *Errant Bodies, Mobility, and Political Resistance* (2019), Particularly in "Beatniks and Guerilla Warfare", the writer utilizes the concept 'Errant Bodies', in order to epitomize the role of mobility in Che Guevara's guerrilla warfare as a way of "resisting oppressive regimes" (p. 53) and then concatenate such revolutionary leader to Kerouac's, and other Beat members', adventurous wanderings to repel capitalism's imprisoning regime. The most relevant scholarly work to this paper is Hassan Melehy's *Kerouac: Language, Poetics, and Territory* (2016) in which he unfolds the impact of Kerouac's French-Canadian background on a formal and thematic level propounding the author as a diasporic and nomadic writer whose writings fall within Deleuze's concept of minor literature. By scrutinizing *The Town and the City* (1950), *On the Road* (1957), *Visions of Cody* (1972), *Dr. Sax: Faust Part Three* (1959), and *Satori in Paris* (1966), Melehy traces Kerouac's poetics of exile.

Echoing Melehy's dialectic, Jimmy Fazzino, in *World Beats: Beat Generation Writing and the Worlding of the U.S. Literature* (2016), employs Deleuzeguattarian concept of rhizome in order to elucidate the fluidity and multiplicity of Kerouac's underground characters. Fazzino portrays the subterranean space that Kerouac's characters monopolize, asserting that "The subterranean spaces manifested throughout [Kerouac's] work, whether set at home or abroad, give rise to a radically expansive geographic imaginary" (p. 39). He then connects Kerouac's geographies with "Deleuzian line of flight and escape" (p. 44).

Susan Pinette, however in “Jack Kerouac’s French, American and Quebecois Receptions: From Deterritorialization to Reterritorialization” (2018), claims that her article:

returns to the actual statements Deleuze made about Kerouac’s works, not to discount the use of Deleuzian concepts to analyze them, but to clarify the paradox underlying Deleuze’s reading of Kerouac and how this paradox exemplifies the reception of Kerouac in France and Quebec (p.1).

She acknowledges that Deleuze, and Guattari in his turn, holds up Kerouac as an Anglo American writer who has the ability to deterritorialize due to the use of English language. Nonetheless, she argues that Deleuze and Guattari hold Kerouac “as the paradigmatic example of ‘reterritorialization’ and the failure of line of flight” (ibid). Pinette’s point is more or less accurate, whereof Deleuze and Claire Parnet (1977) identify “Kerouac’s sad end” with “line of flight’s becoming identical with a pure and simple movement of self-destruction” (p. 38-39). Notwithstanding, Pinette does admit Deleuze’s paradoxical reading of Kerouac’s works and this is based on Deleuze’s limited study of Kerouac’s writings for the former only bases his inquiry on *The Subterraneans*(1958) and *Satori in Paris*.

Still, Pinette’s discourse is insufficient as it only focuses on Deleuze and Guattari’s paradoxical analysis of Kerouac. Moreover, even if Kerouac attempts to go back to America, after leaving it, he is unsatisfied with the then-current state; there is an existential conundrum in his writing; i.e.: struggling between exile and return. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari (1972) explain there is a possibility of failure when leaving (p. 132-133), stating that artists like Kerouac:

fail to complete the process, they never cease failing to do so. The neurotic impasse again closes-the daddy-mommy of oedipalization, America, the return to the native land-or else the perversion of the exotic territorialities, then drugs, alcohol-or worse still, an old fascist dream. (1972, p. 133)

Here, the process, Jeffrey Bjorn Falla (2000) expounds, comes across continuous disruptions or “explosions” (p. 254) as drugs or oedipal relations. Failure of the process is “not a defeat, nor is failure completely a botched attempt at emancipation. Failure, more precisely, involves the inescapability of capitalism’s oedipalized commodity form” (Falla, p. 254). Capitalism, in other words, deterritorializes “bourgeois cultural forms and moral codes, replacing these with the exchangeability and anonymity of the commodity form” (Elliott, p.157).

While capitalism deterritorializes previous economic and cultural systems in order to reterritorialize with commodity form, aiming at profit, the nomad, however, “deterritorializes without reterritorializing”; he “may be in position to disrupt capitalism” (Fackenthal,2019, p. 66). Deleuze (1977), in *Dialogues II*, contends that for artists like Kerouac,

[E]verything is departure, becoming, passage, leap, daemon, relationship with the outside. They create a new Earth; but perhaps the movement of the earth is deterritorialization itself. American literature operates according to geographical lines: the flight towards the West, the discovery the true East is in the West, the sense of the frontiers as something to cross, to push back, to go beyond. The becoming is geographical. (p. 36-37).

Deleuze acknowledges Kerouac as one of the artists who create a new space beyond America and its frontiers. This paper returns to Melehy and Fazzino’s study of Kerouac as the embodiment of Deleuzeguattarian rhizome and line of flight. Adding to that, this study adjoins the Beat writer’s predilection to nomadism as an antidote for capitalism and consumer society. Not to discount the Deleuzian criticism of Kerouac, there will be a further scrutiny of Kerouac’s dichotomy of return/exile in order to showcase the limitation of Pinette’s study concerning Kerouac and equally argue that the latter is the modern/global nomad (becoming-nomad) in *Lonesome Traveler*. In this context, Kerouac is

'in-betweenness' (using Homi Bhabha and Edward W. Soja's concept), often out-of-place which paves the way to become a nomad in postwar America, creating his own space through mobility (line of flight) and deterritorialization of striated spaces. In so doing, there will be particular reference to Deleuzguattarian concepts of space and mobility, mainly striated and smooth spaces, line of flight, and rhizome.

The Deleuzguattarian nomad

Deleuze and Guattari (1980) mold certain "constellation of characteristics" that define a nomad, such as "a creative line of flight, a smooth space of displacement" (423). Line of flight, which is coterminous with deterritorialization, "is like a tangent to the circles of significance and the center of the signifier" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980, p. 117). Whenever there is stratification of bodies or concepts, line of flight is like an exit, or a possible breakthrough that leads to transformation and becoming. Flight is translated from the French word 'fuite' which means escaping or fleeing. This, however, is not the actual meaning of the concept, for Eugene B. Young (2013) demonstrates that such line is a "continually liberating desire in reality from its guidance by or fixation upon external forces (whether political, familial, biological, cultural, etc) that represent (or territorialize) it" (p. 183). Tamsin Lorraine(2005)defines line of flight "a path of mutation precipitated through the actualization of connections among bodies that were previously only implicit (or 'virtual') that releases new powers in the capacities of those bodies to act and respond" (p. 147). Line of flight is not simply a virtual line to escape but substantially attempts to respond to hegemonic power or any possible classification that the state imposes on individuals or groups.

Deleuze and Guattari (1980) also associates line of flight with rhizome, stating that the later "is made only of lines: [...] the line of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension after which multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature" (p. 21). They (1980) metaphorizes such discourse in the paranoid Pharaoh vis-à-vis the Jewish people who took upon themselves to create their own line of flight: "the Jewish people, a group of signs detaches from the Egyptian imperial network of which it was a part and sets off down a line of flight into the desert" (p. 122). By and large, line of flight creates a metamorphosis where an idea or an individual goes under the process of becoming: in this case the becoming-nomad.

The second characteristic that defines the Deleuzguattarian nomad is proclivity for smooth or un-striated spaces. *A Thousand Plateaus*(1980), Deleuze and Guattari's finest philosophical work, a title that is "rich in spatial implications: Plateaus are components of stratigraphy of the world and its millennial age in which time as duration cannot be accorded a chronology that humans can comprehend" (Coneley, 2012, p. 92). In this work, Deleuze and Guattari conscientiously juxtapose striated/sedentary spaces with nomadic or smooth counterparts that are inclusive of new possibilities. The striated space is, according to Deleuze and Guattari (1980), "both limited and limiting" (p. 46) as it is a space of codes that are institutionally foisted on individuals. What is freeing and liberating is the nomadic smooth space that is outside the state whereof it is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, a territory that has not been taken over by the state, whether it is a steppe, a sea, or a desert. ArunSaldanha (2017) defines the Deleuzguattarian smooth space as "those unsuitable for agriculture: tropical rainforests, the steppe, the arctic, swamps, archipelagos, highlands, but especially the desert, which is Deleuze's favorite" (p. 55). Thus, the smooth space is what nomads underline as a form of line of flight and an aspect of resistance or war machine.

These nomads, according to Deleuze and Guattari, tend to move from one place to another depending on their needs without following any structural line or preplanned intentions. By extension, Deleuze and Guattari (1980) differentiate between migration, itinerary and transhumance:

[T]he nomad is not primarily defined as an itinerant or as a transhumant, nor as a migrant, even though nomads become these consequentially. The primary determination of nomads is to occupy and hold a smooth space: it is this aspect that determines them as nomad (essence). On their own account, they will be transhumants, or itinerants, only by virtue of the imperatives imposed by the smooth spaces. In short, whatever the de facto mixes between nomadism, itinerancy, and transhumance, the primary concept is different in the three cases (smooth space, matter-flow, rotation). (p. 410)

The nomad does not move from one place to another in order to settle down, he, rather, occupies a smooth space essentially and only moves when necessity requires. In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari (1980) maintain that:

The nomad is not all the same as the migrant; for the migrant goes principally from point to another, even if the second point is uncertain, unforeseen, or not well localized. But the nomad goes from one point to another only as a consequence and as a factual necessity; in principle, points for him are relays along a trajectory. (p. 380)

As an example of migration and nomadism, Deleuze and Guattari (1980) argue that “those who joined Mohammed at Medina had a choice between a nomadic or Bedouin pledge, and a pledge of hegira or emigration” (ibid). Hence, the nomad is not necessarily required to move from one place to another but mobility is still a choice for him.

Besides occupying the smooth space, the Deleuzeguattarian nomad is likely to be associated with speed over movement. In this respect, Deleuze and Guattari (1980) differentiate between speed and movement, elucidating that while:

Movement designates the relative character of a body considered as “one,” and which goes from point to point; speed, on the contrary; constitutes the absolute character of a body whose irreducible parts (atoms) occupy or fill a smooth space in the manner of a vortex, with the possibility of springing up at any point. (p. 381)

In other words, movement is mainly predictable and structural, moving from one particular point to another, whereas speed is mostly unorganized where the subject springs to a certain point or points in an unplanned pattern. The nomads, they add (1980), have the flow of speed, and that helps them to carry the spirit of war machine through the idea of unpredictability (ibid).

For Deleuze and Guattari, being a nomad does not mean the constant mobility or travelling to which Rosi Braidotti (2011) argues:

[N]ot all nomads are world travelers; some of the greatest trips can take place without physically moving from one’s habitat. It is the subversion of set of conventions that defined the nomadic state, not the literal act of travelling (p. 5).

Although she maintains Deleuze and Guattari’s opposition against the anthropological association of travelling with nomadism, still speed is crucial for nomads to spring up to any point according to their desires. It is also a way of challenging the state apparatuses, Deleuzeguattarian war machine whereof it upholds mobility as a form of threat against the state that tries to striate spaces in order to assert control over the geography and space (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980, p. 386-87). Equally, Peter Adey (2009) connects resistance and mobility to nomadism, pointing out that:

[T]he supposition that nomadism equals resistance springs up in more places than Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of artisans. The power of the nomad's mobility is often remarked upon as an important strategy in the evasion of power. (p. 85)

In this sense, mobile nomadology is a form of geo-political resistance, a discourse of war machine that is meticulously related to the critical figure of a nomad.

Jack Kerouac, the Modern Nomad

Mobility has been widely practiced in America either for self-realization, personal entertainment, or out of necessity, notably Henry Miller (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980, p. 482), Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau spread this tradition through their writings and personal pastime. Thoreau's essay "Walking" (1862) in which he argues that "every walk is a sort of crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit, to go forth and conquer this Holy Land from the hands of the Infidels" (p. 4). This topic, however, had a quite new tone to it during the Great Depression where countless families traveled to the west to obtain jobs and this is minutely accounted in John Steinbeck's epic novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939): The Joads making it to the west and discovering that the American Dream is a delusion. In the postwar era, mobility shifted to another context with the Beats, especially with Kerouac, that "traveled abroad in search of antidotes to their disillusionment with U.S. culture and politics of their time" (Adams, 2009, p.157). This discourse is discussed assiduously in Kerouac's literary work *Lonesome Traveler* in which he collects his "published and unpublished pieces connected together because they have a common theme: Traveling" ("Author's Introduction", 1960, p. 4).

Lonesome Traveler is a collective traveling essays narrated by Kerouac himself as he "had lived all his books as well as written them" ("Introduction to the Penguin Edition", 1958, p. 2). By way of disrupting codes, Kerouac deterritorializes the striated American spaces, a discourse of war machine whereby he voices his disappointments concerning postwar America:

Ah America, so big, so sad, so black, you're like the leafs of a dry summer that go crinkly ere august found its end, you're hopeless, everyone you look on you, there's nothing but the dry dear helplessness, the knowledge of impending death, the suffering of present life, lights of Christmas wont [sic] save your or anybody, any more you could put Christmas lights on a dead bush in August, at night and make it look like something, what is this Christmas your profess, in this void? . . . in this nebulous cloud? (1960, p. 18)

Institutionalized America is a decaying country, to Kerouac, as it engages in wars and promulgates political or social codes that strip people from the pure spirit of Christmas; Kerouac undoubtedly critiques American capitalism that commercializes every aspect of life. His pessimist tone is prevalent when depicting New York as well: "Negro whores, ladies limping in a Benzedrine psychosis.—Across the street you can see the ruins of New York already started" (1960, p. 94). Here, although Kerouac is sketching the literal ruins of buildings, he clearly denotes the decline of New York in a world of consumer and capitalist despair through the emergence of miserable beings down its alleyways.

Rattling the sedentary spaces, according to Tim Cresswell (1996), singlehandedly falls within "Resistance, deconstruction, criticism—all of these are reactions, hostages to wider events and topographies of power" (p. 166). In "The Vanishing American Hobo"—a most emphatic essay that establishes the writer's diversion from stereotypical dogmas concerning the marginalized in the postwar America—Kerouac attributes the banishment of the hobo from the striated spaces to the American society whereof indicating that:

The American hobo has a hard time hoboing nowadays due to the increase in police surveillance of highways, railroads, sea shores, riverbottoms, embankments and the thousand-and-one hiding holes of industrial night (1960, p. 143).

Not only does Kerouac bespeak the excessive surveillance of striated spaces but also the striation of smooth, nomadic or open spaces such as 'seashores' and 'riverbottoms'. Verena Andermatt Conley (2012) evinces that "contemporary world finds its subjects imprisoned in spaces that are at once stratified and striated, everywhere riddled and cut through by locative coordinates that plot the ways that the world can be thought of" (p. 96). The hobo is perpetually threatened to be incarcerated by "Great sinister tax-paid police cars" while he experiences an innocent "idealistic lope to freedom" (Kerouac, 1960, p. 143). Kerouac admits of being a hobo (*ibid*) and this is interconnected to Deleuze-Guattarian rhizome that implies multiplicity, heterogeneity and connection thereby granting Kerouac to establish racial and cultural network during his travels when associating with the marginalized. "The rhizome itself assumes very diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concretion into bulbs and tubers." (Deleuz and Guattari, 1980, p. 7), asserting social and cultural multiplicities.

Importantly, Kerouac's appraisal of America is taken to a level of comparison with hobo life, attempting to forge a correlative study of smooth space regarding each community:

In America camping is considered a healthy sport for Boy Scouts but a crime for mature men who have made it their vocation—Poverty is considered a virtue among the monks of civilized nations—in America you spend a night in the calaboose if you're [sic] caught short without your vagrancy change (1960, p. 144).

The hobo is a threat to the state because of his eccentricity and poverty; even Thoreauvian, Emersonian and Whitmanesque tradition of walking became estranged in the capitalist America. This escalates to "mothers hold[ing] tight their children when the hobo passes through town because of what newspapers made the hobo to be—the rapist, the strangler, child-eater.—Stay away from strangers, they'll give you poison candy" (Kerouac, 1960, p. 145). The issue, Kerouac adds, is not the difference in hobos but children are different (*ibid*) indicating generational divide whereof these children are raised under the capitalist culture. The hobo is "Virgil" because "he leadeth" (*ibid*) to which the narrator exemplifies several famous figures that were hobos such as Walt Whitman (*ibid*), Beethoven, Albert Einstein, Bernard Baruch, and Sergei Esenin as well (1960, p. 146).

Deleuze and Guattari (1980) argue that smooth and striated spaces are continually in concoction: "the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space" (p. 474). There is a possibility of smoothing the striated space and "live smooth even in the cities, to be an urban nomad" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980, p. 482). This is tantamount to Kerouac's roaming around the sedentary milieu: "I roamed the streets, the bridges, Times Square, cafeterias, the waterfront, I looked up all my poet beatnik friends and roamed with them" (1960, p. 88). Here, he is the modern nomad, smoothing the striated spaces with his beatnik friends, adding that they "sorta [sic] wander around like children" (1960, p. 90) and exhibiting the nomadic spirit of the Beats by Thoreauvian walks. Additionally, despite media's distorted image of the hobo, the latter, as the epitome of becoming-nomad, deterritorializes the striated spaces through his appearance around cities which disrupts the coded systems of the state. For Kerouac, however, "the hobo is born of pride, having nothing to do with community but with himself and other hobos and maybe a dog" (*ibid*). The hobo is out-of-place figure who faces capitalism and the control of the state in both striated and

smooth spaces. By being an ostracized figure, he is gradually disappearing from a consumer society. According to Kerouac,

The hobos of America who can still travel in a healthy way are still in good shape, they can go hide in cemeteries and drink wine under cemetery groves of trees and sleep on the cardboards and smash bottles on the tombstones and not care and not be scared of the dead but serious and humorous in the cop-avoiding night and even amused and leave litters of their picnic between the grizzled slabs of Imagined Death (1960, p. 151).

These hobos live a nomadic life in cemetery, a striated space, and thus disrupting the sedentary codes through their unconventional habits of livelihood.

The striation of smooth spaces emerges through confining movements, surveillance, and the police forces. “The American hobo”, Kerouac maintains, “is on the way out as long as sheriffs operate with as Louis-Ferdinand Céline said, ‘One line of crime and nine of boredom’” (1960, p. 150). Quoting Céline (who was a great traveler and adventurer himself), Kerouac exhibits the police’s harsh treatment of the hobos and the marginalized during a critical period of American history (civil rights movement) and somewhat predicting the bleak future of America (21st century with Black Lives Matter movement). Kerouac believes that “Today the hobo’s made to slink”, adding sarcastically “everybody’s watching the cop heroes on TV” (1960, p. 145). He knows the danger of the media that creates these prototypes and this parallels Edward Said’s approach in *Covering Islam* (1981) in which the latter unveils the danger of the western media in misrepresenting Islam. Moreover, Kerouac gives a personal account of his previous hobo life:

I myself was a hobo but I had to give it up around 1956 because of increasing television stories about abominableness of strangers with packs passing through by themselves independently—I was surrounded by three squad cars in Tucson Arizona at 2 A.M. (1960, p. 150)

Kerouac is naturally interviewed by the police, doubting his narrative of being a lonely traveler in a desert (a smooth space) (1960, p. 150-51). Deleuzeguattarian discourse, the striation of smooth spaces, is illustrated in Kerouac’s travels to the desert and he is subsequently hindered by the police:

There’s something strange going on, you cant [sic] even be alone anymore in the primitive wilderness (‘primitive’ so-called), there’s always a helicopter comes and snoops around, you need camouflage—Then they begin to demand that you observe strange aircraft for Civil Defense as though you knew the difference between regular strange aircraft and any kind of strange aircraft. (1960, p. 151)

The narrator discloses the state’s gradual control and stratification of smooth spaces (or what he dubbed ‘primitive wilderness’) through the police and helicopters. In fact, “dominant ideology in the United States places great emphasis on possession, including the possession of place” (Cresswell, 1993, p. 258). Here, Kerouac manifestly frowns upon technology which is an emblem for capitalism and consumerism. The nomadic spirit is destroyed through systematically stratifying the open or smooth spaces.

Kerouac, by extension, is the writer nomad who unravels the fictive narratives of media and the confining codes that are imposed on lonesome travelers and hobos. The struggle is between the striated and smooth spaces that keep intermingling in the postwar America through stratification of smooth spaces by deterritorializing and reterritorializing them. Kerouac melancholically adds:

As far as I’m concerned the only thing to do is sit in a room and get drunk and give up your hoboing and your camping ambitions because there aint [sic] a sheriff or fire warden in any of the new fifty states who will let you cook a little meal over some burning sticks in the tule brake or the hidden valley or anyplace any more because he has nothing to do but pick on what

he sees out there on the landscape moving independently of the gasoline power Army police station.—I have no ax to grind: I'm simply going to another world. (1960, p. 151)

“Another world” here is what Deleuze and Guattari (1977) call “a new Earth” (p. 36) where being out-of-place is seen as a remedy rather than a calamity: a Saidian vision that welcomes this sense of exile as an ontological renewal (Said, 1993, p. 121). Kerouac effectively concludes the essay on a bleak tone:

In evil roads behind gas tanks where murderous dogs snarl from behind wire fences cruisers suddenly leap out like getaway cars but from a crime more secret, more baneful than words can tell.

The woods are full of wardens. (1960, p. 152)

In this despondent impression of striated America, the image of confined dogs is what the state aims to attain through coding the open and inhabited spaces. The unspeakable crime is an implicit reference to the media's distorted portrayal of the misconceived and innocent hobo. The state, by stratifying the smooth spaces, is openly ostracizing the becoming-nomads and the travelers who, like Kerouac himself, find solace in open and nomadic spaces. This, however, creates another Deleuzeguattarian discourse in Kerouac's writing through the line of flight and going beyond stratification of the space.

Mobility and Exile

Kerouac effectively creates line of flight to resist the stratification of the space he occupies through moving to smooth spaces and experiencing a Thoreauvian or Emersonian adventure. In “Alone on a Mountaintop”, Kerouac undergoes a line of flight moment by going to a mountain (Desolation Peak) as a fire lookout. He reasons his choice of the place: “After all this kind of fanfare, even more, I came to a point where needed solitude and just stop the machine of ‘thinking’ and ‘enjoying’ what they call ‘living,’ I just wanted to lie in the grass and look at the clouds” (1960, p. 100). The smooth space, Desolation Peak, gives Kerouac freedom and sense of being in-place, a feeling that the state immune when remaining in striated spaces. Kerouac is “sick and tired of all the ships and railroads and Times Squares of all time” (ibid) and this allows him to appreciate what Deleuze and Guattari (1980) dub as an “open space, one that is indefinite and noncommunicating” (p. 380), as exemplified in Desolation Peak.

Kerouac, a becoming-nomad, forges a new space that is un-striated, for “the consumption of place becomes the production of place” (Cresswell, 1996, p. 165). Expressing Emersonian self-reliance, Kerouac suggests that “[n]o man should go through life without once experiencing healthy, even bored solitude in the wilderness, finding himself depending solely on himself and thereby learning his true and hidden strength” (1960, p. 108). This change of space within capitalist America is rather a way to suggest a new possibility for a Deleuzeguattarian becoming. Kerouac searches for the self in an open space where he grasps a sense of belonging after being constantly ostracized, for “the notion of ‘in place’ is logically related to the possibility of being ‘out of place’” (Cresswell, 1996, p. 164). One of the ways to feel ‘in place’ is meditation: “as I meditated in the alpine grass facing the magic moon-laned lake.—And I could see firs reflected in the moonlit lake five thousand feet below, upside down, pointing to infinity” (Kerouac, 1960, p.109). Kerouac restores the ancestors' romanticism in order to transcend in an open and un-striated space, and this allows him to sustain a Deleuzeguattarian metamorphosis to nomadism.

Although the smooth space is favorable to Deleuzeguattarian nomad, he, nonetheless, can go through this metamorphosis in any particular space seeing that the striated and the smooth spaces are intermingled. In this respect, Deleuze and Guattari (1980) assert:

Voyaging smoothly is a becoming, and a difficult, uncertain becoming at that. It is not a question of returning to preastronomical navigation, nor to the ancient nomads. The confrontation between the smooth and striated, the passages, alternations and supersuppositions, are underway today, running in the most varied directions. (p. 482)

One does not have to experience nomadic metamorphosis in only smooth spaces since it is often intertwined with the striated milieus and there is equally no need to use primitive apparatuses as well. Kerouac, upon fathoming such matter, ascertains:

I realize that no matter where I am, whether in a little room full of thought, or in this endless universe of stars and mountains, it's all in my mind. There's no need for solitude. So love life for what it is, and form no preconceptions whatever in your mind. (1960, p. 111)

He can be a nomad in any space as long as he holds nomadic thinking that is not tarnished by predispositions. The narrator, hence, does not reform society after accomplishing the transcendental experience. He, in fact, accepts society as it is: "I realized I didnt [sic] have to hide myself in desolation but could accept society for better or worse" (ibid). By and large, the difference between Deleuzeguattarian nomadism and transcendentalism is that the former deterritorializes and creates line of flights as new possibilities that might be resistance or otherwise while transcendentalism attempts to deterritorialize and reterritorialize the striated spaces through reformation. Unlike what Pinette argues, Kerouac deterritorializes striated spaces, creates a line of flight, and does not attempt to reform society (in from of reterritorialization). He simply achieves transcendental bliss or what the Buddhist call "the Nirvana Bliss" (ibid) whereby he "turn[s] and bless[es] Desolation Peak and little pagoda on top and thank[s] them for the shelter and the lesson [he]'d been taught" (1960, p. 112).

To deracinate himself, Kerouac travels beyond U.S borders and undergoes rhizomatic connections. He, like Deleuzeguattarian nomad, is unable to stay in one place: "goin [sic] is the real life, now that's where I am headed or hitchhike to New York, either way, I wouldnt [sic] want to be a railroad man" (1960, p. 69). He is also, using Blair's concept, an errant body constantly moving around. For Blair,

[B]eing an errant body is a praxis of cultural subversion—a rebellion in action—a mode of being which challenges codified conventions of behavior. Being an errant body is political ontology of being out-of-place. [...] Errant bodies have become, in their own way, mobile subjects in order to transgress some imposition of dominant culture. (2019, p. 4)

Kerouac does not only deterritorialize the striated spaces, but also blurs lines and borders of nations. In fact, "Kerouac's creative geographies often have less to do with the pure freedom of the mythic open road and more to do with Deleuzian lines of flight and escape" (Fazzino, 2016, p. 44). With the emergence of line of flight, Kerouac opens new horizons to bridge between races. Kerouac's nomadic thinking is quite ahead of its time for it patently appears "to be absolutely central to the work that worlding must undertake: creating nothing less than a 'new earth'—not one of territories, fixities, homogeneous spaces, and immutable borders but rather a worlded world utterly deterritorialized, open and unpredictable" (Fazzino, 2016, p. 45).

Kerouac's palpable sense of exile emerges from his French-Canadian identity living in America. His writings pivots on his search for home; the latter, however, "turns out to be just as much permeated by exile—linguistic, geographic, and cultural—as his road novels" (Melehy, 2016, p. 120). Travelling through the sea, a smooth space, permits Kerouac to embrace cultural multiplicities which metamorphoses his sense of exile to a privilege. James Campbell (1999) emphasizes that "It was the sea, not the road, that first inspired [Kerouac] to shape his travelling into a story" (p. 4). In the

beginning of *Lonesome Traveler*, Kerouac is promised by his friend, Deni Blue, of a trip around the world (1960, p. 6). Kerouac depicts the dreary and vastness of the sea:

Out on that dark ocean, that wild dark sea, where the worm invisibly rides to come, like a hag flying and laid out as if casually on sad sofa but her hair flying and she's on her way to find the crimson joy of lovers and eat it up, Death by name, the doom and death ship the SS *Roamer*, painted black with orange booms, was coming like a ghost and without a sound except for its vastly shuddering engine (1960, p. 5).

The delineation of the sea and the roamer resembles a Melvillean sea sketch. The narrator undergoes a limitless horizon and nomadic metamorphosis by mobility which is “used as a rebellion against authority and cultural norms” (Cresswell, 1993, p. 249).

Moreover, what is quite appealing is the crew of the freighter on which Kerouac travels:

Mohammeden Chiccos, hideous little Slavs of the sea peering out from witless messcoats—Negroes with cook hats to crown the shiny tortured forehead black—by garbage cans of eternity the latin fellaheen repose and drowse of lullish noon. (1960, p. 72)

Kerouac showcases people of different background coming together in a nomadic space (the sea). The freighter can be regarded as Foucault's heterotopia that “represent[s], contest[s], and invert[s]” “real sites that can be found within” a given culture (1986, p. 24). In fact, heterotopia is a “mirror [that] exist[s] in reality where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that [one] occup[ies]” (ibid). Foucault argues that heterotopia enables one to have “a sort of mixed, joint experience” (ibid) and that “the ship is the heterotopia *par excellence*” (1986, p. 27). Heterotopia as exemplified in a freighter, in Kerouac's work, is a place that welcomes different marginalized races: the Muslim, the black, and the bum, demonstrating a space in which free and rhizomatic experiences are established. By welcoming geographical and cultural multiplicities, Kerouac creates a hybrid identity that refuses a return to the fathers. In this context, Melehy (2012) contends:

What Kerouac already knows from his understanding of the mixed nature of cultures, however, is that it is often important to relinquish the roots, the fathers, the ancestors, the integrity of the home culture, since such relinquishment is precisely what occasions the vitality of wandering. (p. 39)

Moreover in terms of Deleuzeguattarian rhizome, Fazzino (2016) states that “Kerouac's work [...] moves along the circuits of this ever-expanding network, or rhizome, as it extends to Mexico City, to Paris, to Tangier and beyond” (p. 42). Through line of flight and mobility, Kerouac, being marginalized and a bum himself, establishes expansive rhizomatic connections with other races and marginalized groups such as the bums, hobos (1960, p. 56-7) and blacks (1960, p. 83). Abandoning his ancestral identity, he connects with Indians and thereby they call him “Kerouaayy the Indian” (1960, p. 60). Moreover, Prez, the freighter's black cook, is fired and Kerouac is convinced that such act “was an anti-Negro management—the captain was worse than anyone else” (1960, p. 87). Kerouac even gets involved in a romantic relationship with a Mexican prostitute (an account of the affair in *Tristessa* 1960) and with a Black woman (*The Subterraneans*). By and large, “this deep sense of shared identities and values across languages and cultures lies at the heart of Kerouac's subterranean world-vision” (Fazzino, 2016, p. 54).

Through travel, Kerouac actualizes the sense of self in regard to other cultures. While the striated space disrupts his goal for rhizomatic and cultural chain, he finds solace and remedy in the smooth spaces. Blair (2019) contends that:

Through his time on the road, Kerouac attempted to redefine mobility as a way of being that was an alternative to the limited and sedentary models of existence being promulgated by

dominant cultural forces. Mobility did provide resistance, but it also physically and symbolically represented the road less traveled—another, more fulfilling path, of self-actualization. (p. 57)

By consociating with other culture, Kerouac subverts the centralization of capitalism and asserts a world of multiplicity. This exemplified when he travels to Mexico and connects on spiritual and cultural levels with the fellaheen. The concept ‘fellaheen’ is taken from Oswald Spengler’s *Decline of the West* (1918) which was a huge influence on Kerouac (through Burroughs). When crossing the U.S borders, heading to Mexico, Kerouac feels like he “sneaked out of school” as the American police confine one’s liberty (1960, p. 21). He provides a full depiction of the land and fellaheen:

It’s a great feeling of entering the Pure Land, [...] you can find it, this feeling, this fellaheen feeling, that timeless gaiety of people not involved in great cultural and civilization issues—you can find it almost anywhere else, in Morocco, in Latin America entire, in Dakar, in Kurd land.—(1960, p. 21-22)

The fellaheen live beyond history or the dominant cultural forces and this equivalent to Deleuze and Guattari’s argument (1980) that “[h]istory is always written from the sedentary point of view and in the name of a unitary State apparatus, at least a possible one, even when the topic is nomads. What is lacking is a Nomadology, the opposite of history” (p. 3). Notably, while the state advocates cultural monopoly whereby the global history is concerned, nomadology encourages multiple narratives (cultural multiplicity) and living beyond historicity/temporality. Being from marginalized party (Québécois) (Melehy, 2012, p. 43), Kerouac relates culturally and spiritually with these fellaheen who live in smooth spaces and exist “in an alternative temporality” (Adams, 2009, p. 161). While Spengler’s vision of fellaheen as people who provide nothing to history and civilization, as they are ahistorical, (p. 169, p. 170, p. 175, p. 184, p.186), “Kerouac alters Spengler’s meaning, seeing in the fellaheen [...] a power to exceed the limitations of organized civilization and offer vital contributions to it” (Melehy, 2012, p. 43).

By connecting with the marginalized people, Kerouac asserts his positive view of exile and nomadism. Being ahistorical and subverting static codes, he travels through the smooth space in order to unveil the depths of the self, the further he travels in the Mexican desert, the better it is to achieve a thorough existential journey. He effectively succeeds in doing so when he uncovers the stereotypes the world is fed by the media about the Mexican fellaheen:

There is no ‘violence’ in Mexico, that was all a lot of bull written up by Hollywood writers or writers who went to Mexico to ‘be violent’ [...] Mexico is generally gentle and fine, even when you travel among the dangerous characters as I did—‘dangerous’ in the sense we mean in America—in fact the further you go away from the border, and deeper down, the finer it is, as though the influence of civilization hung over the border like a cloud. (1960, p. 22)

By dissecting the word dangerous and violent, Kerouac admits the use of these words differently whereof the American use is explicitly exaggerating in order to promulgate the pure and heroic image of capitalism and this leads to the fellaheen’s marginalization and covering the truth. Kerouac’s journey is not only physical but spiritual and transcendental in order to achieve the necessary transformation and to form a clearer vision of ‘his America’. By accepting his exilic impasse, he welcomes this sense of estrangement through creating bridges with other estranged cultures. Although his friend Burroughs advises him to refrain from befriending the Mexicans (p. 28), Kerouac keeps constructing cultural bridges with the ‘other’. Atemporality and spatiality help Kerouac to achieve a perfect nomadic metamorphosis in the fellaheen space:

The drowsy hum of Fellaheen Village at noon—not far away was the sea, warm, the tropical Pacific of Cancer—Spine-ribbed mountains all the way from Calxico and Shasta and Modoc and Columbia River Pasco-viewing sat rumped behind the plain upon which this coast is laid. (1960, p. 22)

The depiction of the smooth space provides Kerouac with ahistoricity and open/nomadic freedom that the striated spaces lack. Hence, Kerouac “sought out the Fellaheenas part of the quest for pure self-knowledge” (Adams, 2009, p. 162). This ontological journey of self-discovery necessitates exile, smooth space, and ahistoricity in order to achieve the full nomadic renewal.

Kerouac’s stance towards America is controversial seeing he perpetually critiques its institutional and political foundations. He, however, has a nomadic vision of status quo, constantly dreaming to go back to it:

HERE DOWN ON DARK EARTH [sic]
before we all go to Heaven
VISIONS OF AMERICA
All that hitchhiking [sic]
All that railroadin [sic]
All that comin [sic] back
to America
Via Mexican and Canadian borders (1960, p. 5)

His perception of America is a land of freedom and multiplicity, a land without capitalist confinement and striation of spaces:

It’s all in California, it’s all a sea, I swim out of it in the afternoon of sun hot meditation in my jeans with head on handkerchief on brakeman’s lantern or (if not working) on books, I look up at blue sky of perfect lost purity and feel the warp of wood of old America beneath me and have insane conversations with Negroes in several-story windows above and everything is pouring in, the switching moves of boxcars in that little alleys of Lowell and I hear far off in the sense of coming night that engine calling our mountains. (1960, p. 34)

Comparing California to the smooth space, Kerouac brings forth the nomadic feeling he pines in the striated spaces. He then yearns for an ‘old America’ (prior capitalism and history) that is not corrupted by capitalism and world history. In other words, he envisions America as the pure land of fellaheen, a free and nomadic land that condones racial and cultural multiplicities. By accepting exile and connecting with the ‘other’, Kerouac asserts this rhizomatic connection in his view of the States. Kerouac may crave to go back to America whenever he travels but it is unequal to what he envisions: he mainly demands a ‘new earth’ of America, the old version of smooth space where he can reach full nomadic metamorphosis. As long as it is not the nomadic America, he remains dissatisfied with capitalist country thereby remaining to be out-of-place and a nomad, for “history has never comprehended nomadism, the book has never comprehended the outside” (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, p. 4).

Conclusion

To sum up, Kerouac insinuates temporal and spatial visions that he thinks are best adequate while traveling within U.S. borders and beyond geographical lines to Mexico. There is struggle between his vision of America and the modern counterpart which subsequently thwarts him from accepting the capitalist state. He, however, accept society as it is which goes against the

transcendentalist reformation of the latter. In other words, Kerouac is not reliving the ancestors' transcendental experience but making it modern and adequate to the postwar America. He effectively deterritorializes the codes of the state through mobility and disrupting the striated spaces while he further demonstrates the failure of transcendental reterritorialization. Even when going back to America, Kerouac brings forth his 'new earth' that calls for a different temporal and spatial dimension: Kerouac's version of America. One witnesses the narrator's transformation from a confused individual to Deleuzeguattarian nomad who welcomes exile as a form of war machine that asserts the dynamics of rhizomatic connections. In *Lonesome Traveler*, one can identify an intermingling of smooth and striated spaces where Kerouac smoothes the striated spaces (transcendental remembrance) and takes advantage of smooth counterparts that are ahistorical and welcomingly 'primitive' to him. His readiness for a corporeal 'errancy' permits Kerouac to have artistic and ontological openness with other races and subsequently takes advantage of the chance to break down media's stereotypes in a Saidian approach. By extension, his in-betweenness becomes a blessing rather than an aggravation when he lives rhizomatically. All in all, he can be an errant body and a nomadic metamorphosis of war machine that resist codes of the state through nomadic lifestyle and mobility. To answer Pinette's essay and to clear out Deleuze's limited scrutiny of Kerouac's writing, the latter is the Deleuzeguattarian modern nomad *par excellence* for he leaves and disrupts dogmas.

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