



// IDENTIFICATION.....

PROJECT TITLE:

STUDENT NAME: JULIEN LANDRY

STUDY PROGRAM: MAÎTRISE EN SCIENCES DE
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DIRECTOR : MYRIAM BLAIS

CODIRECTOR: n.d.

// ABSTRACT

(around 250 words)

The purpose of this essay is to deepen the understanding of the effects of sedentarization among Inuit communities in Nunavik. It focuses on the effects of this profound transformation of lifestyles on identities, territorialities and contemporary Inuit territories. It is important to better understand the relationships of attachment and appropriation of habitat, in all its forms, in order to develop living environments that better support Inuit ways of life and cultural practices. In regard of the conclusions of recent public consultations published in the Parnasimautik Report (Makivik Corporation 2014), Inuit planning aspirations reflect a desire to return to a stronger relationship with the land or territory. (in terms of mobility, hunting and fishing, relation with the landscape, etc.) and even discomfort toward the sedentary settlement.

The concepts of identity, territoriality and territory are, initially, the subject of a review of literature so as to feed, in a second time, a discussion on the process of sedentarization and its effects . In particular, it question the conceptual relevance of nomadic and sedentary traditional territorialities in interpretation of contemporary Inuit realities.

In the twenty-first century, mutations and emergences intermingle and build Inuit territories with multiple perspectives, at once ancestral, natural, dreamed and urbanized.

// INTRODUCTION.....

(including the research problem)

Within the fourteen Northern Villages of Nunavik, despite a type of normative, technical and exogenous development (Vachon et al., 2017), it seems that an Inuit way of life, motivated by freedom of movement, takes its place in the urban landscape. In this context, the northern villages seem perceived as points of service (health, education, trade) and links with the rest of Quebec. However, the territory and the relations that Inuit have with it remain essential anchors to their culture. For many local representatives, their survival as a distinct people depends on it. Consequently, a certain mismatch between the aspirations for housing and the types of houses offered (form, organization, proximity, attribution, etc.) always appears at the heart of development issues (Ikey and Yeates 2016, Nungak 2000). Urbanization and modernization, accused of a strong negative bias on the part of local people, are seen as responsible of a certain form of cultural and social insecurity (Searles 2010).



About the conclusions of recent public consultations published in the Parnasimautik report (Makivik Corporation 2014), the stated aspirations, indicating a desire to return to a stronger relationship with the land and a certain discomfort toward the sedentary establishment suggest the importance of nomadic heritage in contemporary Inuit imaginary. And yet, the knowledge of the elders, resulting from the frequentation of the territory, does not seem any more to be the only source of reference for the younger generations since it does not correspond to their current sedentary life (Duhaime 2017).

This work proposes a reflexive look by placing the concept of sedentarization, as a passage from nomadism to sedentarity, at the heart of the discussion. This study thus relies on the hypothesis that an "Inuit" redefinition of sedentarity, in terms of relation to the territory, will have the potential to suggest the way for a better understanding or, at the very least, a contextualization of contemporary Inuit realities in Nunavik.

Finally, "How could the process of sedentarisation of Inuit communities in Nunavik have led to the mutation of Inuit territories and the emergence of new territories ? "

// THEORETICAL FRAME

Territory

The territory, as an entity, is apprehended, lived and understood by different communities according to different "territorialities" of their own. Joël Bonnemaïson (1981) suggests a three-dimensional division of the territory that include its systemic and symbolic nature: the structural territory, the lived territory and the cultural territory.

Territoriality refers to the negotiations between identity and space. Territoriality is thus express into a multitude of behaviors and customs. Among these, so-called nomadic and sedentary behaviors are considered as references.

Territoriality

The definition of a territory through space evolve in correspondence with the tension that can exist between the desire to stay in one place or to leave that place. Territoriality is there; the constant sway between fixation and mobility. The territory is associated with a reassuring and convivial character (Flamand 2004, Paquot 2007). Host of our values and true trace of our existence, it embodies a "symbol of identity". This is the place where intimacy becomes possible. By extension of this logic, space, between negative and territorial matrix, "opens on freedom" and, by the same token, on a loss of recognition. Space is then a universe of discoveries and confrontations (Bonnemaïson 1981).

Cultural ecology refers to territoriality as the founder of the spatio-temporal organization of societies (Kelly 1983). In this spirit, the anthropologist Lewis Binford (1990) identifies four reference figures: the nomad, the semi-nomadic, the semi-sedentary and the sedentary. In its general sense, nomadism represents a way of life, often gregarious, guided by a quest, by a movement (Bouvet 2006). The objectives of the move are very variable, they can relate to the survival, an adequation with the seasonal cycles, the pursuit of a goal, a spiritual mission or, simply, the freedom of displacement (White 1995, Attali 2005). The anchorage, or relatively ephemeral



establishment takes the role of a "stepping stone" for the rest of the trip (Déry 2010). Perceived as a phenomenon opposed to nomadism, the sedentary lifestyle refers to a fixation of the habitat in space, thus to a reduction, or even a prolonged stop, of the displacements associated with the residential mobility (Ingold 2000). The dimensions of accumulation, exploitation and territorial exclusivity generally became important (Chang 1962, Caniggia and Maffei 2000).

Contemporary Realities

The relevance and reflexivity of this classification, since it is exclusively spatial, however, appear disputed; this classification would more often concern a social and political condition than a spatio-temporal categorization of a society (Retaille 1998) Moreover, the propagation within contemporary practices of the fragmented housing (Sloterdijk and Mannoni 2005), etiolated and " polytopic "contributes to blurring the boundaries between nomadic and sedentary models (Lussault 2007).

// METHODOLOGY

This essay consists of a review of literature on territory as main theme and on its link with the identities and territorialities. These concepts are initially the subject of an exploratory and theoretical review of literature in order to feed, in a second time, a discussion on the process of sedentarization and the emergence of new territorialities in Nunavik. Considering their importance in the imaginary, it seems interesting to explore the potentials of these classical models of nomad and sedentary in this exercise of interpretation. At first sight, these two figures are presented as opposite references (Bouvet 2006) which have presented themselves as archetypes of identity. These figures therefore constitute a primary and frank categorization of territorialities.

The research question is addressed in an exploratory and inductive approach as the objective of this work is first to become familiar with the phenomena studied. It is thus proposed to pay particular attention to the qualitative, perceptual and phenomenological characteristics of the subject under study.

// RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....

Initially, the implication of sedentary forces, whether they are associated with the will of Inuit to benefit from their relationship with the Euro-Canadians or that they are associated to the Canadian state and to its desire to provide support Arctic populations, and thereby integrating them into the Canadian political and institutional order, mark a complex and multifaceted process (Duhaime 1983).

In a second time, although the village appears in rupture with the territory, lived and imaginary, of the land, "the insertion of an environment with urban character within the land does not necessarily short-circuit, but rather to resituate, in a new cultural geography, the places where the traditional activities take place "(Desbiens 2017, 153). This "resituation" thus refers to all the changes associated with the land and assembly sites that will have caused the consolidation of the villages. On a larger scale, the significant increase in contacts with southern Quebec, Inuit Nunangat and the rest of the world also contributes to this "resituation" of the Inuit territories and clearly marks the emergence of new areas of use (Gombay, 2005).



With respect to the relevance of the nomadic and sedentary traditional models, it seems that their ability to feed the interpretation of the sedentary process is somewhat limited. As the philosophical and scientific literature on the subject demonstrates, these would belong to a classical and cultural framework that is substantially rigid and, perhaps in some regards, caricatural. The identities deeply marked by sedentarization, presented in this essay, appear more as figures of between-than as reincarnations or transpositions of these figures of nomad and sedentary.

// CONCLUSIONS.....

The heterogeneous and non-exhaustive nature of the referencing process behind this essay results in an imperfect, but wide-ranging, overview of the realities and dynamics of contemporary Inuit territories. Thus, the debate around the research question is more fed by a combination of interpretations with relative light than it is solved. Similarly, the complexity of the questions at stake seems to justify the need for this open and transversal look. The identification of emergences and mutations of identities and territories in Nunavik supports an open, original and constructive approach. This shows that the territory continues to play a "central role" (Collignon 1999). Although it we are not talking about the same territories; its limits have not necessarily changed, but the very definition of what a territory is transformed (Collignon 1999, Lussault 2007).

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RESEARCH NOTE
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