

Architectonics for evolving pastoralists: nomadic architecture and modern global culture

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ABSTRACT:

This paper seeks to establish a theoretical ground for the investigation of nomadic architectonics as an instructive instance of the taxonomic breadth of architectural space production. This research ties together theoretical threads from the work of Gottfried Semper on the textile wall to that of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on the ontology of the nomos, the smooth space inhabited by non-state actors. When nomads become sedentary, the evolution of their political economy creates a corresponding ontological shift in their understanding of space. Climate change and contact with modern global culture has accelerated this transformation, a cultural crisis articulated through an architectural vocabulary. It is precisely the nomos I seek to explore, challenging the romantic image of the nomad in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* while benefitting from the philosophical notion of the nomos as a unique experience of space. This is a primary example of how philosophical critique can serve to engage a broader spectrum of built work than that for which architectural discourse normally allows.

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INTRODUCTION

Any investigation of space and of how humans situate themselves within it is essentially an architectural investigation. The goal is always to expand the understanding of *mind* or *self* in relation to space. This paper looks at architecture on the cusp of space and place, architecture as a way into larger philosophical issues of ontological space production.

Knowledge of the historical taxonomy of dwellings, like the syntax of languages, gives insight into the human mind. Language functions as an interface between an individual and the world shared with others. Syntax structures not just the rules of language, but also the rules of thought. Ferdinand de Saussure noted that if a certain word did not exist, for example, neither could its corresponding sound-image. (Saussure 1891) Conversely, once a word is learned, the sound-image it signifies cannot be erased.

Just as language shapes the structure of human knowledge, so does architecture. Each type of dwelling is a complex quotation that represents and reflects the particular properties of its socio-cultural milieu. Many of these dwellings tell minority narratives of background buildings, what might be described as non-monumental domestic or vernacular structures. The history of architecture is told by those who possess power. It requires power to assemble the knowledge, money, and material to build a lasting structure. Deyan Sudjic explains simply, "The powerful build because that is what the powerful do." (Sudjic 2005, 3) What is lost with time as more temporary artifacts disappear? What knowledge is deemed too fragile to have its history recorded in the annals of built form? What is lost in this sieve of dominance?

Architecture on the cusp searches for the most vulnerable structures—in this case nomadic dwellings—and creates a critical context for the spatial ontologies they represent. Two texts provide theoretical ground for this research and topical links between an investigation of nomadology and general architectural discourse: the 19th century writings of Gottfried Semper and a 20th century text by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. While Semper's work gives context to nomadic architectonics, Deleuze and Guattari provide discussion of

the ontology of nomadic space. Their chapter, “1440: The Smooth and the Striated,” is one of the most influential texts in the canon of contemporary architectural praxis. I hope to demonstrate how a careful academic critique of such work can structure investigations at the edge of architectural discourse.

I. ORPHAN CONCEPTS

As successful as *A Thousand Plateaus* has been in disseminating its ideas across academic disciplines, the resulting scholarship and criticism has been equally frustrating. This is because, rather than invent new terms and new categories like so many of the thinkers of the first half of the century, Deleuze and Guattari choose to co-opt, bend, and distend existing terms and categories. Each term “sits astride standard categories and confuses seemingly distinct classifications.” (Bogue 2007, 113) The resulting interpretations of *A Thousand Plateaus* are as diverse as the disciplines that the work intersects, each responding with readings and misreadings that suit their own purpose. I cannot but assume the same will occur here. I will attempt to explicate and defend two terms of particular interest, *nomos* and *nomadology*, before calling them into service.

When referring to the “nomos,” Deleuze and Guattari cite Emmanuel Laroche’s text “History of the root Nem in ancient Greek,” which establishes the use of the word largely in the Homeric sense of land set aside for pasturage. (Laroche 1949) This is in contrast to the common use of “nomos” in jurisprudence and political philosophy, which establishes the *nomos* as a place ruled by a specific set of laws indicative of a particular language and culture, or *logos*.¹ In the chapter “1440: The Smooth and the Striated,” *nomos* is opposed against both *logos* and polis. Deleuze and Guattari transfer the common use of *nomos* onto the term *logos*, noting, “there is an opposition between the *logos* and the *nomos*, the law and the *nomos*,” thus preserving the sole definition of *nomos* as a kind of space. (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 369) This space is “nondelimited, unpartitioned; the pre-urban countryside; mountainside, plateau, steppe” which is occupied by the shepherd or the farmer, as opposed to the partitioned, juridically-allocated space of the polis, the city, or, as the Bedouin say, the *hadara*. (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 481) When referring to the *nomos* herein, it will be in this sense of nondelimited, smooth space.

“Nomadology,” then, is the investigation of people, particularly nomads, when within the *nomos*. A point of particular critical contention against *A Thousand Plateaus* is the misappropriation of nomads in the chapter “1227: Treatise on Nomadology—The War Machine.” Invocation of anthropologist Pierre Clastres confuses the philosophical abstract of the nomad in general with the representational nomad in her ethnographic particularities. Clastres’s text *Society Against the State* is of particular interest as a foundational source of ideas in the *Treatise*, of nomads as instigators of a “war machine” that opposes the formation of state-like socio-political organization. Deleuze and Guattari gain maximum traction from the foil of the nomad as an extra-state actor on a variety of social and cultural scales, and lose critical value when they invoke partial representations of the lives of real people, like Genghis Khan, inhabitants of the Amazon basin, or members of Bedouin tribes. Christopher Miller, in his 1993 essay in *Diacritics*, describes the disservice done to the study of nomadic peoples when the concept of “nomadology” is appropriated in such partial, preferential fashion. The romanticization of the nomad, as a pure being in non-juridical space, as a romantic warrior, as a representation of multiplicity and flow, is, from the pen of two French writers, a falsehood that represents a type of re-colonialization and subjugation of nomadic people, many of whom in North Africa fell to the French state.

If one strips away the specific examples of nomadic peoples from the “Treatise on Nomadology,” what’s left is a series of *orphan concepts*, philosophical tools pulled from a variety of sources that serve to organize thinking about space and the state, only the former of which is of interest here. To use such concepts again to discuss actual nomadic peoples, once acknowledging those concepts’ wrong-headed creation in a false realm of pseudo-anthropology, attests to willful ignorance. However, I have not found a similar set of ideas to adequately describe the specific type of non-place which the nomad occupies.² One may take a similar stance to the appropriation of biology in the contrast of “rhizomatic” and “arborescent” from the chapter “Introduction: Rhizome.” Actual biology is set aside, and only a shade of the truth of these organisms remains in a set of ideas appropriated to

explain notions of organizations of power. The difference between the rhizome and the nomad is that only the latter can be hurt by its becoming-orphan,³ not the former. Yet it seems equally misleading to accuse Deleuze and Guattari of writing willfully fake anthropology when they are combining mathematics, ancient Greek myths, texts on maritime navigation, ethnography, and art history in a strange amalgam never before encountered. To imagine that they believed themselves to be masters of any of these disciplines is to miss the actual purpose of the text: to borrow metaphors from a wide variety of sources in order to explain very schematic philosophical concepts. As Bogue explains,

...their effort is not to fix categories and demarcate permanent essences, but to make something pass between the terms of binary opposition, and thereby to foster a thought that brings into existence something new. (Bogue 2007,120)

Ergo; they are not concerned with anthropological accuracy except to the extent that specific instances of the nomadic life may illuminate instructive variations at the margins of the nation-state.

François Zourabichvili, in his text, *The Vocabulary of Deleuze* (2003), contends that even after two decades we do not yet understand Deleuze's terms as we have insufficiently explored his work in the context of the philosophical models he builds upon. It's important to remember that before embarking on *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze published eleven texts of philosophical criticism, including *Bergsonism* and *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, the former of which is heavily drawn upon to define types of state power.

2. THE NOMAD AND THE NATION-STATE

2.1 WHO IS THE NOMAD?

The term “nomad” combines particular anthropological subdivisions, typically arranged by economic mode, thus expressing divisions between hunter-gatherers, herders, agriculturalists, traders, and wage-laborers. This type of division, the “classical model,” is refuted by the study of particular nomadic groups, which often exhibit several emergent forms of economy simultaneously, and whose individual members give evidence for “interdigitation” between these modes. (Galaty 1981) I use classical terms here with the understanding of their limitations.

In ethnographic literature, the three most dominant nomadic types are *hunter-gatherers*, who follow their food source seasonally; *pastoralists*, who engage in animal husbandry and move with the needs of the herd; and *peripatetic nomads*, craftsmen or performers living among and between sedentary people in urban areas and moving either seasonally or as dictated by the state.⁴ Each group may occupy permanent residences for parts of the year, and engage in extra-subsistence practices, benefiting from a symbiosis of overlapping territories and links between the *nomos* and the *polis*.

2.2 NOMADS VERSUS SEDENTARIES

Mounted pastoral nomads such as the Mongols or the Tuareg, while often scapegoated in western histories as conquerors who disturbed or dissolved peaceful cultures, actually represent a civilizing force that spread technology, written language, arts and ideas along trade routes across Europe and Asia. (Khazanov 2001) However, the image of the nomad consistently represents fear in western and eastern literature alike. In relation to modern nations, the nomad is a non-state actor whose existence is inconsistent with building national identity. Consider the Tuareg in central North Africa, who live in a territory that crosses five national boundaries. As Joseph Brodsky remarks, “That’s why a sedentary people always resents nomads: apart from the physical threat, a nomad compromises the concept of border.” (Brodsky 1985)

The “physical threat” is the stereotype of the nomad as barbarian conqueror, linked to Deleuze and Guattari’s disputed contention that the “war machine” is a product of nomadic society. Much of the critical outrage against *A Thousand Plateaus* is caused by the confusing use of the term “nomad” in relation to the “war machine,” for while Deleuze and Guattari reference nomadic military campaigns, they also lump supranational corporations, maritime expeditions and artistic movements into the category of non-state or anti-state actors, thus nomads. Furthermore, the “war machine” “does not necessarily have war as its object,” and “has an extremely variable relation to war itself.” (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 416, 422) They include in their text, in fact, a lengthy disclaimer:

We thought it possible to assign the invention of the war machine to the nomads. This was done only in the historical interest of demonstrating that the war machine as such was invented... However, in conformity with the essence, the nomads do not hold the secret: an “ideological,” scientific, or artistic movement can be a potential war machine... a smooth space of displacement. (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 422)

Deleuze and Guattari’s primary concern is to explicate two ontological tendencies, the nomadic and the sedentary, delimited by philosophical autotelic boundaries, and the conflict between them. These categories are transferred to show how the state uses the “war machine” in order to expand its jurisdiction across ever larger territories.

Regardless of the origin of the “war machine” or the first case of aggression between nomads and sedentaries, the modern nation-state does indeed view the nomad as a threat, an outlier contesting the centripetal exercise of its power. In response, the nation-state constantly seeks programs of “development” that serve to fold nomadic societies into the grip of state control, as was observed across Africa and Asia in the last five decades. The combination of state action and the recent intensification of environmental degradation has made pastoral life untenable in the few parts of the world in which it still exists. With accelerating rates of permanent settlement among pastoralists comes the loss of nomadic architectural forms and a shift in the ontological relationship between the nomad and the smooth space of the *nomos*.

2.3 NOMADIC ARCHITECTONICS

To find a critical entrance to the study of nomadic structures, I turn to the writing of 19th-century architect and art historian Gottfried Semper. In his exploration of the human impulse to build, Semper located the origin of architectural syntax in the use of hung woven fabrics, declaring the mere gesture towards visual partitions in space to be the most fundamental act of architecture. Even when building materials evolved, Semper contends “Wickerwork, the original space divider, retained the full importance of its earlier meaning... Wickerwork was the *essence of the wall*.” (Semper 1851, 103) Semper notes the instructive value of the nomadic tent in relation to the evolution of architecture, particularly in contrast to the arguments of contemporaries he finds lacking in rigor. He wonders why they do not stress what is critical about the nomadic tent, the use of the carpet as a wall:

...they overlook the more general and less dubious influence that the carpet in its capacity as a *wall*, as a vertical means of protection, had on the evolution of certain architectural forms. Thus I seem to stand without the support of a single authority when I assert that the carpet wall plays a most important role in the general history of art. (Semper 1851, 103)

Thus we arrive at an architectonics of textile partitions, what Semper called the *wand* wall, as related to the German *gewand*, or dress, most clearly visible in tensile design. The central thesis of the *wand* wall is the contention that woven partitions, not the structures between them, are the basic units of built space. Semper states that fence and tent builders understand the fundamental ontology of space:

...the use of the crude weaving that started with the [fenced animal] pen—as a means to make the “home,” the inner life separated from the outer life, and as the formal creation of the idea of space—undoubtedly preceded the wall, even the most primitive one constructed out of stone or any other material. (Semper 1860, 254)

Thus weaving the *wand* wall is the first act of creating what Heidegger calls the *raum* or *peras*, a place cleared for settlement or designated by a boundary; what Kenneth Frampton denotes as the *topos*. Semper’s notion that weaving as building is fundamentally linked to the “idea of space” is in conversation with Heidegger’s contention that “...spaces receive their being from locations and not from ‘space.’” (Heidegger 1951, 105) Thus as “the bridge gathers” the site around itself, a smooth space comes into existence as a location; becomes visible as a place. As Christian Norberg-Schulz explains, “The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around the stream... the banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream,” concluding then that “The primary purpose of architecture is hence to make the world visible.” (Norberg-Schulz 1983, 433, 437)

While tent structures as appendages to solid ones, or as temporary pavilions in the landscape, are familiar forms in western architecture, only isolated populations of pastoral nomads rely on this syntax for the entirety of their built work. The architectural diversity these forms embody is rapidly

disappearing. If we lose them, we lose a piece of living architectural history, as “it remains certain *that the beginning of building coincides with the beginning of textiles*,” and clearly, with textile buildings. (Semper 1860, 254) Thus I emphasize the value of an architectural ethnography not just of nomadic forms (such work largely exists already), but of the ontology of the *nomos* as it relates to Heidegger’s notion of being-in-the-world, as a way to define dwelling.

Anthropologists have provided us with a catalog of no-madic forms—tents, yurts, huts—which detail the physical disposition of temporary, mobile dwellings, yet even these catalogs are incomplete and require amendment. As recently as 1999, Sébastien Boulay became aware of a minority architectural concept among the Moorish nomads of Mauritania, the *benye*. The *benye* is a small tent supported by arcing poles distinct from the dominant *khayma*, a large tent supported by vertical struts forming a pyramidal shape. In this culture the *benye* is mentioned as a negative to the *khayma*, as its inverse, as everything the *khayma* is not. Its primary use is as a heterotopia of crisis, in Michel Foucault’s sense of the term, an other place where taboo sexual relations are permitted to occur. (Foucault 1986) The *benye* may also be incorporated into the *khayma*, nested and layered within as a privileged space. Boulay’s conclusion is that even among pastoralists, “a particular architectural model is rarely exclusive and that secondary, more secretive models can coexist.” (Bouley 2007, 63)

In addition to the absence of such minority structures in anthropological catalogues, a detailed critical account of the notion of space itself as seen from a nomadic viewpoint remains elusive. This may be due in part to the dependence of western audiences on Euclidian notions of space, of points in space as places subordinate to the system of the Euclidian grid itself, places subordinate to locations. The ontology of the *nomos* is so far outside sedentary notions of space that structures built within the *nomos* are not commonly considered architecture at all, for they have no site, no location. As Deyan Sudjic suggests, the act of architecture in a sedentary context is an attempt to render systematic the innately chaotic:

Architecture has always been used to give those who build it the sense that they are able to escape the transience of existence, and to give it some sense of coherence. To place man-made objects in the landscape is one way to try to give them meaning; it is suggesting that they belong to a system. (Sudjic 2005, 379)

As nomads settle, as the space the nomad occupies becomes urbanized, we lose the notion of the *nomos as smooth space*. The resulting shift from an architecture of wand walls to the formal tectonic structures of the sedentary world represents a cultural crisis articulated through an architectural vocabulary. This is an opportune site for an expanded study of architectonics within larger philosophies of the nature of lived space.

3. SMOOTH SPACE

3.1 DEFINING “SMOOTH”

An ontological investigation of the *nomos* requires a better understanding of the notion of “*smooth space*” as described in *A Thousand Plateaus* in the chapter “1440: The Smooth and the Striated.” Because the smooth and the striated “in fact exist only in mixture,” Deleuze and Guattari seek to define the two through a series of “models.” (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 474) In the Maritime Model, smooth space is denoted by *extensio* as opposed to *spatium*, a line between points, where destinations are subordinate to journeys, as opposed to a point between lines.⁵ The Portuguese, they argue, cite 1440 as the year of the “first decisive striation,” when maritime space was successfully striated due to accurate astronomical and geographical bearings. In the Maritime Model the sea, a smooth space par excellence, is striated by allocating its surface to points on a map.⁶

In striated space, one closes off a surface and “allocates” it according to determinant intervals, assigned breaks; in the smooth, one “distributes” oneself in an open space, according to frequencies and in the course of one’s crossings. (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 481)

Thus the striated is space allocated before experienced, while the smooth is space experienced through varying distributions of actors during their journeys.

In the Technological Model, omni-directional, heterogeneous felt represents smooth space as opposed to unidirectional, homogeneous woven cloth. That nomads in the *nomos* employ both felt and woven cloth is cited as a mixture:

...the weaving of the nomad indexes clothing and the house itself to the space of the outside, to the open smooth space in which the body moves. (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 476)

That the smooth can be heterogeneous is counter-intuitive. Smooth space is a model that permits local intensities, while striated space imposes universal sameness.⁷

The concept of smooth space is explained perhaps more succinctly in the *Treatise on Nomadology*:

The model is a vortical one; it operates in an open space throughout which things-flows are distributed, rather than plotting out a closed space for linear or solid things. It is the difference between a smooth (vectorial, projective, or topological) space and a striated (metric) space: in the first case “space is occupied without being counted,” and in the second case “space is counted in order to be occupied. (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 362)

Another useful analogy for smooth space is presented in the first chapter of the book, “Introduction: Rhizome,” when contrasting the rhizome against the “arborescence.” The former is a horizontal network with no “privileged” center, each point connected to all other points, while the latter is vertical, hierarchical. The rhizome is a nomadic multiplicity, the “arborescence,” a uniform hierarchy.

Deleuze and Guattari note that nomads are not the sole inhabitants of smooth space, “even the most striated city gives rise to smooth spaces.” (Deleuze + Guattari 1987, 500) Iain Borden, in his architectural ethnography *Skateboarding, Space, and the City*, describes how skaters use body production to make smooth the striated terrain of the modern city, to create “super-architectural space:”

In place of the organized cosmos of architecture, classicism’s cohesion, internal hierarchies, imitation and balance, there are waves, vibrations and oscillations of skateboarding’s ludic procedures, suggesting conflict and contradiction, chaos and confusion, internalization of the external world, emotion and spontaneity. (Borden 2001, 112)

Borden’s text agitates for a study of smooth space, for a broader investigation of the *nomos* and those who inhabit it. He laments that for architects to reduce the study of space to the study of the architectural object is “a fetishism that erases social relations and wider meanings.” (Borden 2001, 7)

3.2 NAVIGATING SMOOTH SPACE

As a modern western individual, I cannot conceive of a system of space that lacks anchors; landmarks are necessary to define the boundaries of a known territory as apart from the unknown wilderness.⁸ Wayfinding systems exist in all cultures, be they minute observations of ecological conditions (wind, soil, temperature, density of flora, what Bogue refers to as “multidimensional signs”) or more precise triangulation using the stars.⁹ Is it then a romantic fantasy that the nomad occupies the *nomos* as smooth space? Bogue asserts it is not:

The Bedouins may follow broadly determined routes through the desert and seek out fixed landmarks, and in this sense they traverse a somewhat striated space, but the shifting sands of the landscape are in constant variation and their passage must precede along the unpredictable sites of scattered shrubs, bushes and patches of grass that serve as pasturage for their animals. In this respect, they inhabit the desert as a smooth space. (Bogue 2007, 126)

The contention is that despite the ability to navigate the smooth space of the desert, mountain, or steppe, pastoralists and their flocks nevertheless wander and move across this terrain as a flow or force, expanding to the extent of their capabilities, the contours of the pack morphing in continuous dynamic flux.

Perhaps one way of gauging the relationship of the nomad to the *nomos* is to determine her relative anxiety expressed upon entering or leaving smooth space. This seems to differ between pastoral cultures. For example, the Bouley notes that for the Moorish pastoralists,

...the nomadic life is considered dangerous, the desert being a sterile and empty (khle) space, inhabited by genies as opposed to the *bādiya*, more humanized and socialized environments. (Bouley 2007, 62)

It seems the tendency to striate what’s perceived as empty, chaotic, or unknown space is a pan-human one.

4. BECOMING SEDENTARY

4.1. RATES OF SEDENTARIZATION

Nomadic cultures have long had contact with sedentary ones, and exist along a “nomadism-sedentarism-urbanism continuum.” (Meir 1997, 7) Yet as Avinoam Meir notes in his study of Israeli Bedouin pastoralists, rates of change along this continuum accelerate with greater proximity to modern western culture. Globalization represents an existential threat to nomadism, one which gives exigency to the study of the *nomos*. As Galaty tell us,

It seems clear that unidirectional change has occurred in nomadic pastoral societies, in large part generated by a global setting of societal transformation and development, in the context of the market and the state. (Galaty 1981, 22)

For the Tuareg and their southern neighbors the *Sahelian Crisis*, a decade-long drought from 1960-1970, initiated a tragedy of the commons that dissipated their power to self-regulate and exist independent of the nation-state. Diminished land capacity resulted in the inability of local chiefs to limit over-grazing, to the detriment of the lives of the herd and the tribe. (Galaty 1981) Such environmental catastrophes reinforce the moral narrative of state programs of development, programs which take the place of traditional obligations for the care, protection and well-being of vulnerable members of the group (women, children, the elderly, the infirm). The state fills the void with social services—food, health care and education—which spark a concomitant desire for individualism and enhanced personal status free from older clan or caste systems. Development thus achieves a voluntary enticement towards modernization that protects the centripetal organization of the state against the centrifugal forces of nomadic life. In this new order, children become only consumers of resources rather than producers, the elderly lose their status and influence, and the newly sedentary population becomes dependent on the services of the state, hence easily manipulated by local governments.

In conflicts between the state and the nomad, administrative and development measures are set against de-centralized control of personal actions, modes of production, and movement across territory. It is the smooth versus the striated: de-centered, heterogeneous flows versus centralized, homogeneous control. The ontological notion of space itself is intertwined with these socio-political struggles. As Meir explains,

The centrifugal-centripetal tension stems from the conflicting nomadic and ethnic ideology on the one hand and the state ideology on the other. It stems particularly from opposing forces of space production. (Meir 1997, 9)

Whether forced or voluntary, the sedentarization and urbanization of pastoralists results in a loss of the cultural understanding of the *nomos*. A yurt in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia that's been permanently fixed to the ground is no longer engaged in a cultural encounter with smooth space. (Sugimoto 2007)

4.2 SPECIAL CASE STUDIES

There are special instances of sudden urbanization that represent particularly instructive case studies for nomadology. These are the mining towns around Niger's Air Massif and on the Mongolian steppe. In these locations, at mines for uranium yellow cake in Niger, and for copper and gold in Mongolia, modern global culture has inserted itself whole into the *nomos* of nomadic pastoralists, many of whom remained until then at the far fringes of the development continuum. Leasing land rights to western actors has resulted in a radical confrontation between advanced industrial technology and pastoralists whom the state considers outside the circle of interested stakeholders. In some instances, this has resulted in violent conflict as waterways are tainted with radiation; in others nomads have settled and sought wage labor.¹⁰

When settlement occurs suddenly, is the ontological relationship of the nomad to the *nomos* transferred to striated space, thus smoothing it? Does sudden spatial change transcend the change in habitation from temporary to fixed dwellings, from an architecture of *wand* walls to solid architectonics, carrying with it the ontology of smooth space into the world of modern global culture? If so, this would be a fantastic counter-example to Deleuze's vision of the “society of control.” In *Negotiations*, Deleuze implies that the goal of modern global culture is an order that transcends divisions of space,

place, and language; an order in which the very production of identity, of bodies and their modes of being, are controlled and normalized. (Deleuze 1995) In such a world, the pastoral nomad could never again regain ontological links to smooth space. These mining towns are a potential exception to that assertion.

5. TAXONOMIES OF SPACE

In their study of contemporary Inuit culture, Genosko and Bryx report instances of smoothing as a form of cultural resistance to the striated practices of Canadian government administration. In their early attempts to take a census of the Inuit population, Canada's central government was frustrated by Inuit naming practices.¹¹ As a result, the government issued each person a number beginning with the letter "E," for "Eskimo." These numbers were issued on felt discs and had to be worn at all times, like dog-tags. This specific erasure of identity—it did not correspond to the system for Social Insurance Numbers issued to other Canadians—is an example of an "administrative convenience" as "endocolonialist violence." (Genosko + Bryx 2005) Since the abandonment of "E" numbers, Inuit have re-appropriated the system for use in various aspects of daily life, as codes for combination locks, as bank account numbers, or as non-consecutive numerical addresses in settlements without street names. In such cases, the Inuit "occupy without counting," as Deleuze and Guattari would say. (Genosko + Bryx 2005) The result is "a good example of 'melding' smooth and striated, of an impure intermixture, a Brownian address." (Genosko + Bryx 2005, 113) It is an example of cultural resiliency which demonstrates the flexibility of smooth space.

This melding shows that the ontology of the *nomos* can endure attempts at systematic striation by the nation-state. There exists an entire taxonomy of types of space embedded in the places between the radically pastoral and the entirely modern. Indeed it seems over time the smooth has made a lasting impact on the striated, as evidenced by IBM's 30-second "Data Baby" television commercial. The data baby represents an understanding of smooth space in modern global culture as a quantum expression of flows of data across the very surface of the human body itself, beginning at birth.¹² Like empires of the past, modern global culture's ability to adopt and re-appropriate the *nomos* will either help to preserve the diversity of spatial taxonomy, or hasten its demise.

CONCLUSION

The encounter between the state and the nomad is typically fraught with tension. The existence of nomadic culture challenges the very notion of nationhood. Here is a group of people for whom political boundaries have no meaning. They exist in the smooth Deleuzian space of ecological continuities, territories defined by the ranges of flora and fauna, by the texture of the land, by average rainfall. When nomads become sedentary, not only does their economy shift, so does their sense of the self in space. Just as nomadology is an ontology of the *nomos*, so too does a second ontology need to be explored, that of the nomad turned radically sedentary.

Proceeding from the theoretical ground established in this paper, I seek to gage the ramifications of radical urbanization on the tissue of nomadic life, searching for points of connection or dissonance between modern global culture and a vanishing way of dwelling in the world. Such an architectural ethnography would compare built responses intended to assist the transformation of nomads into sedentaries, revealing and bearing witness to points of maximum conflict between architectonic types. An architectural ethnography is both a compendium of forms and of notions of space. It is also a potential guide for the amelioration of the qualities of fixed settlements built by urbanized modern people for former pastoralists. In examining the fixed dwellings built to house former pastoralists near mining towns in the territory of the Tuareg in the southern Sahara, and the tribes of the Mongolian steppe, I seek remnants of the *wand* wall and the impact of sedentary architecture on the traditional understanding of smooth space.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ See Cover, Robert M. "The 1982 Supreme Court Term, Forward: Nomos and Narrative." *Harvard Law Review* 97.4 (1983) 4-68, or Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- ² For a description of the non-place, see Augé, Marc. *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Super-Modernity*. John Howe, trans. London: Verso, 1995.
- ³ I use this term as a reference to the chapter, "1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming Imperceptible..." in *A Thousand Plateaus* to which Christopher Miller also strongly objected.
- ⁴ Additional types of nomads present in modern global culture include ambulatory groups of migrant laborers, highly specialized contract workers, and the mobile wealthy.

⁵ Heidegger also favored the term “extensio” over “spa-tium.”

⁶ Foucault called the sea-faring ship a heterotopia par excellence.

⁷ In their endnotes, Deleuze and Guattari credit the distinction “between two kinds of space-time” to Pierre Boulez’s texts on music theory. Boulez introduces the notion of the spatialization of time, time as represented as a series of points on a line, or instances, which determines a single time, but cannot give one the flavor of duration.

⁸ My conclusion is based on a personal anecdote of getting lost along the Great Divide in the Colorado Rocky Mountains in the summer of 2003. Upon reaching the Divide at the mountain’s summit, our trail disappeared into a field of rocks. The cairns that mark the trail in such areas were only partially present, and did not align with their positions on the map. Large spaces stretched between them. Even though our group knew in what direction we were meant to go; that is, along the ridge, along the divide; we could not overcome our anxiety at the lack of markers. We were overwhelmed by smooth space. Ironically, it began to rain as it often does on summer afternoons in the Rockies, and we were forced to scurry down the cliff into the seemingly larger smooth space of the forest to avoid lightening strikes. Yet the forest was like a sea of columns, of point markers, and we felt much more comfortable there.

⁹ Time is surely striated, even if space is not—we cannot stop the Earth from spinning on its axis or from orbiting the sun, thus days, seasons and years remain to ground a being in time even if lost in smooth space.

¹⁰ The Tuareg-organized Niger Movement for Justice (NMJ) most recently engaged in violent action in 2007.

¹¹ The Inuit often have six or more different names, none of which denote a surname or are gendered in any way.

¹² Matthew Cullen and Mth for Ogilvy & Mather New York. Part of IBM’s “Smarter Planet” advertising campaign.