

Villain-Becoming and Body without Organs: A Deleuze-Guattarian Rhizoanalysis of Paul Auster's *Invisible*

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Abstract

The present paper seeks to argue that the opposing roles Paul Auster has devised for his protagonists in *Invisible* (2010) evolve around metamorphosic changes in their behaviors in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome theory. While the protagonist undertakes a Deleuzian Becoming to be a villain, the antagonist possesses a radical form of a Body without Organ. This study thus defines its main assignment to find the relevant Deleuze-Guattarian flickers within the novel. Deleuze and Guattari launch their notions of Becoming and BwO within their theory of Rhizome. To substantiate this, six principles of the rhizomatic expansion (including connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, a signifying rupture, cartography, and decalcomania) are examined vis-à-vis *Invisible*. The story's main characters would thus exhibit their rhizomatic and nomadic inclinations while the novel's narration and setting would add to the multiplicitous dimension of the story. Ultimately, through such rhizomatic praxis, this paper identifies radical de-territorialization – or, breaking free from social norms – as a major Austrian technique to portray the predicaments of contemporary American lifestyle.

Keywords

Deleuze; Guattari; Rhizome; de-territorialization; Paul Auster; *Invisible*.

1. Introduction

The purpose of the present study is to extrapolate the Deleuze-Guattarian concept of rhizomatic de-territorialization of the main characters in Paul Auster's *Invisible* in order to demonstrate the unpleasant atmosphere of contemporary American lifestyle. Rhizome is a name borrowed from botany and signifies a subterranean plant with horizontal and distributing radicles that Deleuze and Guattari use for naming their new "Nomadic" model of thought which is horizontally unbound, and directionless. They further expand their ideas to a special process of writing as a rhizome or "a war machine" against state-apparatus writings. Just as nomads never belong to a certain spot and are always

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on travel, nomadic thought does not limit itself to the centers. Its method is rather like surveying a rhizomatic map of thought. Transparently, such rhizomatic way of thinking always seeks to de-territorialize, or to break free from the established orders by jumping out of the lines of flight: "These are models of nomadic and rhizomatic writing. Writing weds a war machine and lines of flight, abandoning the strata, segmentarities, sedentariness, the State apparatus" (Deleuze & Guattari 4). Nomadology and Rhizomatic thinking (and writing) "do not reflect upon the world but are immersed in a changing state of things" (xii).

Nomadology brings to mind Deleuze's opposition to fixities through the notion of Becoming and the constant evolvment of ideas. Rhizomatic thinking as such, being opposed to the old image, does away with centers, unities, totalities and homogeneities. It is constantly celebrating the heterogeneity of its constituents, hails the differences, and as a method follows the Nietzschean sense of the Dionysian and affirmative joy: "It synthesizes a multiplicity of elements without effacing their heterogeneity or hindering their potential for future rearranging (to the contrary). The *modus operandi* of nomad thought is affirmation, even when its apparent object is negative" (xiii). As its name suggests, nomad thought follows Nomos' method of operation. Such way of thinking is similar to nomadic journeys, it does not stop in a certain point and it constantly evolves and creates new ideas. While traditional state philosophy is similar to sedentary ways of thought, it is bound to logos, closed spaces, and interiorities. Nomadic thought, in contrast, supports open systems and in this sense stands in parallel lines with Deleuzian transcendental-empiricism, a worldview which "has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and which it overflows" (21). Such feature assures its rhizomatic branches to grow free from any point they desire.

Elucidating on the above introductory remarks, it is worth recalling upon the architecture of Auster's *Invisible*, a story with multiple points of view, in which each section, instead of a chapter, is observed as a literary embodiment of a Deleuzian Plateau, or a horizontal and heterogeneously consistent evolvment that acts as a component for a bigger rhizomatic network or the Assemblage. Auster's *Invisible* further reminds us of nomadology, since its protagonist, Adam Walker, is constantly in a personal pursuit/war against Rudolf Born who is a secret agent on behalf of the French government. Additionally, Walker's methods of confrontation with Born look like nomadic war machines, in a sense that they seek to identify the lines of flight or the boundaries of each experience. Considering the above hypothesis in mind, the present study struggles to answer the question whether a Deleuze-Guattarian concepts of Rhizome can be applied to modern fiction; as such to justify the existence of the principles of the rhizomatic

de-territorializations of all the characters in Auster's *Invisible* as a major Austrian technique to portray the predicaments of contemporary American lifestyle.

1.1. Deleuze-Guattarian Principles of the Rhizomatic Expansion

Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome theory is founded upon six elemental principles. The first and the second ones are those of "connection and heterogeneity" (*One Thousand Plateau* 7). Any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be (7). Generally, in rhizomatic shape of connection, there is no pivotal axis to dominate the order of connection. Any point can and must be connected to any other point: it is, "like Eco's third kind of labyrinth which is a net, though it is most baffling and powerful kind with no center, no periphery, no exit, because it is potentially infinite" (Eco 57). This point demonstrates that "a rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts and sciences" (Deleuze and Guattari 7). The third principle is that of "multiplicity" (8). Multiplicity not only opposes unity and shows the heterogeneity of the rhizome, but also it is a means against the representational model insofar as it supports transcendental-empiricism by doing away with the subject, object and logic of mimesis:

[multiplicity] ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world. Multiplicities are rhizomatic ... There is no unity to serve as a pivot in the object, or to divide in the subject. There is not even the unity to abort in the object or "return" in the subject. A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature. (8)

Deleuze's substitutes for the subject of empiricism and the object of transcendentalism are determinations to start journeys, meaning that the driving force of the rhizome is not the target but the journey or the desire to connect and to expand the process of thinking. The fourth principle is "a signifying rupture" which explains that "a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines" (8). This means that a rhizome is able to grow and get connections from any point, a fact which assures its dynamicity (against the fixity over centers in old thought). Deleuze provides a beneficial guidance for us to learn to write rhizomatically: "Write, form a rhizome, increase your territory by de-territorialization, extend the line of flight to the point where it becomes an abstract machine covering the entire plane of consistency" (11). Deleuze and Guattari grant the rupture an opportunity for the radicle to grow a new branch, while criticizing the Dichotomy. In the same token, Jacques Derrida considers the "binary opposition" as a phenomenon that acts in favor of "violent hierarchies" (Bressler 112). As Derrida undertakes to topple

such hierarchies, one can find Deleuze and Guattari's forth principle of rhizome as a notion which resonates with a general post-structuralist ambition to do away with dualism:

There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. That is why one can never posit a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad. (9)

A signifying rupture plays an affirmative and vital role in the novel under the study since it reminds us that any blockage or defeat in life is essentially a new window toward expansion from a new angle, a beginning for a future success. The fifth and the sixth principles are those of "cartography and decalcomania" which mean that a rhizome is a horizontal map, not a vertical structure: "a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure" (12). As a map, the rhizome can enjoy infinite dimensions as well as open-endedness:

The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art... Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it has always multiple entryways. (12)

As the bulk of the novelist situated in Paris, it is interesting to point out to the French capital's urban characteristics and analyze its potentiality to provide Auster with an opportunity to formulate a rhizomatic story in terms of the city's expansions. It could be also inferred that the last chapter of the novel incorporates the Lyotardian concept of *différend* and ends with a suspension of justice. The open-endedness can be also argued to add to its rhizomatic dimension.

2. Literature Review

Upon few studies which have been carried out on *Invisible*, Darko Kovačević's findings have affinities with the current research. Kovačević studies the postmodern narrative strategies in *Man in the Dark* (2008) and *Invisible* (2010). He classifies such strategies into four categories of the disappearance of the real, autoreferentiality, hybridity, and intertextuality. He further assumes that *Invisible* features Auster's deliberate "stylistic variations, mixing of narrative techniques and discontinuity of narration" (336). Kovačević then asserts that the two novels show Auster's "special relation to reality – either by fictionizing it in an alternative way or by criticizing and making it cruel or shocking" (337). And consequently, his analysis of *Invisible* suggests that

In such a way, with a novel based on the writing of one man about the novel he got from his friend, the notions of truth and reality are completely dim and subjective, and, at the level of the novel, almost treated as irrelevant. The novel exists as such, and the readers are left to answer and interpret the questions that come from it. On the other side, its other purpose is to shock, both through the uncertainty and relativity of the protagonists' identities. (340)

Kovačević thus suggests that the reciprocal nature of protagonists' identities can leave the novel open to multiple interpretations. However, while Kovačević establishes his findings on *Invisible* upon the discontinuity of narration and the vagueness of reality, this paper would argue that Auster's narrative mode of multiple points of view has given his novels a multiplicitous dimension which, when juxtaposed with the heterogeneous nature of his story worlds, can eventually result in a Deleuzian rhizomatic narration.

In addition, Debra Shostak in a research paper explores the theme of grief and pain over the loss of characters' loved ones in Auster's fiction and undertakes a detailed analysis of characters' rhizomatic trauma as a quest or an ever-present search for knowledge of the self. According to Shostak, a "need to exercise control over the unpredictability of loss is of considerable significance, especially given Auster's concern with the chance nature of events. Auster's work repeatedly evidences a fascination with chance—figured variously as fortuitous coincidence or arbitrary fate" (68). Shostak thus reflects upon the coincidental nature of fate to analyze the symptoms of rhizomatic trauma and sorrow in Auster's character; however, the present study departs from this notion and analyzes the heterogeneous nature of his story worlds, and terminates on the Deleuzian rhizomatic narration.

Embroidering on the above review, Temenuga Trifonova observes that "Time-images are experienced as past; however; they belong to an impersonal rather than an individual past. In this sense, the time- image is a form of *déjà vu*" (134). Trifonova views Deleuze's time-image as an advanced form of *déjà vu*. Although her argument is generally accounted for, the present study explores Auster's dexterous or rhizomatic techniques breeding a sense of hemiplegic to his narration.

3. Discussion

Paul Auster's *Invisible* unfurls around the manuscript of Adam Walker's autobiographical book *1967*. The original frame retells the stories, that most of them do not have any personal relations whatsoever to James Freeman the editor of the would-be-book. Adam's stories, in other words, stand in the "exteriority" of the "relations" between James and his life, as the outer layers of the novel, in

Deleuzian terms (Deleuze & Guattari 3). *1967* thus acts like a Deleuzian “literary machine” which is “plugged into” the outer frame of the story (4).

In the manuscript of *1967*, we come across a protagonist who is in a full-fledged war with the villain. However, he unconsciously admires his foe and unknowingly imitates his nomadic methods of engagement. Rudolf Born, the antagonist, is a university professor on the surface and a spy in the foreground, but neither his espionage carrier nor his methods and mentality are familiar with the reader’s commonsensical understanding of intelligence operatives. The story is set in the cold war era and at the last pages of the novel we learn that Born has been a double agent from the start, meaning that he has constantly jeopardized the Eastern and Western centers of power. Above all, he betrays his own country because “Russians are paying him good money, more money than the French are paying him”. However, “as a cynic who doesn’t believe in anything”, his own ideas remain vehement toward the notions of power and government in general (Auster 303).

Reading *Invisible* more precisely brings a set of questions to the reader’s mind in this regard. For instance, why Born, an international most wanted and infamous spy might use a simple-minded student, a nobody, to reach his essential goals, and more importantly, why Adam, a junior student of English literature, should be drawn in doing business with someone as experienced and as manipulative as Born in the first place? Providing a rhizomatic reading of this novel would shed light on the unseen corners of the story and might enable us to answer these and other similar questions.

The six principles of rhizome theory are going to be applied to reading *Invisible*. As such, it would be helpful to take a look at the design and the messages of the novel. *Invisible* is written as a Deleuzian literary war-machine, in a sense that it narrates the story of a ruthless spy who undermines the law of the state and an eccentric student who leaves his studies to execute his personal understanding of justice. Adam Walker, having learned that Born has fled the U.S., regrets that “I gave him extra time; he had pounced at the opportunity and run, fleeing the country and escaping the jurisdiction of New York’s laws” (70). This situation introduces Born as a suitable candidate for manifesting nomadic moralities. However, betraying the notion of friendship by killing Cécile’s father by “subtle ways” (304), stabbing Cedric Williams “with the switchblade” (65), and threatening Adam afterwards that “I still have the knife and I’m not afraid to use it” (68) show that Born is literally bounded by no commitment toward any kind of human moralities. Running away from the law – which according to Deleuze and Guattari is like running away from the “logos” or the state-dictated “model for thought” (4) – and doing away with the norms of the society, Born

proves himself as a kind of nomad standing in front of state hierarchies and social establishments.

The story within the story in *Invisible*, on the other hand, presents people, their mentalities, and their situations in constant opposition to the state and the international law as well as the notion of common sense in a way or another. While Rudolf Born as a university professor suddenly turns out to be a ready-to-shoot assassin, the naïve Adam, under his influence, develops devilish plans to topple Born from his power. These features give the novel the dimension of a literary machine or “the war machine-book against the State apparatus-book” (Deleuze & Guattari 9). In order to have such power in practice and to present the reader with anti-capitalistic themes, motifs, and values, the novel should be able to attach itself to other social and cultural machines as well. Accordingly, by devising double-faced characters, such as Born, Adam and Hélène Juin, Auster arguably creates a multiplicitous story world which is formed as an assemblage of heterogeneous agents, connected to each other within a network via Adam’s thread of narration.

Considering the first so called three characteristics of the rhizomatic principles, Auster’s *Invisible* offers a suspenseful and often complex web of diverse incidents that appear likely to enjoy a considerable degree of Deleuzian asignifying rupture insofar as the overall story never actually reaches a logical dead-end. This feature owes its supremacy to Auster’s independence from the clichés and commonsensical techniques of characterization. The characters of *Invisible* are not rigid and clear-cut templates, but innovative and independent individuals through which the story flows and finds its flexibility. In this regard, the first character we stumble upon is Rudolf Born, who is not given to us by a description of his inner or outer characteristics. The author instead disrupts the rules of characterization and tries to portray him through his strange namesake. Rudolf in this regard has a moral “grotesque image”, is a “dead man”, a “rebel” (Auster 3), and seems like a “decapitated body” from the “underworld” (4). Born’s character will be further introduced not through his actions but by what Deleuze labels the process of “making yourself a body without organs” (Deleuze & Guattari 152). By organs, Deleuze refers to the re-territorializing and limiting forces and establishments we come across in the society, and when someone breaks free from those norms, he/she is finding or making him/herself a Body without Organ (BwO).

For Deleuze, it appears that the individual has chosen his/her productive desires over the imposed laws. Through noticing one’s “different desires” which stand in contrast to the codes of the society, the individual can reach a “rhizomatic unconscious” (18). Such person would be a true nomad then and

would know that “you can’t desire without making” a BwO for yourself (149). All people who act and think beyond commonsensical expectations have somehow found or made themselves a BwO. Most particularly here, we contend that through paralleling Born’s inner impression with de Born’s decapitated body, Auster finds Rudolf a potential BwO. Born eventually makes himself an original BwO and we see this issue in the detailed description of Cedric Williams’ murder.

Similarly, through the first-person narration Adam retells us that “[I] saw him reach into the inside breast pocket of his jacket...but when his hand emerged from his pocket it was bunched up into a fist, as if he was hiding something”. A moment later, Adam is shocked to see that Born has hidden a switchblade in his hand: “an instant later I heard a click, and the blade of a knife jumped out of its stealth”. But at this moment, Auster’s description focuses entirely on the physical aspect of the action: “With a hard, upward thrust, Bon immediately stabbed the kid with the switchblade – straight in the stomach, a dead-center hit. The boy grunted as the steel tore through his flesh, grabbed his stomach ... and slowly sank to the ground” (Auster 65). This special attention to the physical description of the stabbing, on the one hand, might refer to the Deleuzian notion of the body, and on the other hand, show Auster’s emphasis on Born’s death of conscience.

At the moment of the strike, we read nothing from Born’s mentality, which might imply that Cedric Williams is just a body to Born which he tears apart like a piece of meat. This gets clearer when Born confronts Adam’s call for help: “Don’t be an idiot...the boy is going to die, and we can’t have anything to do with it” (65). Born – as a radical nomad who constantly de-territorializes all social, legal, and political shackles on his way – attempts to employ his status as a BwO in order to fulfill his insatiable desire for power and reach his goals by any means possible. Looking at the notion of BwO as a liberating factor completes the analysis of the novel regarding the fourth rhizomatic principle. It could be thus argued that the signifying rupture in *Invisible* has to do with the bold presence of BwOs within its antagonist. The protagonist, bit by bit, learns the methods of disobeying social norms to make himself a BwO, as he carelessly acts for the sake of his personal desires. Adam’s main reason for following Born to Paris comes from his thirst to confront the murderer of Cedric and to punish him in his own way. Punishing Born for Adam metamorphoses from a need for justice to a desire for vengeance, and that is where he is distracted from his right path and becomes a villain. In Lyotardian terms, Adam becomes a postmodern character who, based on his “incredulity toward the metanarrative of legal justice” (xxiv), develops an ingenious plan through which Rudolf’s future would eventually change. At the same time, Adam’s own conscience is being betrayed, and the

reader finds that the protagonist of the novel is also capable of wronging for the sake of vengeance. When considered as a whole, Adam's notion of justice turns out to be a personal vengeance, a mere desire absorbing him and bringing him a powerful, yet negative BwO.

To reach his goal, however, Adam goes straight to Margot and tells her the evil nature of Rudolf. The account of Williams' murder devastates Margot. Adam finds out that his first idea about bringing Born to justice has turned out to taking vengeance on his relatives including Margot: "In spite of his fondness for Margot, he discovers that he enjoys punching her like this, hurting her like this, destroying her faith in a man she lived with for two years, a man she supposedly loved" (Auster 172). Adam does not take his action as unethical since through his vengeance he seeks to shatter the dominance of imposed ideas on him. Deleuze in this context asserts that "all signifying desire[s] are associated with dominated subjects", hence to break free of such signifying desires, one needs to deterritorialize the dominance of the imposed subjectivity in society. To make a rhizomatic BwO, Deleuze proposes one to move toward "no significance, no subjectification" (Deleuze & Guattari 18). This strategy thus works for Adam as well. He enjoys his vengeance in that his BwO status gives him a subjectivity and a signification, making him a rhizomatic nomad and also adding to the rhizomatic dimension of the story as well.

Adam's subjective character is also evident through his technical discussion about authorship with his friend James. Through their postal communication, James presents Adam with a solution for writing the second chapter of *1967*. James in this regard tells Adam about his own experience: "I needed to separate myself from myself, to step back and carve out some space between myself and my subject (which was myself)" (Auster 89). Adam accordingly follows James' instructions and writes "Summer" through the second person narration, which arguably introduces him as a subjective character. That is to say, by separating his own identity from himself as the subject of his book, Adam creates a new identity for himself which is still Adam Walker but with a lost subjectivity. As such, Adam manifests a clear resemblance to Deleuze and Guattari's notion of a subjectivity which is a feature of rhizomatic characters.

Cartography, the fifth Deleuzian principle, is evident in the precise descriptions of the ways, routes, and networks that Adam undertakes to reach his target locations, and from which he initiates his vengeful war against Rudolf Born. Deleuze asserts that the rhizome is anti-genealogy, by which he means that rhizomatic characters move horizontally and it is through their journeys that they access meaning in life. For Deleuze, on the other hand, the "rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots". The rhizomatic character

applies an emancipatory pattern to life. Deleuze's influence thus expands over the horizontal map and not merely through the deep structure of the society. Deleuze also believes that the rhizome "pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari 21). Upon his arrival in Paris, since he vows to wage war on Born from a familiar ground, Adam starts mapping downtown Paris and finally visits the hotel in which he used to stay two years earlier, "The Hôtel du Sud is a decrepit, crumbling establishment on the rue Mazarine in the sixth arrondissement, not far from the Odéon metro station on the Boulevard Saint-Germain" (Auster 167).

Another reference to detailed addresses and mappings occurs when Adam easily finds Margot's residence: "He remembers that the Jouffroys live on the rue de l'Université in the seventh arrondissement, not terribly far from this hotel" (Auster 169). Consequently, he uses this address to visit Margot and initiate his plans against Rudolf. Such descriptions of mappings add to the creative dimension of the story, as Inna Semetsky argues, "A diagram, or a map, engenders the territory to which it is supposed to refer: it is on the basis of diagrammatic thinking that new concepts and meanings are created" (88). Rhizomatic networks which act like maps encourage creativity. This might signal two rather correlative issues, the first is shown in Born as a rhizomatic character who visits four corners of the world and while Adam is in Paris, he visits London for a while. Adam could have thus selected London as his battle ground with Born, yet he decides to stay and fight in Paris. The second issue comes from Adam's own recognition of the map of Paris, which undoubtedly has a bold role in his selection of Paris for bringing Born to justice. These two issues might arguably point to Paris as a city with Deleuzian cartographic features since both rhizomatic characters of the story prefer to stay and finish their jobs there.

Paris underground railway system could be taken as a rhizomatic network which connects the city to all the cities in France, all the capitals in Europe, and the Seine river which is an important commercial waterway providing the fastest way from Paris to the Atlantic simultaneously as it connects the northern ports to Paris and the central cities in France. Such underground system, waterways, beside roads and aerial routes, all give Paris the dimension of a highly connectable map, which when added to its metropolitan and multicultural ambience, will present it as a Deleuzian cartographic rhizome. In *Invisible*, the reader finds such cartographic details in the service of Adam and Rudolf for fulfilling their de-territorializing desires. The cartography of Paris can merge with the rhizomatic nature of both the characters and the story world.

For decalcomania, as the sixth principle of rhizome, one might not find visible folds on the surface of the novel; however, as Adam and Rudolf go through constant becomings, one can sense that they create a differential and smooth space in the novel. Here, we can argue that these rhizomatic characters move according to the Riemannian space of thought, whereas all the other participants in the story world belong to the Euclidean space and such duality creates a kind of decalcomaniac fold in the story. Deleuze and Guattari thus borrow the notion of the “Euclidean space” (47). Both the Euclidean geometry and the classic Western thought are limited, resisting the emancipatory spirit of the modern age. Riemannian geometry, in contrast, presents a mathematical space in which difference, creativity, and unbounded development is appreciated. Deleuze’s reference to “Riemannian space” of thought (476) resonates with the rhizomatic thinking which embraces the flexible and liberating spirit of the age. These definitions enable us to see Adam and Born with a Riemannian mentality on the one side of the fold and other characters with a Euclidean mindset on the other. More prominently, this fold is happening in Paris as a cartographically rhizomatic city. The mentioned fold thus adds the feature of decalcomania to both the French capital and the story world.

Having tested all the six principles of rhizome theory on the novel, the present analysis now seeks to argue that rhizomatic relations are not based upon building structures, but they are related to the “manner of becomings” (Deleuze & Guattari 21). As Leonard Lawlor observes, “for Deleuze and Guattari, becomings are never processes of beginning again” (171), but beginning to become the other, becoming different. This brings us back to our initial questions. It appears that Adam’s villain-becoming has made Born an attractive character to him. Adam, beyond hating his foe, learns from Born’s rhizomatic methods and in his counterstrike uses his newly possessed concept of BwO as a Deleuzian war-machine against him. Rudolf Born, on the other hand, is attracted to Adam, since he somehow becomes aware of Adam’s initial lack of BwOs and, through Williams’ stabbing, tries to show Adam that to liberate oneself from the moral shackles of society one has to think of bodies beyond the established mentalities. Philip Goodchild in this regard notes that such attention to bodies creates a kind of ethics which is liberated from representational and classical moralities: “Ethics is a matter of experimentation rather than representation in an attempt to discover what the mind and the body can do”. For Goodchild “life of the body” is an issue which “escapes representation” (25); bodies could be taken as means for de-territorialization and escaping from the valuing system of the society. Williams’ murder thus shows Adam that a body can manage to eliminate another body without being worried about any moral consequences. This unmoral process provides Adam with a radically negative understanding of humanity and thus prepares him to undergo a villain-becoming.

A recapitulation of the rhizomatic analysis of Paul Auster's *Invisible* sounds beneficial to a better understanding of how the novel works. We focused on Adam Walker's manuscript of *1967* and its role as a literary machine, in order to initiate our rhizomatic analysis we posed two elemental questions regarding the relationship between Adam and Rudolf Born. Following this thread, we continued by applying six rhizomatic principles of heterogeneity, connection, multiplicity, a signifying rupture, cartography, and decalcomania to the novel. Such application led us to the perception that the form, characterization, setting, and theme of the novel add to its rhizomatic dimension, making it possible to answer our initial questions in terms of the role becomings play in the story.

4. Conclusion

Paul Auster's fiction often mirrors the predicaments of the contemporary American life. In the present paper, an attempt was made to provide an investigation into the evolving Deleuzian rhizomatic nature of Auster's novel, *Invisible*. For this purpose, such features of Auster's bestseller story as multiple points of view, interconnected stories and independence from the storytelling clichés seem appropriate enough to provide a justification for the arguments of this article. Our analysis of *Invisible* demonstrated that the story within the main frame of the novel could be compared to a Deleuzian literary machine, *1967*. Since the manuscript of *1967* represents characters and ideas which stand in contrast to the capitalist society, we analyzed it as a literary war-machine. The exteriority of the work to and its contrast with the commonsensical thought as well as Adam and Born's nomadic methods of engagement in their all-out war tells of a highly rhizomatic story ahead. In response to two mentioned critical questions regarding the nature of Adam's relationship with Born, our analysis takes the form of an investigation for Deleuzian clues in the story. This enables us to easily identify numerous examples from the text to certify the presence of all the rhizomatic principles in the novel.

We consider Adam and Born as radical nomads who constantly de-territorialize the accepted moralities of the society by creating (or finding) themselves Bodies without Organs (BwOs). Relying on such status, and to quench their thirst for power and vengeance, they carelessly undermine laws, rules, and even basic human moral values. The last observation helps us to understand Adam's tendency to come out of his role as a protagonist. Adam, by learning from his foe, undergoes a tense process of villain-becoming through his subsequent actions on his war against Born. As it turns out, the rhizomatic features of *Invisible* are inclined toward the leading characters' ability to form BwOs. The novel under consideration, when read and criticized in the terms of the mentioned approach, demonstrates compelling inclinations toward rhizomatic features.

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