

The Nomad and the Postcolonial Limits of *A Thousand Plateaus*

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Abstract:

This paper traces the aesthetics of the nomad—their fetishization within the poststructuralist car-tographies of *A Thousand Plateaus*, and their fetishes (to open, wild land, particularly)—through, what is argued, a (paradoxical) situatedness in settler-colonial imaginaries. The nomad’s destabilizing relation to the signifier, heralded in *A Thousand Plateaus* and enveloped into poststructuralist theory more broadly, this paper argues, bears a provocatively unexamined dynamic of colonial signification. Routing through figures such as Chris McCandless and Jack Kerouac, and motifs such as the map and the road, this paper traces the nomad’s signifying relationship to the frontier towards a broader exploration of the relations between freedom and dispossession, undergirding our “postcolonial” moment.

Keywords: postcolonial; poststructuralism; frontier; nomadism; aesthetics