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Linguistic Spatial Violence: The Muslim Cameleers in the Australian Outback

Joshua Nash

The Temporal, or an Absence of Violence?

This piece is proffered as a reconciliation. I intend it as an appeasement across the disciplines of language documentation, linguistics, architectural history, and, to a smaller extent, Australian colonial and cultural history. Further, the creative license I take in my writing style and the topics with which I grapple mean that I hope to reach new understandings of a story about the history of the exploration of the Australian interior now becoming more broadly known: the cultural and physical history associated with the presence of the Afghan cameleers in Australia. While this empirical and artefactual history has been documented and presented, and its associated architectural history and cultural-citizenry research is underway, the role of language in the story of the cameleers remains largely undocumented.¹ Through looking for and considering the role of placenames and language artefacts, I piece together a story of language meeting architecture. I document and ruminate on these names and their implications to see whether their being made explicit and recorded can provide a reconciliation of the crossover between the language and architectural experience the cameleers experienced. Here I use my own travel, movement, and pilgrimage event with colleagues from different disciplines through outback South Australia as a means to resolve some threads that relate cultural history, architectural (non)remnants, language and placenames (toponyms), and how time-space can remove objects and even memories in a fashion which can be *spatially violent*. And because my implication involves language, *linguistic spatial violence* is the expression I use throughout to make sense of my striving for harmony.

My use of *violence* is analogical. I link violence to that which has been

removed, destroyed, forgotten, is no longer. My definition contrasts with typical uses of violence: behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something. My violence is synonymous with absence; that which is forgotten, disremembered. Architectural presents (gifts) can endure as architecturally present(s) (built remains), like linguistic currents (waves, movements) can persist as linguistically current(s) (language still spoken). Just as time is implicated in my posing and the temporal is my delineating instrument dividing void and incumbent-cum-occupied space, the distinction between adjective–adverb and definite–indefinite article renders my description sensible. The spatial syntax of space is cast upon the syntax of spatially linguistic relics; the built in names and the honorifics of the assembled. A duel of dualities.

I use the mediation of presence and absence to advance an argument concerning (linguistic and architectural) spatial violence. The study of what I moot is a neglected and deficient architectural register layered against a landscape of language in place and a relative surfeit of realised monikers (there are relatively many names compared to the small amount of extant architecture). A couple of the names: Afghan Hill and Afghan Well (more later). A bipartite launching: architecture and language, the built and the names, the realised and un(der)realised, the theoretical and the practical, the violent and the gentle. The study: the architecture of the Muslim cameleers in outback (South) Australia. The method: linguistic architecture–writing, spatial (linguistic) writing, (language) site writing, or any apt amalgam. I contrast the missing and unavailable architectural residua of the explorer–drovers in the inland of Australia with a neo–representation and recognition that they are extant, if nothing, in language seen through toponyms (placenames). For me violence resembles the strength of material(ity) and vocables, that which can span and be recounted across time–space and which continues to exist where it wants. This schema is situated against the inherence of our study, those nomadics (not necessarily a cameleer, possibly me, not only because I am travelling this land in 2014, but because I am a South Australian) who are constantly at odds in keeping their hold against the violent potency of this time–space. Time has the last (violent and virulent) laugh with both architecture and language; it decides whether something stays or goes.

Architecture, like language, can be considered to be composed and comprised of a grammar. A crucial component to any architecture and any language, and particularly when aspects of the built and the spoken are few and even absent, is how the user uses these. I purposefully pose the user as absent in order to eliminate the restraints of utility and focus entirely on form and its almost formless possibilities. Architecture and language are as much concrete and definite experiences as abstract and removed realities. A building or a language no longer present, but which might have once been there yet has been

removed through time or other harsh means, are as relevant to my discussion as those which are prominent and stated.

Some background.² It was the late 1850s. Camels were deemed by prospectors and governmental officials to provide the best and most efficient means of exploring inland Australia and transporting goods and provisions into the country's heartland. Entrepreneurs saw transportation as a vector and means of opening. Horse and bullock teams could not cope with the sandy deserts, extreme heat, and lack of water. European cameleers were not unknown nor untrained, but the Muslim cameleers were recognised as the best and most efficient. For them the camel was more than a beast of burden. The Koran tells it is a blessed animal.

The Afghan camel drivers, the cameleers who steered their ships of the desert, ventured to Australia primarily for economic reasons. At least 2000 cameleers and 20,000 camels arrived in Australia during the period from 1850 to 1920. This epoch was a burgeoning time for migration to Australia and for the expanding of industry in (mainly) coastal centres. By this time, what inland Australia had to offer in terms of resourcefulness and potential financial probing remained largely unexplored. The 1893 gold discoveries at Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie in Western Australia greatly increased demand for camels by traders to move gold to other Australian trading posts. A vast network of camel routes spread across the inland. Most cameleers arrived in Australia as young men, in their 20s or 30s. They mostly arrived from the arid hills and plains of Baluchistan, Afghanistan, and the north-west of what was then British India, today's Pakistan. They assisted the exploratory expeditions of explorers like Thomas Elder and Ernest Giles, such as the laying of the overland telegraph line from Adelaide to Darwin, and contributed to the development of the physical infrastructure of the Australian outback. Many left wives and families at home, returning to them after their employment contracts with European employers in Australia were over. Others stayed on in Australia, and some formed unions with European and Aboriginal women. Today, their descendants retain marked links with this distinctive heritage. They acknowledge they are descendants of the cameleers; they have a definite skin colour unlike Europeans or Aboriginal people. Some people I spoke with in Marree, one of the main camel stations in South Australia, consider themselves *grey fellas*. Not black, not white, but in between. The cameleers' offspring maintain links to their ancestry through mind and heart and with events and acknowledgement in a more recent place of Muslim worship in Marree. The memory and sensation of the camel and their foot soldiers still adorn the outback.

The cameleers belonged to four main ethnic groups: Pashtun, Baluchi, Punjabi, and Sindhi. Despite cultural and linguistic differences, the cameleers shared ancient skills. In their homelands many led semi-nomadic lives, carrying

goods by camel string along centuries-old trade routes through arid and harsh regions of Central Asia. Our operators shared faith in Muhammed the Prophet, with more than a few being of the Sikh denomination. Many would pray as they travelled through the barren line of their journey. In their communities, small iron or earth-walled mosques provided a focus for daily prayer, religious festivals, and sociability.

The cameleers spoke a mix of languages, reflecting the landscapes from which they came. Pashto, Dari (Persian), Baluchi, Punjabi, Sindhi, and Urdu were likely heard in the streets of Kalgoorlie (Western Australian), Bourke (New South Wales), and Marree (South Australia). Some cameleers were literate, while others relied upon oral tradition, reciting poems or folk-tales at evening campfires and celebrations. Although the language of the Koran was not widely spoken in Central Asia, the cameleers would have uttered most of their prayers in Arabic.

The reader may note a significant absence of Aboriginal presence and marginalisation in my treatise. To talk of the Australian colonial story and the occupation of land without mention of such a central aspect, no matter the specific methods and writing practices adopted, may be perceived as again rendering a crucial player absent. Still, the focus here is on the cameleers and their architectural (non)integration, and not the contestation of the consideration of Indigenous relationships with and ownership of land and place. The Indigenous Aboriginal attendance in historical and ongoing political, cultural, and linguistic geographies of the colonisation in Australia cannot be denied. It is simply not my prerogative to characterise these. The interested reader is referred to any number of publications dealing with such matters. I need not list them.

It is July 2014. I have driven north from Adelaide with a small posse of colleagues employed on an Australian Research Council project entitled “The Architecture of Australia’s Muslim Pioneers.” It is with knowledge of the cameleers and what they built that I have departed. My workmates have their different foci; mine hover somewhere in inbetween spaces, straddling finding built remains and understanding the linguistics of concrete forms and dusted architectural landscapes. My position as driver, passenger, and generalist researcher in a four-wheel drive in the outback leads to emotional connectedness to the project and to the land (Figure 1).

After Port Augusta, I traverse the same path the cameleers took, north into the centre. I consider it a pilgrimage path. It is necessary to show where they were, at what times, and those European explorers with whom they associated (Figure 2). While on the so-called Ghan track leading north from Port Augusta, I search for the remains of these peripatetic pioneers. The remnants are both architectural (fewer) and linguistic-toponymic (more, though still few), the methods I use are as scientific as emotional. What I



Figure 1 The Australian outback in a four wheeled drive near Port Augusta, South Australia, 2014. Image courtesy the author.

experience on this desert mission is expressed through the emotions, experiences, and senses of self I seek. While these emotions are mine and not necessarily in any way those of the cameleers, I believe such sentiments can offer special insight into the relation between the Afghans and the places they lived and worked. From buildings through signs, spatial(ly violent) behaviour, and architectural pilgrimage, I notice a connectedness worth measuring. I want to write as much about architecture (strong in the sense that it is present, you can touch it, it is hard) and that which is gentle yet weak (namely the dusty remains of architecture no longer), as much about strength as the violence of time and what it confiscates from our vision. That is, I want to know and experience how time can forcefully remove previously strong artefacts like buildings and appropriate their physical memory.

The cameleers used their dromedarian creatures as their ships of the desert and their toil as their mark on the land. This time our animal is a grunty four-wheel drive, not a four-legged beast. We use an accelerator, automatic transmission, and raise much dust during our journeying. Our travels take us far north, beyond Goyder's Line.³ Some of their sites can be visited—there are some remains. Still, despite their labours, their travail in the red dust, there exist few linguistic relics or objects in the landscape. A few gravestones oriented in the correct direction facing Mecca are incident, some unmasking obvious monikers and proper noun vestiges: Bejah, Khan, Muhammed. The toponymist (placename researcher) in me searches what I quickly realise is in vain: the desire to partake in placenames which may be more than the nondescript.

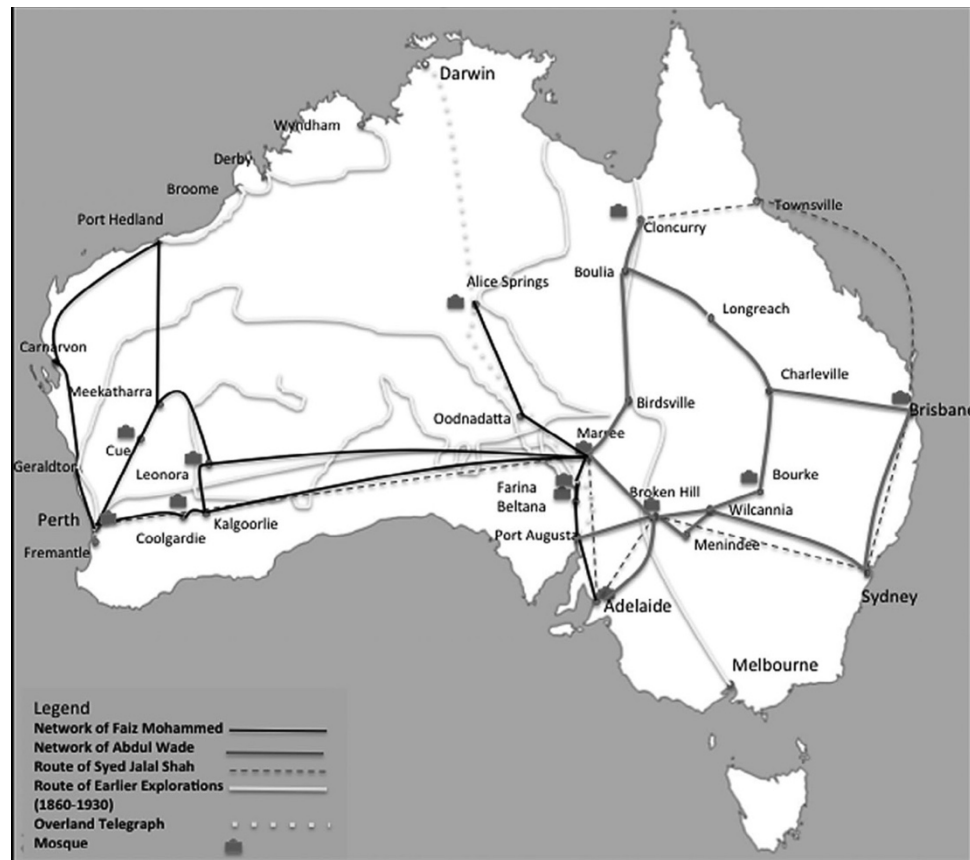


Figure 2 Map of early Australian inland exploring expeditions involving camels, 2016. Image courtesy of Md. Mizanur Rashid and Md. Noorizhar Ismail.

I am looking for as many placenames as possible, as much language in landscape as imaginable, and as many hints as to how language influenced the now-available-to-the-eye built remains of the cameleers. How can I document language data when there appears such a dearth? What is at stake here is how architectural language and vernaculars may crumble yet provide the possibility to salvage language documentation and how language might be collected in such granular environments.

I seek out something personal, epithets beyond the descriptive placenames of Afghan Hill, Afghan Well, and Camel Well of Beltana and the Afghan Quarter of Marree. Sure, these placenames were by and large created by other people referring to Afghans, not by the Afghans themselves. And indeed, the personal names were recorded in English scripts and mostly by English spellers. I can only give a few because so few remain. Nonetheless, these are my toponymic reference points. I have lucked out. Other than these, and other than a few architectural and archaeological remains, there is little to go on. Still, the (writing architecture) show must go on.

I begin by constructing an emotional standpoint of my feelings on this fieldwork around an architecture of atmosphere. When I travel through spaces, I am exposed to a character and tone, a time-space I have to experience and to

be exposed to in order to grasp and appreciate it from where I stand.⁴ Within (an) architectural space(s), any experience is driven by the subjective, my mood, my emotional state, my sense of perception, and its connection to the world. This archaeology of atmosphere combined with the idea of the embodied experience as (a) pilgrimage situates my writing practice architecturally and linguistically.⁵

I employ the rather pliable and adaptable methodology of spatial writing (or “writing architecture”) within architectural theory and extend it to an innovative and experimental rendering of the linguistics and architecture on this journey. By integrating spatial writing in this undertaking, I draw significantly on the ease of writing critically about space, intersections, and interstices offered by Jane Rendell, something she calls “site-writing,” Hélène Frichot’s steps towards writing as a means of theoretical enquiry and as a process of “imagining new forms of life into existence,” and Karen Burns’ application of extracted spatial tropes from philosophy through architecture to writing.⁶ The resultant consequence is an outcome of the very travel I am engaged in combined in consonance with an introspective posthoc practice of writing up results and findings.

My application of writing as spatial practice aims at being sensuous scholarship, and I develop an emotional situatedness about my place within an architecture of architecture-writing.⁷ This movement through space, on a specific linear path, is spatially driven and by nature violent. There is a piercing of the natural body of nature (read: transportation both vehicular and corporeal), an impaling of an old(er) narrative in terms of my own ends (read: linguistic highjacking), and my own ambition to (re)tell another’s story based in an individual choosing of what I want to read (see: selective attention).

(The) Unbuilt of the Weak, or the Linguistics of Concrete and Dust

The cameleers’ architectural influence may be notable, but it is humble. The Marree Mosque (Figure 3), for example, is an exceptional specimen of this humility. It is small yet distinct, respectful yet tame. It is one of the most well-known outback housings of the cameleers’ worship. Without the camel drovers, little discovery, exploration, and settlement of Australia’s vast desert interior in the nineteenth century would have been possible. Quietly but indelibly, these peripatetic Muslim pioneers also constructed their own places and dwelling spaces within this harsh landscape and made it (their) home. Along with their cultural settling, one would also expect a degree of linguistic housing to have occurred. That is, a certain amount of language residue is expected in signs (several gravesites contain Arabic writing) and in written



Figure 3 One of the earliest documented mosques in Australia, Hergott Springs (officially renamed Marree in 1883), South Australia, 1884. Image courtesy State Library of South Australia (Article B15321).

documentation (Australian linguist Jane Simpson lists some of these records), but there is much less than I expected.

As a trained toponymist, I would specifically expect language to be made explicit in landscape through placenaming practices. While the cameleers' concrete remains are scant and few, my assignment is to uncover a little more regarding that which is absent, and what this (architectural and linguistic) absence discloses: the previously organised dust I discover in the course of my walkabout. I want to know the severity of these leftovers, and how they were (mal)treated. Not by humans necessarily, but by being exposed to the elements and time across mobile epochs. Beyond standard and expected names like Afghan Well and Camel Well, personal names like Baloosh and Hafiz pepper the cemetery landscapes of Hawker and Marree. Still, I was hoping for more. The former cameleers, and their grey fella descendants, are not as visible as I had expected.

This writing of architecture, the project made flesh and made emotional, is represented as a/the deconstructed built, and a search for the built–unbuilt within the linguistics of concrete and dust. I perceive some messiness and jumble among this arrangement, yet I also find a striving for reconciliation from the violence of the spatial arrangements that I measure and adjudge. The strong, built architectural remains fashioned in the late 1800s by the cameleers are as much in my view as the weak, absent residua of the unbuilt they never fabricated. By documenting names, (in)definite articles, and spatial doings, I search the thought remnants of these explorer–builders, hoping to uncover something more than (the) concrete lees of primitive construction left after makeshift mosques and rural settlements had been deserted or rendered

defunct. The tangible frames prompt deliberation on the relationships of (the) language of the weak, the linguistics of concrete(ness), the grammar of architecture, and the definite versus the indefinite.

The Marree Mosque (Figure 3), a single structure since demolished yet rebuilt in a commemorative fashion to remember the influence and presence of the cameleers in Marree from the mid 1800s, was built primarily of mud, wood, and thatch. Although a small configuration, its presence would have been imposing on the otherwise inert outback landscape. The striking presence of such a piece of architecture in this remote place would almost have seemed bizarre for anyone except the cameleers themselves. So remote, so un-outback-like, so expansive in comparison to the flatness of its surroundings. The memories of the mental and physical heritage of this rustic place of worship and other spots of peripheral encampments in country South Australia are obvious, apparent, lucid. I collect images, experience contact and proximity, feel the grit of dust beneath my fingernails. This landscape must have been tough to build in, so difficult to even leave a trace. The unbuilt is concurrently more distant, abstracted, a language type unseen and actually unwritten. The punctuation between these dichotomies is where I sit and attempt reconciliation. The threshold of the seen (naked) expressed in the absent (clothed). One of my tools for penetrating and reconciling this weak–strong divide: language as (the) article.

Articles emerge definitely, indefinitely, or absently. The nexus of articulation produces the mortar and sticky stuff marrying the parts: definitiveness specifies, indefinitiveness makes vague, an absent or zero morph forges annulled space–place. Within this tripartite complex(ity)—a weak system—lies an intrinsic enfeeblement: the forfeiture of the unidealised, the unconcrete (subjected)-unconcretised (predicated), the forgotten. The definite–indefinite, built–unbuilt, materiality–thought, strong–weak, architecture–language contrarities are the methods I use to arrange my project. Still, I know my object lies somewhere between any vantage point into any said divergent portal.

The cameleers constructed and were scaffolded by their new homeland, stationed among the exotic and esoteric placenames adorning pastoral Outback rural towns—Marree (Figure 3), Beltana, Farina, Oodnadatta. To me on my Australian desert crusade, the toponyms and places I traverse are as linguistic as they are architectural, as disassembled as entrancing. The landscape is strong, robust, fierce, the persuasion about what I see punchy, terse, laconic. The spaces this architecture has lost through violence want to be documented. I want to talk about it but find few remarks. Against what epitomises architectural and formal strength and brevity, I identify a linguistic verbosity, a frailty and casual weakness.

The weak, the soft, and the voluptuous of my systems of malleable and

apologetic thoughts, my language, and the articulation of articles and of (place)names are distinguished from the puissance of the actuality of the built architecture that I behold. The memories of the men and their animals are supple, the red soil possibly workable, the wind desiccating. They worked here, transported goods through notional thoroughfares, opened up colonial Australia. This country would not be the same without them. Theirs is an aspect of colonial (architectural and linguistic) history that is largely omitted. Strong forgetfulness, weakened potency of their posting within alien territory. I am attempting a remembrance.

The cameleers were situated on several (weak) edges, obvious verges. Linguistically marginalised, they spoke Hindi, Urdu, Baluchi, Pashto, Farsi. Financially limited because of their short-term contracts, they never occupied nuclei of outposts but would convene their forced dispersal in makeshift and improvised fringe bivouacs—Ghantowns—on the rim. Bijou hubs, cosy nooks that sympathised and had rapport with the Afghans' earlier housed and worded yarn. These abbreviated architectural librettos and jargonistic travails tell much. They were left out on the edge, rarely welcomed onto the "right side of the tracks." Through their contact with the colonial lingua franca, a developing Australian English idiom-cum-cant, their languages were also pressured to the brink, the linguistic perimeter. Pidginised and conceivably creolised medleys evolved, forming paralleled linguistic and architectural parlance, hybridised states, creolisation. Some more personal names of the Afghan cameleers—Abdullah and Shah—endure amid the contradiction separating the grounded dust fated relics (the now unbuilt, the thought, the linguistic) and architectural realis (it is there, I know it because I can see it) in amalgamated linguistic terrain and architectural reach. I acquiesced to thinking of these micro colonies the cameleers occupied in this non-urban land. I attempt to harmonise what appears as the violence of unfamiliar systems of building, talking, and naming with their campaign to prevail with their dromedaries (dromedary: from Old French *dromedaire* or late Latin *dromedarius* (*camelus*) 'swift camel').

Weak(er) pidgins and creoles (contact languages), interspersed and even disrupted with/out articles, utter something much less humorous yet still real: fusion, adjustment, crusading for staying and belonging. A search for meaning in the lack of a defined medium or definite article, some significance in the broken and the feeble. Few rules govern this rural tribality, a sort of sectarian architectonic anatomy. No code meant no bureaucracy, a desolate democratocracy made flesh. Motile and itinerant, yes. Static and unstained, no. Peripatetic, nomadic, wandering, roving. A bygone migratory coupling noted now through form (secure) and word (flimsy).

Processes: the Grammatical and the Assembled

The search is directed at buildings, that which is built, and that which has since receded from view—that which has become dust-like. What we can no longer see competes with the present, a kind of architectural and archaeological loss. Nowhere is this as apparent as in language. Here it is not only language but also the archetype of the camel as a semiotic, fleshy representation of the linguistic, cultural, rhizomic, and symbiotic connectivity that fastens our memory to those who drove the beasts through such bleak and spartan terrain. Camels were and are still vectors, Outback conveyors. As the linguist Jane Simpson has shown, they even moved their language(s), they were carriers (of) pidgins. I believe assuredly there must be a story in the paucity and insufficiency of palpable and substantial pointers. This deficiency (in)forms and makes oblique the basis of my writing.

In the linguistic sense, the definite article “the” exudes force because it establishes and specifies a noun; in the architectural sense, definiteness and specificity inculcates the ability to touch, to be documented, an implied historicity of material and emplacement. This ganging up of definiteness renders the weak even weaker through an imposition of ideals: if you cannot be felt, be made definite, or be concretised, you are easy prey, painlessly acquiesced and removed. You are more likely to be colonised, marginalised, and potentially forgotten. And here we have the main (spatial) violence committed and imposed on the cameleers and their building(s): one can (almost) not find anything, to the point where we might conclude they were never there.

The toponymist searches for more, something less battered, less brutalised by the elements, more defended, safer. My fellow pilgrims (academic colleagues) are from different disciplines: history, architecture, and planning. They seek evidence in historical truth and evidence-based comprehension, a way of carnally documenting the spatial violence that has taken place here. Maybe I am lazy. I look for an easier way. I simply look around, take in the view. There are (almost) names everywhere. On the gravestones in the graveyards, in the few toponyms attached to the action of cameleering, and in the memories of people who remember these men.⁸ When one walks into a graveyard, one heads west. That is where all the Muslim graves are. There is usually rusted metal around and some text, which is often barely readable, on a headstone (Figure 4). I want these names and their absence of the articular now to see if their articulation can lead us anywhere away from or towards some reconciliation of the spatial violence the cameleers experienced.



Figure 4 Cross depicting J. Khan, Port Augusta Cemetery, South Australia, 2014. Image courtesy the author.

The Articular and the Vehement

Articles are strange animals. They exist as an ephemeral aspect of grammar, unclear in their usage, pointed in their appearance. They punctuate space, render the corporeal abstract, the distant close. How and when to employ the definite, the indefinite, or the zero morph (\emptyset) even alludes native speakers of articular languages, while many languages do not possess lexemes that can be considered article-derived or article-representative. The article comprises a stratum of grammatical “bits,” clitics, which fall under a higher order category: determiners. With possessive pronouns (my, our), demonstratives (this, that), and “no-things” (zero morphs, implicit and absent lexemes) articles begin noun phrases. These clitics, particles with no semantic value of and on their own, modify, alter, and affect that which they precede (proclitic) or come after (enclitic). “We’re going to school” and “we’re going to the school” entail differing degrees of definiteness and specificity, the habitual and non-habitual, physical and psychological space through knowledge of the present and past. Apropos the current, articles concretise and deconcretise distant and close spaces. The absence-presence of an article may de/concretise a place, just as the presence-absence of concrete can de-elaborate an article’s presence-absence.

“To articulate” an idea means to make it clearer. “To cliticise” means to put a grammatical lexeme before (pro-) or after (en-) that which is being referred to. “To concretise” culminates the process of articulating

procliticisation. Objects of/as materiality (concrete, bricks, glass, the built) are “languaged” into analysable ephemera whereas the linguistic (indefinite and definite articles, clitics, grammatical lexemes) is rendered flesh through our knowing and not-knowing. Foregrounding and reducing a language’s or an architecture’s nexus of concreteness or unconcreteness must then be mediated through acts of processing, temporal-spatial engagement, and levels and degrees of inertia-action. This is what I have attempted with our current example of the cameleers and their built and spoken-named.

One aspect of the active process of *pilgrimage* (contact, movement, touch, viscosity, employment, assuredness) contrasts with an aspect of the inertia-directed process *introversion* (thought, distance, separation, speculation, quietude). At these edges, vicissitudes, and entrance points there is striving, an ambition to live and deploy (e)motions, thoughts. However, it is in pilgrimage that an active and concretised amalgam occurs involving world (in this case concrete), human (here “the article” as language), and reconciliation (a resultant equilibrium between thing and no-thing). This crossover as pacification has led us to believe that it is in names where architecture can live on, where it can avoid the brunt of a spatial violence gone wrong. The cameleers consecrated new architectural form—whether concrete or not—and made definite their linguistic imprint on the Australian landscape. The Marree Mosque (Figure 3) is our prime example. It is these consecrations, these in/definite, de/concretised memories and forms that are worth travelling to, at least in thought, in order to realise the schism between the definite-indefiniteness of their relationships to land, self, language, and architecture. I hope our adventure has soothed even the most sceptical, appeased the most violent of individual, clime, and time.

Peroration

Through time and positioning, a group’s participation in foreign physical habitus has not only been forgotten but even impeached. In the search for legitimisation of my silent and unvoiced victors, I have insisted it is a dispute of and over linguistic form and content as much as built configuration and substance where a speculative retort exists as regards a possibly abstracted architecture of non-violence and its meek linguistic parallels. Where much literature focuses on the naturalisation of fact and masking of others in political violence associated with architecture, I have presented a softer and less explicit effectuation of (linguistic) spatial violence.

The worded and (un)built reorganising I thumbnailed precedes acts of neglect and ignorance and methods through which members choose to recollect. Where the cameleer architects were not exactly architects—they were

camel drovers, remember—and while the makeshift mosques in, for example, Marree and the Afghan establishments in Beltana, Farina, and Oodnadatta were not really built to endure much by way of time and climactic compromise, the events which did take place on the physical and cultural minority of the space-places they inhabited and their undermined architectural work do offer means through which to make observations. Like elsewhere in the Muslim world, the pool by the Marree Mosque (Figure 3) ensured worshippers entered the structure with clean feet. The mosque's open, earth-walled construction derives from the cameleers' homeland.

In the case of the cameleers, these architectural acts of violence were not necessarily physical or explicit. That is, it is not (necessarily) true that higher order decisions were given about where and how they could build and what architectural languages they would use, but that their work was continually under the duress of some higher, non-cultural regimen. The buildings fell, the materials vanished, and now there are only photos and other forms of documentation. Such natural phenomena caused their work to be made spatially violent. Still, and this has been my main contention, it has been through linguistic and toponymic means and media that the cameleers' made-spatially-violent architecture has been liberated and perpetuated. This has not occurred in obvious safeguarding and defending of the original structures themselves—they are all but gone—but in the toponymic representation and retaining of names within landscape and hence their spatial (and linguistic) behaviours.

Through nominal means, and through acknowledging the architectural unbuilt, a putative prevention and recovery from a lost and spatially divorced architecture removed from the colonial history of Australia has been retrieved. Architecture has thus played a role in the resisting of violence-through-forgetfulness. Whether or not I believe this to be a noble cause worthy of further architectural and linguistic research does in no way detract from the efforts such investigations and documentations make toward assuaging the fissures spatial violence itself creates.

* * *

Joshua Nash is an islophilic generalist-cum-linguist working on the language of Pitcairn Island. He writes about ethnography, the anthropology of religion, architecture, pilgrimage studies, and language documentation. He has conducted linguistic fieldwork on Pitcairn Island and Norfolk Island, the South Pacific, Kangaroo Island, South Australia, and New Zealand; environmental and ethnographic fieldwork in Vrindavan, India; and architectural research in outback Australia. He is concerned with philosophical and ontological foundations of language and place.

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Notes

¹ The interested reader is referred to several volumes that document the extant empirical history of the cameleers: Philip Jones and Anna Kenny, *Australia's Muslim Cameleers: Pioneers of the Inland, 1860s-1930s* (Kent Town, SA: Wakefield Press, 2010), originally published 2007; Christine Stevens, *Tin Mosques and Ghantowns: A History of Afghan Cameldrivers in Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002), originally published 1989; Peter Scriver, "Mosques, Ghantowns and Cameleers in the Settlement History of Colonial Australia," *Fabrications* 13, no.1 (2004): 19-41. Several recent works relating to architectural and cultural history of the cameleers are Katharine Bartsch, Mizanur Rashid, Peter Scriver, Izhar Ismail, and Philip Jones, "Golden threads: Understanding the Transnational Significance of the Perth Mosque (1905)," in *Australia ICOMOS Conference, Adelaide, Australia*; Peter Scriver, Katharine Bartsch, and Md. Mizanur Rashid, "The Space of Citizenship: Drifting and Dwelling in "Imperial" Australia," *Fabrications* 26, no. 2 (2016): 133-157; and Katharine Bartsch, Peter Scriver, and Md. Mizanur Rashid, "Does Not the Glorious East Seem to be Transported to our Shores? Perth's Golden Mosque (1905)", in *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand: 33, Gold*, eds. AnnMarie Brennan and Philip Goad (Melbourne: SAHANZ, 2016): 22-32. Jane Simpson's chapter "Camels as Pidgin-carriers: Afghan Cameleers as a Vector for the Spread of Features of Australian Aboriginal Pidgins and Creoles," in *Processes of Language Contact: Studies from Australia and the South Pacific*, ed. Jeff Siegel (Saint-Laurent, Quebec: Fides, 2000), 195-244, gives an excellent summary of the movement of the cameleers and how this was reflected in language change among communities in outback Australia the cameleers where peripheral to or an integral part of. Simpson's chapter is the only published work of significance that has dealt with the technical details of the cameleers' language, its movement through the vector of the camel, and of the cultural significance of the language used by these people.

² Much of this content is derived from Philip Jones and Anna Kenny, *Australia's Muslim Cameleers: Pioneers of the Inland, 1860s-1930s* (Kent Town, SA: Wakefield Press, 2010), originally published 2007.

³ Goyder's Line is a boundary line across northern South Australia

corresponding to a rainfall boundary believed to indicate the edge of the area suitable for agriculture. North of this line, rainfall is scant, and land is generally not suitable for cropping, only grazing. It was named in 1865 by surveyor George Goyder.

⁴ Gernot Böhme, *Architektur und Atmosphäre* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2006).

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 2002); Tim Flohr Sørensen, “More Than a Feeling: Towards an Archaeology of Atmosphere,” *Emotion, Space and Society*, 15 (2015): 64-73; Larry Russell “A Road Less Traveled: Vocation, Sex, and Religion,” *Emotion, Space and Society* 11 (2014): 23-27.

⁶ Jane Rendell, *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism* (London: IB Tauris, 2010); Hélène Frichot, “Following Hélène Cixous’ Steps Towards a Writing Architecture,” *Architectural Theory Review* 15, no. 3 (2010): 323; Karen Burns, “Becomings: Architecture, Feminism, Deleuze—Before and After the fold,” in *Deleuze and Architecture*, eds. Helene Frichot and Stephen Loo (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 15–39.

⁷ Paul Stoller, *Sensuous Scholarship* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Hélène Frichot, “Following Hélène Cixous’ Steps Towards A Writing Architecture,” *Architectural Theory Review* 15, no.3 (2010): 312-323. Regarding theoretical work on architecture writing and spatial writing, see special issue of *Architectural Theory Review* 15, no. 3 (2010). The introduction to this issue (pp. 233-241) provides ample references, methodological insight, and a practical summary of work into spatial writing and architecture-writing.

⁸ While the male cameleers did beget children, many of whom were female, there were no female cameleers who came from Asia to Australia. Camel droving was and is still largely a male dominated occupation.