

// IDENTIFICATION.....

PROJECT TITLE: Territory representations and identity traits of traditional and contemporary innu camps: towards a culturally adapted planning for the Innu community of Uashat mak Mani-utenam

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// ABSTRACT

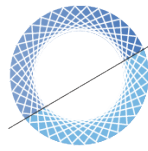
In an era when Innus spend the majority of the year in communities and in an urban setting, natural and built environments that differ from life in their ancestral territories, it is important to ask how native communities can better their quality of life by restoring their basic cultural references within their planning. A symbol of an ideal for many, the territory, for those who frequent it, is still intimately linked to the pursuit of game and fish. The study attempts to understand how the different ways to settle on the territory reveal the ways of life of the Innus.

The methodology includes a typo-morphologic analysis carried out on two sites that are occupied seasonally by the Innus of Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, the Shipit site on the shore of the Moisie River and the Mani-Utenam beach on the shore of the St. Lawrence River. Twenty-six camps were the object of this study. The study also takes into account the testimonials of seven Innus from Uashat mak Mani-Utenam who frequent the territory.

Even if the transition from the tent to the cabin is more frequent, many identity traits persist in the way of occupying and living the territory. The results also reveal that the establishment of the camps is not tributary of a factor in particular, but is a combination of factors that includes the prevailing winds, the period of the year, the site's topography, location and accessibility to water. The view to appreciate the landscape has its importance, but it is secondary to the view in an optic of pursuing game and capture prey. At the community level, this can be transposed in particular by implanting a building according to the site, rather than conforming with the street network under the pretext of aesthetics and uniformity.

// INTRODUCTION.....

This essay focuses on the representation the Innus make of the land and the way they inhabit it, at a time when the majority of the year is lived in the community. It focuses more specifically on the Innu community of Uashat mak Mani-utenam on the Côte-Nord. The Indigenous communities face multiple challenges in regards to their living environments and a clear lack of adaptation to the culture and values of the people who live there is part of the problem (Burns, 2006; Casault, 1999; Harvey, 2013; Lessard, Chicoine and



Ouellet, 1986; Marchand, 2011; Martin and Casault, 2005). This essay tries to understand how the ancestral territory, in the ways Innu represent and inhabit it, can inspire the development of their communities.

// THEORETICAL FRAME

This research explores the topics of land representations and its multiple definitions (André, 1984; Mailhot, 1993; Vachon, 1985) and Innu identity (Antene-Kapesh, 1979). It also studies the space organization of traditional Innu camps, through patterns developed by Jacobson, Sylverstein and Winslow in their book "Patterns of Home" (2002).

// METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative and two methods of data collection and analysis are used. First, a typo-morphological analysis of twenty-six camps was carried out on two sites occupied by the Innu: in Shipit, along the Moisie River (14 camps) and on the Mani-utenam beach (12 camps). These camps were analyzed according to the system proposed by Caniggia and Maffei (1979): buildings, urban fabric and territory or land. Thus, at the scale of the building, the nine patterns of Jacobson, Sylverstein and Winslow (2002) serve to deepen the analysis.

Second, semi-structured interviews with seven members of the Innu community help to refine and clarify the data collected with the typo-morphological analysis. The interviews are divided into three sections: territory, coastal locations and communities.

// RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....

A symbol of an ideal for many, the territory, for those who frequent it, is still intimately linked to hunting and fishing activities. The concept of territory includes the same three entities, namely the "Great Woods", the Coast, including Shipit and Mani-utenam's beach, and the community itself. For respondents, it appears that the term "territory" or "land" refers more to the "Great Woods", the Coast located more in a natural environment, such as Shipit.

// CONCLUSIONS.....

Although the community has become the new living environment for a majority of the Innu of the Uashat mak Mani-Utenam Band, the fact remains that ancestral land still holds a great importance in their lives. For those who frequent it, the land is still intimately linked to hunting and fishing activities. The practice of these traditional activities still influences the location and types of camps on the land. These settlements, however, are not dependent on a particular factor, but on a set of factors that includes wind direction, site topography, accessibility and access to the water source and views on the landscape. Access to water is an important criterion to meet primary needs but also as a mean of transport, apprehending game or fish and accessing these wildlife and resources. Although the land and the community may be perceived as two entities, the community is still within the geographical boundaries of Nitassinan. Land and community are thus reconcilable in the sense that they complement each other according to what each of these environments has to offer.