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Review Paper

Nomadology in Cormac McCarthy's *The Crossing* and *The Road*: A Deleuzian Geocritical Study

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Abstract

In the present essay, the researchers aim to study two famous novels, "*The Crossing*" and "*The Road*," in the light of Deleuzian geocritical concepts such as nomad, rhizome, smooth space, and war machine. Studying space and place in American literature is a new trend. Space and landscape, considered smooth space and striated space in Deleuze and Guattari's nomadology, are significantly highlighted in American literature. By drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's view of a rhizome, which does not follow any plans or structures, the novel can be regarded as a rhizomatic structure in which the characters with nomadic existence move freely in a smooth space- a space without an explicit beginning and a clear destination. Portraying American space and landscape is a dominant theme in Cormac McCarthy's novels, including "*The Crossing*" and "*The Road*," in which the characters move from a rooted life to a nomadic life. Through examining these two novels, this paper is going to investigate the movement of nomadic characters in the smooth space of the postmodern world. Moreover, through exploring the relationship between literature, space, and identity, drawing on the philosophical ideas of Deleuze and Guattari, this paper is going to expose to what extent the representation of spaces in literature can reflect and shape cultural and national identities.

Keywords: Deleuze Geocriticism, Nomadology, *The Crossing*, *The Road*

کوچ نشینی در کتاب گذرگاه و جاده کورمک مک کارتی: بررسی انتقادی-جغرافیایی دلوزی

در این مقاله، پژوهشگران به بررسی دو رمان معروف "گذرگاه" و "جاده" نوشته کورمک مک کارتی از منظر مفاهیم جغرافیایی دلوز و گاتاری مانند: کوچ نشین، ریزوم، فضای صاف، و ماشین جنگی می پردازند. بررسی فضا و مکان در ادبیات آمریکایی یک روند نوین است. فضا و مکان، که به عنوان فضای صاف و فضای خطدار در نومادولوژی دلوز و گاتاری تلقی می شوند، در ادبیات آمریکایی به شکل قابل توجهی مورد تأکید قرار گرفته اند. با استناد به دیدگاه دلوز و گاتاری درباره ریزوم، که هیچ برنامه یا ساختاری را دنبال نمی کند، فضای رمان می تواند به عنوان یک ساختار ریزوماتیک در نظر گرفته شود که در آن شخصیت ها با وجود نومادیک خود به صورت آزادانه در فضای صاف - فضایی بدون آغاز مشخص و مقصد روشن - حرکت می کنند. نمایش فضا و مکان آمریکایی یک موضوع غالب در رمان های کورمک مک کارتی است، از جمله "گذرگاه" و "جاده"، که در آن شخصیت ها از زندگی ریشدار به زندگی کوچ نشین یا بی در کجایی حرکت می کنند. این مقاله قصد دارد تا از طریق بررسی این دو رمان حرکت شخصیت های نومادیک در فضای صاف جهان پسامدرن را مورد بررسی قرار دهد. علاوه بر این، این مقاله قصد دارد تا از طریق کاوش در رابطه بین ادبیات، فضا، و هویت، با استفاده از اندیشه های فلسفی دلوز و گاتاری تا حدی که نمایش فضا در ادبیات می تواند هویت های فرهنگی و ملی را منعکس و شکل دهد را آشکار سازد.

کلیدواژه ها: کورمک مک کارتی، گذرگاه، جاده، نقد جغرافیایی دلوز، کوچ نشین

Introduction

Feeling displaced, bewildered, and lost in this fragmented postmodern world, an individual looks for a means that gives him a sense of place. Maps, as agreed by critics, are the most considerable figure. It "offers a fictional figurative representation of space in which we find ourselves"(Tally, 2013, p.2). Literature, in this context, is regarded as a map. "Literary cartography, literary geography, and Geocriticism enable productive ways of thinking about the issues of space, place, and mapping after the spatial turn in literary and cultural studies"(p.3).

Deleuze and Guattari's contribution to cartography in literature is undoubtedly remarkable. They call attention to the importance of space and landscape on an individual's identity. They are known for concepts such as line of flight, rhizome, nomad, and war machine.

Investigating space and landscape in McCarthy's novels has been significantly concentrated recently. His novels are prominently concerned with American identity and landscape, particularly that of the Southwest. Geocritically, the significant influence of space and landscape on the characters' identity in his novels is undeniable. Due to space and landscape, the characters' identity in McCarthy's novels is unstable and fragmented.

McCarthy's characters have a nomadic existence in the fragmented world of novels. Portraying the nomadic wanderers in a smooth space is a notable element, which is the crucial concept considered by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus Capitalism (1980)*. Moreover, the problem of space and landscape are the concepts Deleuze and Guattari highlight in their discussion about nomadology. They stress that the distinction between nomad space and state space results from the contrast between smooth space and striated space. Nomad dismantles the concept of boundaries. It crosses and recrosses borders while the state is associated with a stable space. Nomad and state, in Deleuze and Guattari's idea, are totally different. Such conflicts between nomads and states, however, allude to the conflict between groups of nomads and states historically. In McCarthy's novels, nomadic figures are in conflict with the state and its rules and moral values; hence, they are involved in subversion and deconstruction of moral values and concepts. In addition, this conflict and deconstruction are found in the subversion of the Western genre. McCarthy's works "is not a case of historical or mythological or theological or postmodern, but historical and mythological and theological and postmodern"(qt in Andersen, 2018, p. 3), which can be studied through Deleuze and Guattari's notion of rhizome and war machine.

The movement from a rooted life to a nomadic one, as explored through the lens of Deleuze and Guattari's geographical concepts, serves as a metaphor for the fluidity of American identity within the post-apocalyptic world. This shift reflects the creation of American cultural identity which is continually reshaped by historical events and experiences. The post-apocalyptic setting, furthermore deconstructs traditional notion of identity. Thus, the novels serve as a cartographic exploration of identity that define what it means to be American.

Nomadic Experience and Identity Transformation in "The Crossing"

In *The Crossing (1994)*, McCarthy portrays American space through Billy's Journey. Assisting his father, Billy Parham engages in the capture of a wolf responsible for preying on their livestock in New Mexico. When the wolf finally gets stock, Billy chooses not to inform his father and instead starts a journey to take the wolf to its homeland in Mexico. However, it is taken away from him to be used in dog fights, where it is killed. When Billy returns to the U.S., he discovers that his family, except his brother Boyd, has been killed. The brothers return to Mexico to find their parents' stolen horses. Leaving Billy, Boyd, who is killed after a while, becomes a mythic hero. Billy learns about his brother's death through the many different stories narrated across northern Mexico. The novel, then, narrates Billy's aimless wanderings in Mexico and the U.S. to find his place in the world.

One of the remarkable qualities of *The Crossing* is declaring philosophical statements, many of which are told through stories. The blind man, the catholic man, and the gypsy all engage the reader's mind with matters of truth and challenge what is considered as truth through telling long stories. The reason for coming to the ruined town, as mentioned by a catholic man, can be referred to as an example of such a long story:

"I was seeking evidence for the hand of God in the world. I had come to believe that hand a wrathful one, and I thought that men had not inquired sufficiently into miracles of destruction. Into disasters of a certain magnitude. I thought there might be evidence that had been overlooked. I thought he would not trouble himself to wipe away every handprint. My desire to know was very strong. I thought it might even amuse him to leave some clue"(The Crossing, 1994, p.100).

During his third trip to Mexico, Billy realized that his brother had died, and he decided to bring his dead body to his own country. On his way to his homeland, he confronts Quijda, who tells him stories about a real and unreal airplane, which can be echoed as another instance:

" Finally, he said that it was necessary to state that there were two such airplanes, both of them flown by young Americans, both lost in the mountains in the calamitous summer of nineteen fifteen. [...] and there it had languished on in that wild upcountry lost and unclaimed single history. Whether there be two planes or one. Whichever plane was spoken of it was the same" (p.299).

Furthermore, this novel is marked by "a matrix of intersecting stories, [...] with varying relationships to truth"(Luce, 1999, p. 196) that is "the interconnectedness of stories and things in the world"(Andersen, 2018, p.40) which is the essential feature of a rhizome: The first principle of rhizome involves the idea of connection. Every part of the rhizome can connect to the other part. This connectedness can be traced in *The Crossing*. The three stories the gypsy talks about the airplane or the two stories that are told to honor Boyed after his death can best reflect such interconnection. Regarding this, Andersen notes that "these stories in their connectedness come closer to saying something true than one story alone would"(p.40). Now, narrating the stories about Boyed, people know him as a hero who has killed Manco. They believe that despite being wounded, the brother managed to stand up, draw his weapon, and kill the Manco. However, it is denied by Billy, the witness, who knows Manco had suffered a grievous fall from his horse, resulting in a fractured waist. Though these stories were composed long years before his death, people who see Boyed as a young, valiant savior narrate them for him. Accordingly, it is people who compose such stories for Boyd. It is an example of mythologizing people. "The people are constructing a myth by placing Boyd in the role of the mythic hero that he does not completely fit into"(Andersen, 2018, pp.41-42).

Moreover, the rhizomatic study of *The Crossing* highlights the concept of a map developed by Deleuze and Guattari. On his second journey to Mexico, in pursuit of the horses stolen from his father, Billy and his brother meet an old man. Billy asks him for directions; he draws a map on the soil. However, another man, sitting on the bench while listening, questions the drawing map:

"He said that what they beheld was but a decoration. He said that, anyway, it was not so much a question of a correct map but of any map at all. He said that in that country, there were fires, earthquakes and floods and that one needed to know the country itself and not simply the landmarks therein. Besides, he said, when had that old man last journeyed to those mountains? Or journeyed anywhere at all? His map was, after all, not really so much a map as a picture of a voyage. And what voyage was that? And when?"(The Crossing, 1994, p.132)

Such a picture can be regarded as a tracing and not a map. Deleuze and Guattari declare that tracing is reproductive, arborescent, and tree-like, so it is dangerous (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980). In this context, the man rejects all maps, believing they are invalid. The drawing map, as he mentions, is just what the old man has perceived in his journey. It is just a picture of his journey, a

tracing, and not an accurate map. "It is inaccurate to say that a tracing reproduces the map"(Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p. 13). This map is based on state thought and tree logic, and "all of the tree logic is a logic of tracing and reproduction"(p.12). Accordingly, the old man's map, which is based on his last journey and a picture of his experience, is not accurate because it is fixed while the world is constantly subject to change.

McCarthy's *The Crossing* is filled with depicted spaces, both striated space and smooth space: the cities, forests, deserts, homes, etc. In his reading, Andersen explores the complex notion of space, which underlies Billy's journey. He reiterates Bourne (2009) in his book:

"McCarthy straddles this play between space and place by situating his novels in border spaces, where characters continually cross and recross borders, geographically and socially constructed, creating a liminal landscape where the place is constantly transformed back into space, disengaged through the process of movement (qt in Andersen, 2018, p.49).

The differentiation between "space" and "place" reminds the difference between "smooth space" and "striated space" mentioned by Deleuze and Guattari. Striated space is a rooted, linear space where everything is known and named, while smooth space is an open space. The beginning of the story represents striated space: Billy's hometown with its determined name, which classifies it as striated space: "the newly formed county they'd named Hidalgo was itself little older than the child"(The Crossing, 1994, p.1). While it ends with Billy's travel in "the white light of the desert noon"(p.313). Hence, there is a movement from "a rooted life to nomadic life" (Andersen, 2018, p. 40), from place to space. Through depicting Billy's changing way of life from a rooted life to a nomadic one, McCarthy exposes the primary fact that in this world, which is constantly changing, one cannot live a rooted life. Regarding this fact, the novel challenges the previous definition of American identity as fixed and rooted and instead gives a new definition of American identity, which is constantly reshaped by experiences.

Besides this, through deconstructing binary oppositions, the novel employs a rhizomatic structure in which there is no hierarchy. Through breaking the dichotomy between life and death, McCarthy challenges the concept of binary opposition. In his analysis of *The Crossing*, Lindely asks a challenging question: "If all the world functions as one story in which all are included and always will be included, would not it stand to reason that while one may cease to exist, one's story goes on?"(Lindely, 2011, p.2). Accordingly, if there is a story for everyone in this world, no one will die. He further agrees that in literature, and particularly in the works of McCarthy, the story is frequently regarded as the only thing that is immortal. When Boyed dies, and Billy looks for its dead body, he hears his story before finally finding him. Everyone tells one different story, though it was narrated years ago by other heroes

"He asked the corridero who was this joven of which he sang, but he only said that it was a youth who sought justice as the song told and that he had been dead many years. The corridero [...] toasted aloud the memory of all just men in the world, for as it was sung in the corrido theirs was a blood-filled road, and the deeds of their lives were writ in that blood which was the world's heart's blood, and he said that serious men sang their song and their song only"(The Crossing, 1994, p. 278).

The conversation between Quijada and Billy reveals the fact that immortality overcomes Boyd's death because he is alive in the songs and among people:

"Quijada shook his head. The corrido tells all, and it tells nothing. I heard the tale of the guerito years ago. Before your 'brother was even born.

You don't think it tells about him?

Yes, it tells about him. It tells what it wishes to tell. It tells what makes the story run. The corrido is the poor man's history. It does not owe its allegiance to the truths of history but to the truths of men. It tells the tale of that solitary man who is all men"(p.287).

Through storytelling and prompting this assumption that humans are alive in a story, McCarthy deconstructs binary codes between life and death and questions this profound assertion that death is powerful and the end of life. On his way to Mexico, his second journey, Billy meets a catholic man in a ruined church. When Billy asks him, "what did you find?"(p.100), he replies:

"Not a thing. Things separate from their stories have no meaning. They are only shapes. Of a certain size and color. A certain weight. When their meaning has become lost to us, they no longer even have a name. The story, on the other hand, can never be lost from its place in the world, for it is that place. And that is what was to be found here. The corrido. The tale. And like all corridos, it ultimately told one story only, for there is only one to tell."(pp.100-101)

So, in this world, there is just one story that never ends. According to Lindley, "If story connects all humanity into one tale which cannot end, which cannot die, then death becomes impossible"(Lindley, 2011, p.5).

As a nomad protagonist, Billy does not have a specific destination. The novel portrays his nomadic life through his journeys. For him, the word "destination "is meaningless. Lack of destination is a considerable feature of the rhizome. According to Deleuze and Guattari, "A haecceity has neither beginning nor end, origin nor destination; it is always in the middle. It is not made of points, only of lines. It is a rhizome"(Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p.263). The meaninglessness of the destination is revealed in some more parts. In the courtyard in San Diego, for instance, when Billy asks about Monith's family, an old man informs him that they had departed. When Billy asks about their destination, "the old man seemed not to have a clear understanding of the idea of destination. He gestured widely at the world"(The Crossing,1994, p.276). Or the blind man, another nomadic figure in *The Crossing*, asserts that there is no destination in the world. He mentions, "for the blind everything was abruptly at hand, that nothing ever announced its approach. Origins and destinations became but rumors. To move is to abut against the world"(p.215).

As Deleuze and Guattari discuss, an individual's desire and willingness are regarded as the entryways of a map. The only way to stop an individual from having desires is to prevent him from being in connection with the outside world by breaking his rhizome. As they argue, "Once a rhizome has been obstructed, arborized, it's all over, no desire stirs; for it is always by rhizome that desire moves and produces."(Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p.14). Therefore, since it is the rhizome that arouses and reproduces desires, no desire arises anymore when the rhizome is broken, and the individual is obliged to follow a constructed way. Accordingly, in a society, power structures that are thoroughly aware of the individual's cartography attempt to break the rhizome of "other" and keep them away from being connected with other rhizomes and instead root them to the society that has been constructed for them. So, these groups - others- have to follow a planned way, a genetic axis. They are permitted to live and speak just when all entryways are obstructed, the rhizome is broken, and as a result, no desire is aroused. This is how they fortify the structure of the binary opposition in a society. In *The Crossing*, as in most of McCarthy's works, the element of dream is implied to inform the reader of the characters' unconscious. The dream is a smooth space in which the character moves without any destination. As Deleuze and Guattari note, dreams are externalized by a system that belongs to the war machine. "This element of exteriority- which dominates everything [...] will give time a new rhythm, an endless success of catatonic episodes or fainting spell"(p.356). So, an individual's actions and emotions are desubjectified within a space in which there is no internal wish.



Nomadology and Post-Apocalyptic Space in "The Road"

The Road (2006) narrates the story of a father and his son, both unnamed, as they make their way south in a post-apocalyptic America. They navigate through a world shrouded in shades of black and grey, where only a few people have survived who enslave or cannibalize others. They continue their journey in search of a brighter future.

Through depicting the American landscape, McCarthy exposes to what extent these novel deals with the nature of American space. "Most of the text describes an apocalyptic hellscape in which even the air itself is poisonous, and this resonates with the tradition of writing space as overwhelmingly negative" (Keller Estes, 2013, p.189).

Through the rhizomatic text of *The Road*, McCarthy tries to create situations where the reader observes connection and heterogeneity as one of the principles of rhizomatic thinking introduced by Deleuze and Guattari. This rhizomatic interconnection between different figures can be investigated by studying the relationship between human beings, animals, and nature. The last paragraph of *The Road*, for instance, portrays a picture of a fish with a map on its back, which is regarded as a direction. Keller, in his studies, knows this map as a "suggestion of a new way forward, a better way of interacting with the environment" (p.190)

In *The Road*, McCarthy portrays the movement of nomadic figures in a rhizomatic smooth space in which there is no direction, no beginning, and no end. More than his other novels, *The Road* reflects Deleuze and Guattari's statement that the rhizome lacks "foundations, nullif[ies] endings and beginnings" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p. 25). Other novels involve "ab ovo beginnings" (Andersen, 2018, p.55) and end with the protagonist's death, except *No Country for Old Men*, in which the novel ends with the protagonist's monologue. *The Road*, however, starts in "medias res" (p.55): "When he [father] woke in the woods in the dark and the cold of the night he'd reach out to touch the child sleeping beside him. Nights dark beyond darkness and the days grayer each one than what had gone before" (McCarthy, 2006, p. 2), and it does not have an explicit ending because the end of the novel, in fact, is the start of another situation, in which the boy starts his journey with a new family. Unlike the title, which suggests a road with a definite beginning and a destination, the nomadic figures move on the road, and the father stops traveling only when he dies; however, his son moves on.

Furthermore, this novel narrates a journey, and the journey implies movement. Hence, the characters are wanderers in the open space with an unclear destination. They are the representations of nomadic figures who move in a smooth space, a "vectorial, projective, or topological" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p. 361) space. Father knows the south and the beach as their destination, but when they get there, nothing different is revealed to them. So, when they arrive somewhere, they soon leave it. Deleuze and Guattari, in this regard, consider such questions as useless:

"Where are you going? Where are you coming from? Where are you heading? Those are totally useless questions. Making a clean slate, starting or beginning again from ground zero, seeking a beginning or a foundation – all imply a false conception of voyage and movement" (p.25).

As Andersen points out: "In terms of seeing the road as a metaphor for life, stopping is not an option either, since life or the story of life must continue. Although they have no specific destination, the journey in itself is the purpose of their lives, [...], as they call keeping themselves and their ethical code alive" (Andersen, 2018, p. 57).

The nomadic characters cling tightly to those honorable human characteristics of love, trust, moral values, and culture. McCarthy's characters are left in a world from which they feel withdrawn, so there is nothing unexpected that the primary thing they would unwittingly search for is another feeling of home. In a world that has been taken back to primitivism and brutality,

father and child who confront the violence and savagery should adjust themselves to the new world and make their own little community of two that depends on their own ethics.

Employing a rhizomatic structure in McCarthy's *The Road* is considerable when he aptly questions binary oppositions. He portrays moral binaries by depicting the father who distinguishes between good guys and bad guys in order to help his son, who was born during the catastrophe and has no knowledge of the civilized world, to know how to behave, people, they meet on their way. The man informs his son of his constructed division between good guys and bad guys. As is depicted, after the disaster, many people turn to cannibals in order to survive. Though the father, who establishes moral codes, does not ignore the moral values, "the pragmatism necessary to survive their nomadic scavenger existence repeatedly makes it impossible to uphold the codes of morality that [he has] established"(p.52). The legitimacy of such moral values is questioned by a boy when the father doesn't help to release the enslaved people in the basement who are kept to be eaten by cannibals or when the father refuses to give the old wanderer some food or to take him with them. When he shoots the cannibal to save his son, the boy asks him:

"Are we still the good guys? he said.

Yes. We're still the good guys.

And we always will be.

Yes. We always will be.

Okay" (McCarthy, 2006, p. 44).

So, this is the situation that determines pragmatism: "My job is to take care of you. I was appointed to do that by God. I will kill anyone who touches you" (p.44). Referring to the father's justification, Andersen writes, "He is at once employing a code of ethics that divides people into a strict binary of us and them, while constantly adapting that code to fit the circumstances they meet (Andersen, 2018, p.53). Moral binaries, so, are the result of "actual consequences"(Gwinner,2011). Highlighting this point, Gwinner points out,

"[t]he *Road* makes evident its pragmatism by highlighting the protagonists' application of their experiential knowledge to the work of interpreting their surroundings to exist in them, [...], the post-apocalyptic pragmatism ironically yields an abstract ethical dimension, a type of 'actual consequentialism', which maintains that determining 'whether an act is morally right depends only on the *actual* consequences" (p.138).

Consequently, everything that poses a threat to survival is wrong. This challenge between moral principles and pragmatism results from living in a post-apocalyptic world. The father tries to save his son; so, regarding the situation, he breaks the moral principles. The father, as mentioned, attempts to teach his son the old values by telling old stories. However, after these incidents, the boy refuses to listen to his stories, which seem meaningless to him. The problem is with their world, which is nomadic, subject to constant change, and involves "another justice"(Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p.353). The old stories of morality and justice make a distinction between good and bad based on which individual's behavior can be measured. However, the situation in which the character lives assert that "good and bad are only the products of an active and temporary selection" (p.10). In terms of nomadology, in this post-apocalyptic world, there is no stable hierarchy of moral principles; hence, values are constantly overturned "[e]ven the primacy of survival". (Andersen 2018, p.55). Consequently, the values he instills in his son are slowly breaking down as increasingly challenging ethical situations occur, such as leaving behind a group of people kept as livestock. It provokes the following conversation about right and wrong:

"They're going to kill those people, aren't they?

Yes.

Why do they have to do that?

I don't know.

Are they going to eat them?

I don't know.

They're going to eat them, aren't they?

Yes.

And we couldn't help them because then they'd eat us too.

Yes.

And that's why we couldn't help them.

Yes.

Okay" (McCarthy, 2006, p. 74).

As Keller Estes exposes in his studies, "[t]he *Road* can best be understood to be foregrounding a series of binaries of the utmost importance to American literature in particular and the larger culture in general" (Keller Estes, 2013, p.208), Good/evil, life/ death and utopia/ dystopia, which lead to the deconstruction of such binaries through studying the novel in the light of geocritical analysis of Deleuze and Guattari. accord

The son, however, is annoyed at his father's decisions. The son exhibits unexpected smooth space through sympathy for the hoodlum while the father contends against such a response. In this manner, goodness and justice are central in the discussion between the father's perspective on ethical quality and his son's. Also, this argument finishes with his challenge to his father, demanding that they give their food to an elderly person named Ely. The kid provides the elderly person with a tin of natural products and mixed drinks and welcomes him to eat with them.

The *Road* is an ethical survival path that examines the significance of the nomad existence regarding two essential needs that are fundamental to survive in a post-apocalyptic world: to have a place in a community that possesses ethics, trust, and moral values and to look at the world from parameters that do not exist. The primary thing they would unconsciously seek may be a sense of community. In a world that has been brought back to primitivism, savagery, and tribal traditions, the father and his son, as powerless characters incapable of surviving on cannibalism and savagery, must adjust themselves to the new world and fortify their little community of two, which is based on their own. In this regard, it is the father who gives his child their morals.

Conclusion

The importance of space and identity is remarkable in McCarthy's novels. He ties the engagement of space and landscape to identity, which is a fragmented entry. In *The Road*, father and son embark on a journey through a devastated world. In *The Crossing* Billy Parham crosses the borders between Us and Mexico three times. In both novels, the characters move in a post-apocalyptic world where in their experiences shape their identity. Accordingly, farther, in *The Road*, and Billy, in *The Crossing*, as examined, cross the frontiers philosophically and physically. Through border crossing, they overtly convert into different individuals.

The nomadic existence of the father and his son in *The Road* and Billy in *The Crossing* put them outside of the state, which attempts to control and dominate them. In this regard, literature is, as Deleuze and Guattari declare, a smooth space in which the nomadic figures move freely. In *The Crossing*, the characters move freely in a smooth space- space with explicit boundaries, and in *The Road*, characters move in a smooth space without an explicit beginning and destination, which aligns with Deleuze and Guattari's idea of rhizome.

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