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Landscapes, Houses, Bodies, Things: "Place" and the Archaeology of Inuit Imaginaries

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Although the dichotomization of space and place has spawned a lively archaeological discussion, it threatens to devolve into a troublesome binary like sex/gender. Local place-making and universalizing spatial science are not so neatly segregated. Rather than dividing and bounding the notion of an investment of locations with meaning, it can be extended to describe the intricate topologies of bodies and things, as well as landscapes. Places emerge as sites of the hybrid articulation of representations, practices, and things, as spatialized imaginaries. The notion of imaginaries and the rethinking of place are illustrated with Inuit archaeological and ethnographic examples.

KEY WORDS: place; landscape; imaginaries; Thule Inuit.

INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of a landscape archaeology focused on practical, meaningful, and sociopolitical aspects of people's relationship to the natural and built environment, place has increasingly acquired a specialized sense opposed to space, as the local and the meaningful are opposed to the universal and the objective. Like the sex/gender dichotomy before it, this problematically reifies a nature/culture divide, while limiting the discursive potential of an interesting and useful concept. The inadequacy of the space/place dichotomy is illustrated below through a consideration of Inuit geographic knowledge practices. Although these embody many of the features considered hallmarks of a socially embedded, place-based relation to landscape, they also embrace instrumental navigational concepts and a variety of material technologies for mapping, traveling through, and physically inscribing the environment. Western spatial sciences, on the other hand, are not limited to

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such technical knowledges, things, and practices; they are equally socially embedded, imaginative, and place-making, not to mention thoroughly entwined with the indigenous knowledges they purportedly trumped. Human spatialities are everywhere complex and heterogeneous, at each historical moment articulating embodied actors with a simultaneously symbolic, social, and biophysical world.

Place is regarded here as the effect of a general movement of thought and practice that imbricates the real and the representational at complexly layered sites, and along heterogeneous seams. The investment of particular locations with meaning (place-making) is a ubiquitous social and cognitive process. Looking more closely at the archaeologically and ethnographically well-described Inuit case, networks of places and paths can be discerned at a host of spatial scales, from the vast expanses of the arctic landscape and sea ice to the intricate topologies of houses, bodies, and tools. Homologies, however fragmentary, between these toposemantic arenas point to a field of circulation of representations that can be labelled "the imaginary," and its regional networks "imaginaries." A place can be thought of as a *spatialized imaginary*, a nexus of imaginary significations at the site of its intersection with the real. The notion of imaginaries opened up by this rethinking of place usefully orients us to hybrid past realities constituted by historically emergent networks of representations, embodied practices, and things. The archaeological implications of the notion of hybrid imaginaries are developed further below through a prehistoric Inuit (Classic Thule, ca. A.D. 1200–1450) case study of place-based imaginaries from the central Canadian Arctic.

SPACE AND PLACE

In an increasingly common usage that first crystallized in phenomenological geography (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; and see Heidegger, 1977, for the roots of this formulation), space is taken to refer to the universal, abstract, quantifiable quality of *spatial extension*, especially as conceived and deployed by objectifying sciences like physics or urban planning or, for that matter, archaeology. Place, on the other hand, is taken to refer to a qualitative, historically emergent, experientially grounded mode of inhabiting or dwelling in the world that invests particular locations with personal and collective significance. Tilley (1994) employs such a dichotomous characterization as the foundational premise of a new phenomenological landscape archaeology. Although the terminology varies (de Certeau's [1984] usage, for example, more or less reverses the above senses of space and place, and Lefebvre [1991] defines varieties of "space" that include the experiential dimension frequently designated "place" by others), similarly dualistic conceptions of spatiality are frequently encountered in the social sciences and humanities.

The sundering of space and place, the global and the local, has proved to be an extremely fruitful move for archaeology. Together with Foucault's (1977, 1980)

influential analyses of the spatial modalities of surveillance and domination, it has helped open up important avenues of critical discourse on the oppressive power relations embedded in Western scientific, bureaucratic, political, and commercial representations and manipulations of human spatial practices. These have been explored by historical archaeologists (e.g., Delle, 1999; various contributors to Delle *et al.*, 2000), adding an archaeological voice to the interdisciplinary dialogue on capitalism, postcoloniality, and the state (see also Gosden, 2001; Johnson, 1996; McGuire and Paynter, 1991).

Tilley (1994), Barrett (1994), and others have pursued the complementary path, emphasizing the construction and meaningful experience of places, and of landscapes knit together by paths of movement among networks of places. This approach has been widely criticized and emulated by prehistoric archaeologists, as part of the expanding discourse around the notion of landscape archaeology of which this special issue is a part (for overviews, see, e.g., Anschuetz *et al.*, 2001; Knapp and Ashmore, 1999). Bender (1998) combines a bit of both approaches in an innovative analysis of Stonehenge that explores the continual reworking of meanings and social practices around the stones, from their creation, modification, and reappropriations in the remote past, to contemporary struggles between countercultural groups and heritage authorities over rights of access to the stones for festivals.

While Bender successfully evokes the creative place-making of the free-festivallers (and see especially Morris and Goodwin, 1996), she is somewhat less sympathetic to the archaeologists, bureaucrats, and others who opposed them, but who are likewise engaged in a creative and socioculturally explicable appropriation of the site. Indeed, the officials' relations to the stones could often be characterized as a central part of their life projects, insofar as they have pursued university degrees and careers in archaeology or heritage management. Surely ringing the stones in barbed wire and a phalanx of riot police, or probing the soil beneath them to analyze and exhibit the finds, are as much varieties of creative place-making as holding a rave among them, or erecting the stones in the first place. In each case, certain meanings surrounding the site are actively stabilized, reworked, or created, and given social substance through being drawn into networks of people and practices, and linked to other places and things. The meaningful, cultural, and phenomenological are not on the side of individuals and collectives, and the dominating, objectifying, and universalizing on the side of government, industry, and technoscience. Scientists and technocrats are also individuals and members of society, and everyone's place-making articulates with a common (and limited) material reality that is the object of perpetual social, political, economic, and symbolic struggles.

The space/place distinction comes to bear a suspicious resemblance to another categorical divide that likewise proved useful at a certain moment of theoretical debate and then began to get in the way, namely that between sex, understood as

a stable, biological, precultural ground of bodily difference between women and men, and gender, understood as a culturally and historically specific elaboration of women's and men's roles and statuses that somehow eludes the materiality of the body. The criticism eventually leveled at the sex/gender dichotomy is that there is no universal category of phenomena that is everywhere labeled bodily nature or biology, but rather socially negotiated and endlessly variable cultural *constructions* of what counts as nature or bodily essence (e.g., Butler, 1993; Fausto-Sterling, 2000). The individual bodies that are the ultimate referent of any general understanding of corporeality have always already been given unique shape by history, environment, culture, and biography, as bioarchaeology readily attests, and so cannot be a neutral ground for gender. Not only "gender" but "sex" is historically and cross-culturally unstable. Striving to imagine a precultural, ahistoric body leads to fantasies of wild men and children raised by animals, and to genetic determinisms. Bodies cannot be disentangled from the cultural ways of knowing and the social practices that have shaped them, and on which they in turn impinge. It is precisely this local, historical imbrication of the real and the representational that body studies must seek to elucidate. As Butler (1993) put it:

> For surely bodies live and die; eat and sleep; feel pain, pleasure; endure illness and violence; and these "facts," one might skeptically proclaim, cannot be dismissed as mere construction. Surely there must be some kind of necessity that accompanies these primary and irrefutable experiences. And surely there is. But their irrefutability in no way implies what it might mean to affirm them and through what discursive means. (p. xi)

For similar reasons, we need to avoid the tendency to split the objectification of space from its meaningful elaboration, abandoning one to technoscience and claiming the other for culturalist interpretation. Spatial science does not exact a wholesale abstraction, alienation, and devaluation of space, but rather particular, historically and culturally intelligible kinds of *valuation* of it, no less than do indigenous occupants of "places." Although particular spatial representations or practices are open to political economic critique, to suggest that all modern or Western or capitalist spatialities mark such a profound break with traditional place-based ones that they cannot even be described with the same words and concepts is to reinscribe the essentialist divide between the West and the rest that anthropologists have finally come to contest. There is no imaginative place-world wholly apart from quantifiably real landscapes, bodies, and things, but neither is there a material world that is not thoroughly invested with significance as a precondition of human thought and action. Neither one nor the other has ontological autonomy or priority. Rather than argue over the explanatory precedence of spatio-environmental or socio-symbolic phenomena, we need to build new conceptual frameworks that acknowledge the mutually generative importance of each, as the notion of embodiment has done for sex and gender (Csordas, 1999), and developmental systems theory for genetics and developmental context (Oyama, 2000).

There are various ways to move beyond the space/place impasse. A symmetric pair of approaches would unveil Western spatialities as "soft" and cultural, and

non-Western place-based knowledges as "hard" and objective, redistributing and balancing the putative properties of each. Science studies (e.g., Franklin, 1995; Hess, 1997; Latour, 1999) tackles the former, exploring the discursive possibilities opened up by the recognition that scientists and bureaucrats are also social and cultural creatures, and their practices and conceptions historically constituted. Latour (1987, 1990) and others (Law, 1986) have considered the production of bureaucratic and scientific spatialities historically and ethnographically, in terms of their local cultural logics, technologies, and social conditions. Sociologists and geographers have also produced increasingly sophisticated self-critical analyses of the production of spatial knowledges (e.g., Crang and Thrift, 1999; Harley, 1992; Lefebvre, 1991), a move mirrored by the turn towards greater methodological reflexivity in archaeology (Chadwick, 2003; Gero, 1996; Hodder, 1999; Lucas, 2001).

These sorts of analyses draw back the curtain to expose the mechanisms by which authoritative discourses on space (and other things) are produced. Western spatial sciences (e.g., topology, cosmology, geography, sociology, engineering, architecture, planning) and the technologies that actualize them (statistics, cartographic projection, CAD, GIS, total stations, GPS, etc.) turn out to be analytically pliable social, cultural, and historical objects. Putatively universal spatial scientific discourses are themselves place-based and place-making practices, rooted in labs, field sites, classrooms, archives, factories, and offices, and helping to constitute particular spatial technologies, practices, and representations as part of the world-making projects of individuals and factions within society. A cartographer employing the most elaborate technoscientific approaches to precisely quantify spatial relationships (e.g., analyzing satellite images) is not less engaged with the locations she manipulates than the native elder who presences a mythic time in telling a story about some of the same locations. Rather, the two are differently engaged in imaginative projects of practically and discursively realizing a complexly textured reality. In each case, the location has been invested with significance, drawn into other networks of meaning, and articulated within the logic of a culturally distinctive way of knowing.

The effects the cartographer and the storyteller are capable of producing may be of different orders of magnitude, but they are ultimately intelligible only within the discursive parameters within which each operates. They cannot be arrayed along a simple continuum of either objectivity or authenticity, but are merely different, addressed to different ends, making different knowledge claims, and employing different material and symbolic and social resources along the way. As Latour (1987, 1999) would say, neither science nor storytelling escapes from the network of its own production. As long as the cartographer can draw on the resources of labs, libraries, universities, and a military–industrial–bureaucratic infrastructure to produce and guarantee the accuracy of the instruments and images—in other words, to the extent that the cartographer's analyses and interpretations circulate along the filaments of a technoscientific network that guarantees their

intelligibility—they are capable of being assessed as more or less true and accurate. The same holds for the social networks and cultural logic that guarantee the intelligibility of the elder's stories and their efficacy in transmitting knowledge of water sources, hunting locations, clan identities, or moral precepts.

The cartographer who immerses herself in maps and landscapes, who draws her professional and personal identities from these things, is no more deeply and essentially embedded in an alienated pursuit of instrumental power/knowledge than the elder is incapable of realizing his knowledge in a positive, instrumental, or political fashion. There is not an alienated technocrat on the one hand and an authentic human subject on the other, but only hybrid mixes of reason and emotion, person and culture, technique and meaning, observation and interpretation. Space, it might be argued, is merely a particular (Western, capitalist, modern) case of place, differing from other cultural modes of place-making not in the fundamental character of its representations, but in its vast material proliferation and practical insinuation in the lives of so many people (see Latour, 1993, for a fuller development of this antiessentialist critique of the modern/nonmodern divide). The triumph of Western spatialities is a consequence not of their transcendent objectivity, but of their close historical articulation with states, corporations, and various fields of technoscience over the course of the emergence of a hegemonic global capitalism.

The complementary tack would be to explore the materiality, coherence, and objectivity of place-based knowledge practices. Arguably, this has been part of the anthropological project all along. In his pioneering ethnographic research on Baffin Island, Boas (1964 [1888]) attended closely to Inuit spatial models and practices, reproducing accurate hand-drawn maps of the convoluted Cumberland Sound coastline, and documenting the correspondence between Inuit settlement systems and patterns of sea ice formation. For later cultural and human ecologists, Inuit spatiality expressed a social and economic accommodation to environmental necessity (Kemp, 1971; Wenzel, 1981), or what evolutionary ecologists regard in a Darwinian idiom as the behavioral outcome of adaptive–selective processes (Smith, 1991). From an ethnoecological and ethnolinguistic perspective, Inuit spatiality expresses a coherent, if idiosyncratic, symbolic framework for modeling reality (Fortescue, 1988). From the perspective of indigenous or traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) studies, the relationship of Inuit to their environment represents something else again: the achievement of a culturally distinctive Inuit science, based on socially appropriate and objectively verifiable ways of knowing and appropriating critical resources (Freeman and Carbyn, 1988; Stevenson, 1996).

A difficulty with some early TEK approaches was a tendency to essentialize indigenous knowledge in the effort to contrast it, however favorably, with Western science, setting up a series of categorical oppositions in much the same terms as Tilley distinguishes space and place (e.g., Berkes, 1993). In the recent enthusiasm for TEK there is a danger that local knowledge will be reduced to its positive, science-like content as it is mobilized in state-sponsored resource co-management

regimes, a trend mirrored by the exploitation of indigenous (e.g., ethnobotanical) knowledge by Western commercial interests. In turn, this has set in motion efforts to secure intellectual property protection for TEK (Brush, 1993), potentially further circumscribing and co-opting socially complex networks of knowledge and practices of local cultural reproduction. An emerging political ecological critique of such processes takes the ontological status of "nature" or "the environment" as a key field of political, economic, social, and symbolic struggle in the negotiation of notions of place, modernity, development, indigeneity, gender, class, etc. (Braun and Castree, 1998; Castree and Braun, 2001; Descola and Pálsson, 1996; Escobar, 1999; Jones and Cloke, 2002). These various strands of ecological anthropology (and close equivalents in geography and sociology) all recognize the obstinate materiality of the environment and the real efficacy of indigenous engagements with it. Recent approaches go further, equally addressing the conceptual systematicity, social embeddedness, and practical utility of non-Western knowledge practices, without discriminating a priori against either the scientist or the native. Place-based knowledges are revealed to be as rigorous (and as socially mediated and conceptually idiosyncratic) as technoscientific ones; place is merely a particular (non-Western, communal, local) case of space.

A middle way through the space/place dilemma would be to hold the two terms in a constructive analytical tension, for example, by looking at the dialectic between global (space-related) political economic processes and local (place-based) stratagems of cultural resistance (Escobar, 2001), or exploring the novel (and proliferating) hybrid spatial formations that defy scale and locality, like those addressed by the neologism "glocal." Alternatively, the space/place dyad could be seen as merely a complementary set of generalizing and particularizing discursive moves, like the centripetal movement of formalization and purification and the centrifugal movement of fragmentation and hybridization identified by Bakhtin (1981) as basic historical features of all discourse. The angle pursued further below is to return to the germ of the notion of place (as any meaningful site) and pick up alternative discursive threads, effectively abandoning the premise that place is fundamentally opposed to certain modern spatial knowledges and practices. Rather than *restricting* its usage by opposing it to technical thought and practice, or by confining it to the scale of sites on a landscape, the notions of place and placeness are radically extended to embrace the meaningful constitution of sites and surfaces of thought and action at any interesting scale, from cosmos, landscape, and community down to individual buildings, bodies, and things.

INUIT GEOGRAPHIES

Inuit toponymic, ethnographic, and ethnoarchaeological studies disclose the vast amount of cultural information tied to the land at particular places (Correll, 1976; Fossett, 1996; Müller-Wille, 1987; Nuttal, 1992, 2001; Spink and Moodie,

1972; Stewart *et al.*, 2004). Inuit place names variously consist of categorically or visually descriptive labels (e.g., *nuvuk* = "point of land" vs. *tikiraq* = "index finger," as names for points of land), or references to things or activities associated with the locale, including economically useful (or environmentally prominent) animal, plant, or mineral resources; particular harvesting or processing activities; suitability of a location for camping or travel at various seasons; a mythic or magical occurrence or being; a memorable historical event or person (see Burch, 1998; Rasmussen, 1930a, 1931; Wheeler, 1953, for illustrative lists of place names and their meanings). Not only does the descriptive content of place names facilitate wayfinding in a sometimes unfamiliar landscape (Rasmussen, 1930b, p. 26), but as Burch notes for the regional groups ("nations") of northwest Alaska: "Simply by learning the place names, one acquired considerable knowledge of one's national heritage" (1998, pp. 12–13).

Such knowledge was acquired through deliberate instruction and recitation in both communal and intimate social settings. Many settlements had one or more buildings used as community festival houses (in North Alaska, *qariyit,* sing.*qargi*, following Larson, 1995) in which myths, histories, and personal experiences referencing places were regularly transmitted in the form of stories, songs, rites, and dances. Songs often evoke intense emotional longings regarding the land, especially nostalgia for places visited in youth (e.g., Arima, 1976; Rasmussen, 1929, 1930b, 1931; Roberts and Jenness, 1925), while conveying real biographical and biophysical detail. Similarly, Minc (1986) has shown that positive technical knowledge was embedded in Inuit myths and other seemingly unrelated discursive genres. Place names and the historical and environmental information associated with them were recited at length as travel directions (Fossett, 1996; Rasmussen, 1930b), and in a "running narrative" while travelling on the land with elders (Burch, 1998). Correll (1976, p. 178) reports that at Unalakleet place names are strung together into rhymes or tongue-twisters that children play at reciting at top speed. Each rhyme was a mnemonic consisting of the sequence of places encountered along a conventional travel route that began at or intersected the home village. Together, they constituted a web of intersecting paths and nodal places perfectly congruent with the territory of the Unaalirmiut (i.e., the people of Unalakleet, sing. Unaalirmiuk).

Place names index a huge corpus of myths, legends, proverbs, history, and tales of encounters with people, animals, and other beings while living and traveling on the land. The centrality of place names to Inuit spatiality is reflected in their capacity to simultaneously archive a diverse array of cultural knowledge in a tangible, geographically anchored idiom, impart cultural and personal meanings to this same topography, and provide individuals with mnemonic devices for navigating an often trackless arctic landscape. Topography is made intelligible and mapped into memory through its articulation with a store of cultural knowledge, and at the same time the community comes into being through the enculturation

of individuals to a local history embedded in places (Nuttal, 1992). Nuttal refers to the culturally idiosyncratic, historically sedimented, community-constituting landscape of Greenlandic Inuit as "memoryscape," with much the same sense that Basso (1996) gives to the term "place-world," or with which Ingold (1993), Bender (1998), Tilley (1994), Thomas (2001), and many others inflect "landscape."

It follows that place and landscape are closely bound up with personal and collective identity. Throughout the Inuit and Yupik (together, formerly, "Eskimo") world, individual societies were conventionally named by appending the suffix *-miut* (people of, inhabitants of) to the name of a place within their territory, such as a principal village or geographic feature. Some speakers make a terminological distinction between places that are part of their *-miut* inheritance, and those that properly belong to neighboring *-miut* groups, through a suffix marking a place as one of which one has only heard reports, and the retention of nonlocal dialectical variants for nonlocal places (Correll, 1976, p. 176). Social identity is mediated by toponymy (and see Müller-Wille, 2001, on Inuit use of toponymy and modern spatial technologies to mold new political identities in arctic Quebec).

Individual personhood is also tied to the land, as expressed in the genre of the autobiographical song (see above). Correll (ibid, p. 178) cites an Unaalirmiuk's contention that every personal name in use corresponded to a place name within Unaalirmiut territory. While such personal place names were not ubiquitous across the Arctic, the notion that names represent a constituent essence of the entities that possess them does occur widely. One's name (*ateq*) is a kind of soul—a name soul—that combines with a body, breath, and personal soul to form a heterogeneous, composite person (Correll, 1976; Nuttal, 1992). The *ateq* transmits many of the social relations and obligations of its previous possessors; individuals are addressed using the kin term appropriate to the person from whom the name soul was most recently inherited. Like place names, personal names evoke images and memories, rights and obligations, beyond their immediate referent (Nuttal, 1992, p. 67). People and places share the significant quality of *being named.*

> By means of names, an Eskimo has access to the universe of things that have been named: *taijaujat* = the named things. Empirical and non-empirical entities have names. Animate and inanimate things have names. Human and non-human beings have names. In fact, these dichotomies are not definitive of the Eskimo view of things. Men have names and the *nuna* [land] has names. Man and land are related. (Correll, 1976, p. 178)

Traditional Inuit spatiality was not, however, limited to inventories of place names and place-based knowledge practices. It also consisted of elaborate navigational concepts, skills, and technologies for *moving through* space along tens of thousands of kilometres of traditional travel routes (Ross, 1976), including spatial nomenclatures designating cardinal points and directions of movement (Fortescue, 1988; Gagné, 1968), and way-finding techniques such as determining direction from the orientation of snow drifts (which record prevailing winds), discerning the configuration of distant land, ice, and water in the "sky map" reflected

in low-lying clouds (Spink and Moodie, 1972), and orienting oneself to named stars and constellations (MacDonald, 1998). It included explicit ecological, geographical, and technical knowledges imparted pedagogically, as well as practical, embodied knowledges acquired experientially and embedded in the skills of making and handling boats, sleds, harvesting equipment, and temporary shelters while travelling on the land at all seasons. The profoundly embodied character of these habitual spatial practices is registered in the musculoskeletal stress markers and other osteological pathologies they produced. "Kayaker's clavicle" and compression fractures of the vertebrae related to sled travel are among the most common pathologies in prehistoric and historic Inuit skeletal series (Hawkey, 1988; Hawkey and Merbs, 1995; Merbs, 1983; Steen and Lane, 1998).

Navigational competence, and the practical means to move oneself, one's family, and accumulated stores and equipment across the landscape, varied between individuals according to such things as age, gender, health, wealth, kinship networks, and life history (Peterson, 2003). For example, skins for *umiak* (open skin boat) covers and wood for boat frames or sleds were strategically limited resources in many areas, and required ingenuity and effort to acquire (Bogojavlensky, 1969; Rasmussen, 1931). These technologies also exacted high maintenance costs. *Umiak* skins required constant oiling and dog teams constant feeding, hence intensified harvesting effort to procure dog food and sea mammal oil. Spatial mobility was not merely a function of geographical knowledge and navigational skill, but demanded substantial production and expenditure of social and economic capital in raw material procurement, equipment manufacture and maintenance, cooperative harvesting, exchange, and householding. Such material constraints on, and expressions of, mobility mean that frequencies of boat parts and sled gear, as well as the scarce or exotic commodities to which they gave access, provide archaeological indexes of interhousehold variability in spatial practices (Whitridge, 1999, 2002a).

But perhaps the most striking feature of Inuit ethnogeography was the utilization of material maps and navigational markers to depict topography and travel routes abstractly. Alongside a rich and culturally distinctive body of place-based spatial conceptions were technical practices that reified space in a manner hardly distinguishable from Western scientific spatialities. The traditional genre of the Inuit map consisted of schematic representations of major topographic features (coastline, rivers, lakes, relief) drawn in outline or sculpted in relief in snow or sand, or occasionally sketched in the air (Fossett, 1996; Rasmussen, 1930b; Spencer, 1955; Spink and Moodie, 1972). Maps were typically created as visual aids when providing travel directions, and were accompanied by detailed descriptions of such things as wind and sea conditions, landmarks, available resources, travel routes, travel times, and the all important place names. Since maps were normally not portable they had to be memorized as they were produced, along with the accompanying information so essential to Inuit travel.

The physical map served primarily as a memory aid for the mapmaker and the observer:

> The map served as a mnemonic device during the relating of stories or the description of intended routes, for the outline drawn in the sand or snow was unimportant when compared with the names and stories given as various locations were reached in the drawing process. The progressive drawing of the map recalled the features in the mind of the narrator, and the naming fixed them in the memory of his observer. (Spink and Moodie, 1972, p. 27)

The map and the recitation of place names together traced a path through a hybrid socionatural landscape (see below, and Castree and Braun, 2001; Escobar, 1999; Latour, 1993, 1999, on hybrid socionatures), a simultaneously real and imaginary geography. The distributed, social character of imaginary geography is reflected in the participation of whole communities in the production of detailed map dioramas, as recorded by several nineteenth-century explorers (Fossett, 1996).

Spencer (1955, p. 47) notes that small maps were sometimes incised on pieces of ivory although these were apparently not used for navigation, and several specimens of maps carved from wood that were employed by Inuit travellers were collected in the late nineteenth century in the Ammassalik area (Peterson, 1984). Most of the latter depict the deeply indented, island-studded coast of East Greenland in sculptural relief (Fig. 1), but at least one example incised on a flat piece of wood shows a large section of coastline in stylized two-dimensional plan (Franceschi *et al.*, 2001, plate 26). The nearest prehistoric analogues to such objects are the eye-level depictions of villages and landscape sometimes incised on bow drills or other tools, such as a Classic Thule example from northern Baffin Island (Fig. 2) depicting villages and hunting scenes, among other things. Although no archaeological examples of Inuit or Yupik maps have been identified (having not, apparently, been sought systematically), the consistent ethnographic reports of ephemeral snow and sand maps from the entire area of Inuit and Yupik settlement suggest that these, at least, were in widespread use prehistorically. In effect, the objectification of spatial relationships in the form of a physical map, however temporary, was a traditional mode of the Inuit relationship to place.

The best documented expression of Inuit mapping abilities was the production of two dimensional sketch maps with paper and pencil for European explorers and ethnographers in the early contact period, of which some 150–200 examples are reported to exist (Fossett, 1996, p. 76). Despite the apparently great chasm between European cartography and Inuit memoryscape, from at least the early nineteenth century Inuit from Bering Strait to Labrador produced detailed renderings of convoluted coastlines and interior bodies of water (Fig. 3), or extended and annotated existing European charts. Observers consistently remarked upon the ability of their Inuit guides and informants to produce accurate and highly intelligible maps with no or little tutoring in Western cartographic conventions (Boas, 1964 [1888]; Rasmussen, 1931; and see discussions in Correll, 1976; Fossett, 1996; Lewis, 1997; Ross, 1976; Spink and Moodie, 1972). The strictly two-dimensional

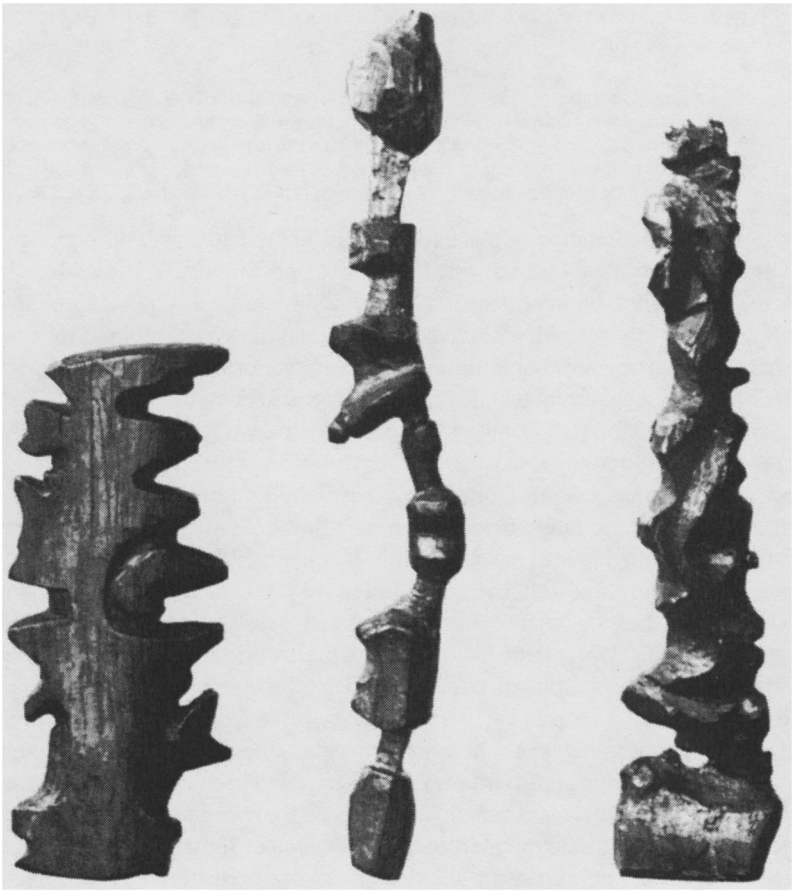

Fig. 1. Ammassalingmiut wooden maps of the East Greenland coast (Peterson 1984:624).

cartographic projection was not so alien to the indigenous mapping idiom that Inuit women and men could not readily execute one with consummate skill.

Indeed, Inuit maps frequently incorporated a convention widespread in native North America (Harley, 1992; Lewis, 1997, 1998; Warhus, 1998) that could be considered a refinement and improvement of the bird's eye projection. Scale was often transformed on these maps, and likely also on the sand and snow maps on which they were based, to reflect typical seasonal travel times, with the marking of daily campsites imposing a kind of temporal grid on the schematized topography. Spink and Moodie (1972, p. 8) calculate that the scale on an Iglulingmiut map of northern Foxe Basin varies between 1:2,000,000 and 1:10,000,000, while holding the relationship between distance on the map and travel time relatively constant.

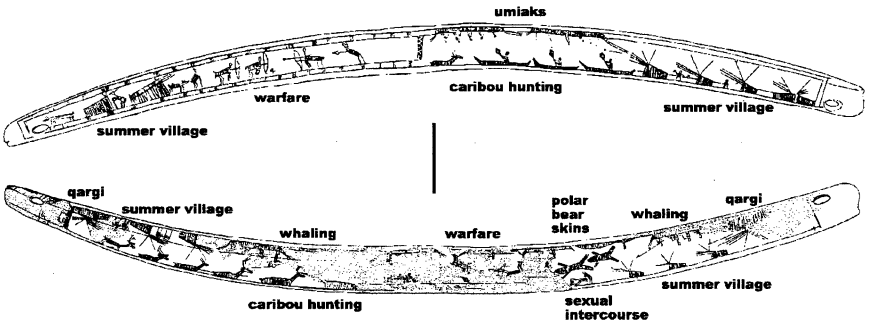

Fig. 2. Thule drill bow from Arctic Bay (after Maxwell, 1983, p. 84).

Rather than an erroneous *distortion* of space, this manipulation of scale represents a *correction* of the deficiencies of a two (or three) dimensional representation of a four-dimensional object (a journey). This is a sophisticated form of cartographic projection analogous to those based on the space-time of latitude and longitude employed by the Europeans, but aiming at different practical ends and assuming different technological means for moving through space and reckoning position.

A final illustration of the complex and hybrid (mixing the real and ideal, the natural and cultural) character of Inuit geographic knowledge practices is the widespread use of permanent navigational markers and temporary route indicators.

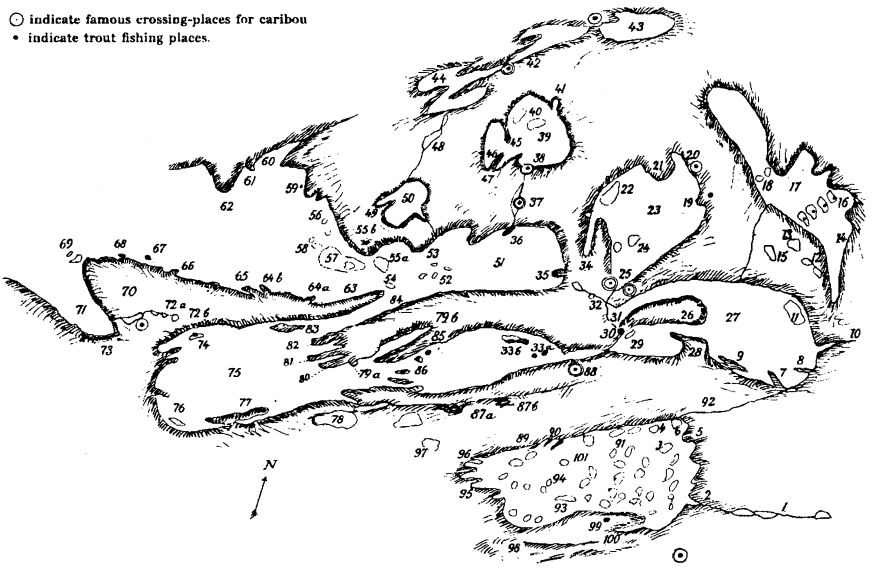

Fig. 3. Netsilingmiut map of western Boothia Isthmus (Rasmussen, 1931, p. 92).

Complementing the translation of landscape into abstract inscriptions on snow or paper, Inuit also inscribed the landscape itself with abstract spatial signs (Hallendy, 1994; Heyes, 2002). *Inuksuit* (sing.*inuksuk)* are features consisting of standing stones, stacked and balanced stones, or substantial stone cairns, occurring singly or in rows or clusters in a wide variety of landscape settings throughout Inuit-occupied lands. Ethnographically documented examples served a wide variety of purposes: as drive fences and blinds for caribou hunting; markers of campsites, harvesting locales, ceremonial gathering places, or territorial boundaries; memorials to an event or person; navigational markers; and ritual objects in their own right. Hallendy (1994) has collected Inuktitut terms for 20 distinct categories of *inuksuk,* recorded dozens of specific functions, and mapped out semantic fields centered on *inuksuit* that relate to navigation, harvesting, and spirituality. In their navigational version, *inuksuit* were erected on heights of land or coastal promontories to serve as artificial landmarks or specific directional indicators. Some *inuksuit* took the form of stone windows aligned with sighting stones to visually frame the route towards a distant destination, such as a point or island at or below the horizon (ibid; Heyes, 2002). Although oral historic evidence and associations with Paleoeskimo and Thule settlement systems suggest that many have great antiquity, there has been relatively little archaeological attention to *inuksuit* other than well-defined caribou drive systems closely associated with settlements (e.g., Grønnow *et al.*, 1983; but see Plumet, 1985, for an investigation of potential navigational *inuksuit*). Recent GPS-based off-site surveys of features (Stewart *et al.*, 2000) and place names and travel routes (Aporta, 2003) provide useful models for documenting *inuksuit* in the interstices *between* settlement systems that reflect the physical imposition of large-scale navigational grids across the arctic landscape in the past.

Inuksuit marked many of the locations that were also designated by place names, and could be considered their material homologs: elements of a nonverbal discourse on human–animal–land relations, and tools for the practical mediation of those relations. Given the early-nineteenth-century explorer George Lyon's reference to "certain piles of stones" having names (cited in Fossett, 1996, p. 87), and Hallendy's documentation of their spiritual importance, *inuksuit* would also appear to belong to the universe of quasi-animate named entities. In the Eastern Arctic some *inuksuit* are regarded as ancient constructions of the pre-Inuit Tunit (likely Dorset Paleoskimo) who had "prepared the land" for the Inuit (Hallendy, 1994, p. 406; Rasmussen, 1931), hence the legacy of a long-term social historical process of appropriation of the arctic landscape. Less permanent variants of the *inuksuk* include signposts made of wood, sometimes incised with a pictographic message (Hoffman, 1895, p. 897), and rows of animal skulls, both of which were used to indicate the direction recently taken by a travel party or a community on its seasonal migration. Land and sea were not perceived as a wilderness, a "nature" opposed to society, but as a socialized and enculturated field of human and nonhuman activity, as were the even more profoundly anthropogenic landscapes found in other parts of the Americas (Denneven, 1992).

EUROPEAN ETHNOGEOGRAPHIES

Early European explorers and colonists in the Arctic likewise made maps, erected cairns and benchmarks, and assigned place names that reflected or instituted an imaginary geography. Norse sagas, medieval *mappaemundi*, and early Renaissance atlases populated the northwest reaches of the Atlantic Ocean with fabulous beings inhabiting legendary places like Hy-Brasil and the Isles of the Blessed (Allen, 1992; Harley, 1992; McGovern, 1994; McPherson, 1997). The great dissemination of printed maps and books led eventually to the collectivization and rationalization of these imagined geographies, but nineteenth-century exploration was still driven by fantasies surrounding a northwest passage to Asia, such as a vast inland sea, or an ice-free polar ocean (Quinn, 1997; Ross, 1997). Tabloids (some of which sponsored arctic expeditions) and popular novelists supplied these fantasies with a Gothic visual vocabulary of impossibly rugged mountains and icescapes (Riffenburg, 1991a,b; Steedman 1995).

Even as coastal charts attained increasing congruence with topographic reality, shedding their marginalia of chimeras and unipeds, the arctic landscape was mapped into Euro-American consciousness through the assignment of new place names that evoked the archetypes of Victorian naval geography: royalty, ship's captains and officers, wealthy patrons, scientific societies, the home counties. Ships themselves provided toponyms for numerous coastal features, projecting the rich body of anxious imagery their names incorporated onto the land and sea: *Fury, Hecla, Erebus, Terror, Alert, Investigator, Resolute, Intrepid.* The renaming process helped conceal a great irony of the Western geographic project, namely the extent to which the purported triumph of objective, spatial science over native irrationality and superstition was accomplished though a wholesale assimilation and appropriation of indigenous geographic knowledge (Harley, 1992; Lewis, 1997, 1998). Although European cartographers possessed the strategic ability to assemble a host of local observations into comprehensive maps, many of these data were generated by Inuit, in the form of testimony, hand-drawn maps, and chart annotations collected by explorers, whalers, missionaries, and other Western agents. Inuit frequently guided and supplied these same exploratory and scientific expeditions, even piloting ships in unfamiliar waters (Fossett, 1996), and provided the labor and expertise for commercial enterprises (e.g., Cassell, 1992).

The encapsulation and domestication of arctic space for which explorers claimed credit was the effect of centuries of social, cultural, and economic exchange and hybridization, and the northern extension of Euro-American sovereignty as much a project of spatial–scientific conquest as of imaginative place-making. Inuit spatiality likewise comprehended culturally distinctive variants of many of the sorts of technologies and knowledge practices commonly reserved to Western geographic science (maps, navigational landmarks, directional signs, pedagogy), in addition to an elaborate ethnogeography built around place-names. The theory and practice of Inuit spatiality were historically emergent within conflicted social

fields (Whitridge, 1999), and shaped by centuries of intercultural negotiation of landscape and territory along thousands of kilometres of frontier with Yupik, Dene, Cree, Innu, Paleoeskimo, Chukchi, Norse, and others. The cognized landscape of the Inuit was not less precise or rational for the immense cultural burden it bore, nor Western geographies devoid of fantasy, emotion, and other subtexts. Space and place are merely analytically circumscribed moments of a complex, hybrid human spatiality.

THE UBIQUITY OF PLACENESS

While the dichotomization of space and place now appears overly simplistic, the dialogue it initiated has enriched archaeology by forcing us to attend as much to the social, discursive, and phenomenological qualities of locations as the behavioral economies and ecologies that have dominated spatial interpretation in the past. The notion of a "toposemantic" process of investment of locations with cultural meanings gives rise not only to an archaeology of landscape, but to an archaeology of the imagination, insofar as places are in part constructed from and attached to biophysical reality, material culture, and embodied practices and social interactions, and in part constituted within the imagination and endowed with a semiotic omnipotence that defies location, scale, and time. To take a mundane example, Nuttal (1992) notes that places are not confined to land; seascapes and icescapes are also encompassed within Inuit ethnogeography. A seasonal icescape unavoidably confronts us with the imaginative dimensions of place. On the open waters of Davis Strait, several kilometers from Clyde River on Baffin Island, enormous icebergs often ground in an area of shallow water, becoming fast in late fall when the sea ice forms. Breathing hole sealing is particularly productive near here, so as the days lengthen in late winter the area becomes busy with men, boys, and snow machines, particularly on weekends. Close to lunchtime, people will gather where someone has just caught a seal to joke, snack on the liver, and share tea and bannock. The grounded icebergs, and the flaws in the ice along which seals most often make their breathing holes, annually take shape in slightly different but not unpredictable ways. This creates the conditions for the recurrent emergence of a network of hunting and camping places, key nodes in the social and economic life of the village and in the biographies of hunters (Whitridge, 1991). Across much of the central Canadian Arctic in the not too distant past, entire Inuit societies camped for much of the winter in a sequence of communal snow house villages on seasonal sea ice that crystallized each fall and disintegrated each summer. These groups returned year after year to make places that survived only in memories, stories, and songs.

Places can be sited anywhere. The mind can zoom to any scale, from the microscopic to the cosmological, and find each level richly detailed and inexhaustible to thought. There is a fractal quality to conceptualized reality—a preservation of

complexity at ever-diminishing scales—and an aesthetic delight to be taken in the slippage between levels, as in the logo on a letterhead that becomes a window into endlessly unfolding worlds in the writings of the naive surrealist Raymond Roussel (Foucault, 1986). While it is difficult or impossible to hold numerous scales in thought at once, it is easy to move from level to level; there is a limited and appropriate breadth to the cognitive arena that can be conceptualized richly and completely at any moment, but virtually no end to the number of such arenas that can be imagined in succession. Indeed, archaeologists routinely move between levels in this way, from something as detailed as microwear on a tool edge, to the distribution of features across a landscape, to the great sweep of millennia over the course of deep human prehistory, at each interval framing discourse with a concise set of synoptic devices: maps, photographs, tables of numbers, statistical graphs, texts.

A profuse quality of placeness or topicality manifests itself at every spatial scale-out there, in the world, and within every cognitive fold in here, in the mind (e.g., Shamma, 2004). It is shadowed by the mathematical field of topology, which explores geometric properties unaffected by changes in shape or size, in other words, the relations among sites and surfaces irrespective of scale. In its utter disregard for scale the notion of place, of a meaningful location, assumes a remarkable discursive richness, and need not remain tethered to the archaeology of landscape. An archaeology of placeness can analytically isolate any number of toposemantic arenas, each punctuated by sites and patches of practical significance, and dissected by seams and paths.

THULE PLACES

Landscapes, Seascapes, and Icescapes

With regard to the Inuit archaeological record the wider toposemantic levels or fields might include landscapes, settlements, architectural features, bodies (both animal and human), and things. Each of these encompasses numerous categorical varieties and a vast number of unique instances. For example, we could consider the semantic and practical regionalizations of the human body in general, but also the bodies of women, men, elders, children, etc., as well as individual bodies. Some of the potentially significant regions within the Thule (prehistoric Inuit) cosmos have already been touched upon, including the land, sea, and ice as important fields of travel, settlement, and harvesting activity. Although land-based activities leave the most obvious material trace, in the form of settlements, kill/butchery sites, isolated features, etc., varying patterns of use and perception of sea and ice can be interpolated from material culture (technical equipment for hunting and travelling on ice and water, occasional figurative depictions of animals or seascapes), activity-induced skeletal pathologies, faunal remains, navigational and place-marking *inuksuit*, and missing portions of the seasonal settlement

round. Networks of contextual meanings can be derived for generic settings and for specific places based on such things as biophysical features of the environment, settlement types, season of use, feature types, harvesting and processing activities, ritual associations, and depictions, working with the ethnographic and ethnohistoric records for more recent time periods.

During the Classic Thule period land-based winter settlement in the central Canadian Arctic was associated with much more durable, deeply sedimented places than the snow house villages of Modified Thule and historic times (Whitridge, 2001). Classic Thule settlement systems consist of dense, regionalized networks of diverse feature types, strung out along paths of seasonal travel and clustered at strategic harvesting and caching loci. The networks themselves were bounded and systematically spaced along productive stretches of coastline (Savelle and McCartney, 1988), or across complementary inland and coastal harvesting areas (Stenton, 1989), with sparse scatters of harvesting features, caches, temporary campsites, and navigational *inuksuit* in peripheral and interstitial zones.

Settlements

Individual camps and villages were themselves regionalized, and crisscrossed by footpaths that are sometimes still archaeologically visible (e.g., Savelle and Wenzel, 2003). Sod houses and tent platforms were reoccupied year after year, acquiring the associations of the things that occurred there and the family histories of their occupants—"the dust of events," in Foucault's (1977, p. 213) phrase. Festival houses, or *qariyit*, acquired stories of great feasts and shamanic performances, the bones from celebrated whale hunts accumulated on flensing (sea mammal butchering) beaches, burial grounds acquired their ghosts, and the land grew lush from refuse and excrement. The Netsilingmiut had a word—*nunatorleq*—for the manured soil and vegetation associated with Thule winter villages (Rasmussen, 1931, p. 459). The large winter village of Qariaraqyuk (Fig. 4) on Somerset Island was made up not only of dozens of long-occupied winter houses sunk into great mounds of refuse, but also of several *qariyit*, summer tent neighborhoods, rows of underground food caches, household and community middens, paths, a bone-working area, a great commons free of features onto which all the houses faced (like the festival ground or ball field [*manigzuk*] of large North Alaskan villages; Burch, 1981; Spencer, 1959), and a corresponding swath of burials, a common space for the dead, to their backs (Whitridge, 1999).

Each of these regions represented a site or zone or pathway of practical activity amplified in the community's imagination over the course of a history of use. In similar historic North Alaskan winter villages, the placeness of such locations was recognized by the conferral of unique toponyms on particular *qariyit* and house clusters (Burch, 1981). Such "great places" pass into what Bakhtin (1986) called "great time," converted into culturally generic place-times or *chronotopes* (Bakhtin,

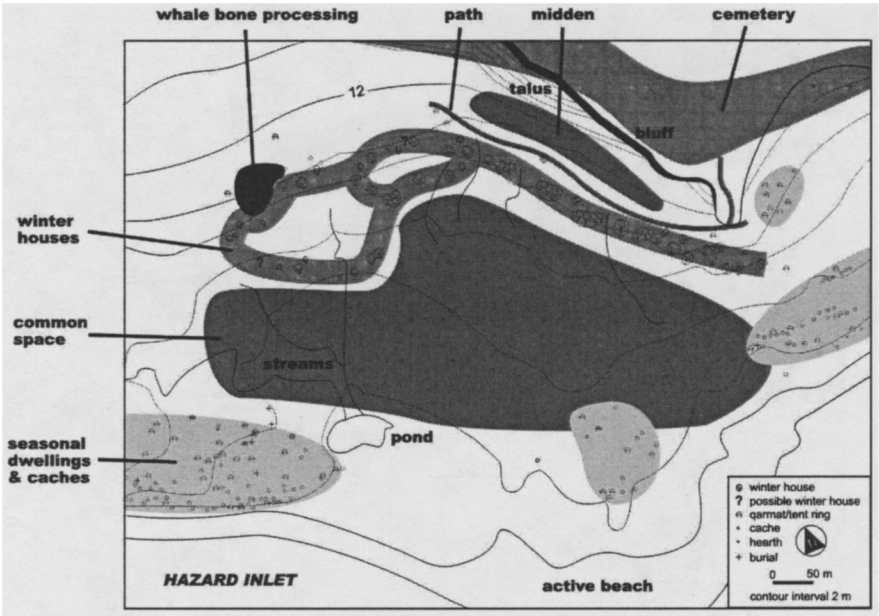

Fig. 4. Qariaraqyuk (PaJs-2) site structure.

1981) that recur as conventional settings in myth and poetry. An echo of the Thule winter village chronotope can be heard in a tradition of the Netsilingmiut, likely descendants of Somerset Island Thule groups. The Netsilingmiut wintered in a series of ephemeral snow house villages on the sea ice while living from breathing hole sealing, rather than passing a relatively leisurely winter on land in large sod house villages (like Qariaraqyuk) while living off stores of whale meat and oil put up in fall, as did Classic Thule groups. Houses in snow house villages are typically tightly clustered, abutting each other and often sharing walls, vestibules, or entrance tunnels (see illustrations in Lee and Reinhardt, 2003). Nevertheless, Netsilingmiut spoke of an afterworld where "the houses stand in long rows . . . and round about the houses the snow is trampled hard with the many footprints of happy, ball-playing people" (Rasmussen, 1931, p. 315).

Houses

Just as village space can be decomposed into its constituent places and paths, so too can individual features, especially ones as complex as the house. Houses represent great condensations or localizations of meaning and demand their own spatial phenomenology, or "topoanalysis" as Bachelard called it. He unfolds the dense webs of personal associations—periods of joy or drudgery,

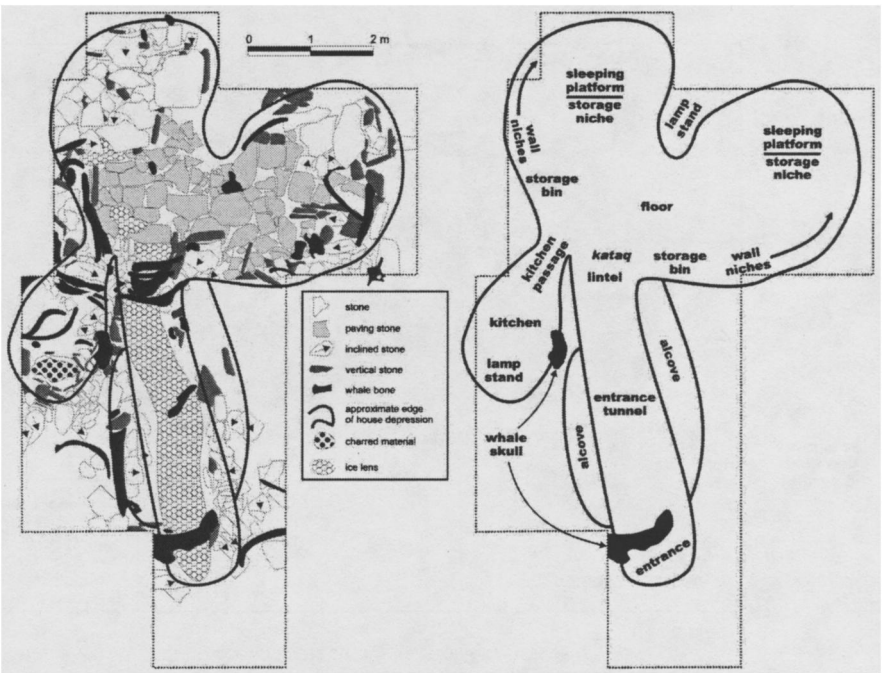

Fig. 5. House 38 at Qariaraqyuk and some of its significant places.

emotional watersheds—that are anchored to remembered architectural spaces in the dwelling of one's childhood, the housing of history and memory in houses: "In its countless alveoli space contains compressed time. That is what space is for." (Bachelard, 1994 [1964], p. 8). The Thule winter house (Fig. 5) can be seen to have consisted of a network of such intimate sites of everyday practice or communal activity (sewing, cooking, eating, woodworking, playing), variously including an entrance porch, tunnel, tunnel alcoves, kitchen, paved floor, storage bins, sleeping platforms, subplatform compartments, shelves, wall niches, and exterior storage platforms. Even the passages and thresholds between these delimited spaces were themselves sometimes named locations ethnographically, such as the *kataq*, the threshold between the entrance tunnel and main compartment, from which orphans, murderers, spirits, or whales issue in stories.

Besides such linguistic and literary clues to their identities, the practical and meaningful investments of these places can be teased out through spatial analyses of architecture and floor assemblages. A correspondence analysis (CA) of artifact distributions at Qariaraqyuk revealed spatial associations of artifact types interpretable in terms of a gendered segregation of refuse-generating activities, and a separation of domestic maintenance tasks from community gaming and ritual (Fig. 6) (Table I) (Whitridge, 1999, 2000). The spatial structure elucidated by

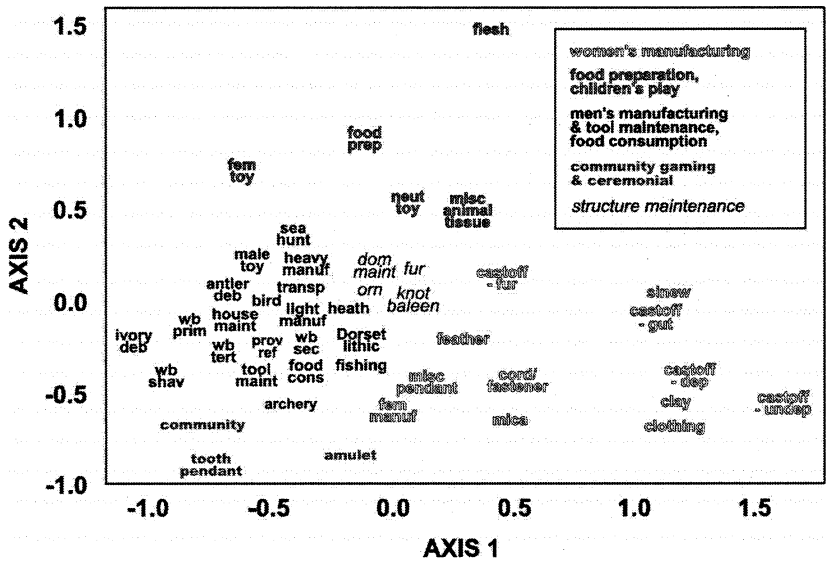

Fig. 6. Results of correspondence analysis reflecting spatial associations of 44 functional artifact categories.

artifact associations can be used as an analytical template, without letting prior assumptions about the use of specific architectural locations constrain the analysis, by reinserting architectural context as a supplementary variable in the CA (Fig. 7). The results reveal the pattern of articulation of the network of settings that constituted the built environment with the major dimensions of practical activity (Fig. 8). This model can be put to work in various ways. For example, it can be treated as a kind of conceptual map of the spatiotemporal rhythms of Thule community life at the scale of architectural space, part of Ingold's (1993) taskscape. The degree of association of men's and women's tools and refuse with particular places reflects the degree of redundancy of paths of movement and sites of activity, a time geography (Giddens, 1985) that can be superimposed on house and community plan maps as the first step in an exploration of the phenomenological experiences of women and men and children going about their routines according to the conventions of their habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). We could also focus in on particular places, examining them in finer spatial detail or tracing the web of associations that pass through that place outwards, into other realms of meaning and practice (see below).

Things

The *umiak*, or open skin boat, was the supreme accomplishment of Neoeskimo technology and social economy and represents another topologically complex surface that ethnographically was differentiated not only by an elaborate terminology

Table I. Artifact Categories Used as Variables in the Correspondence Analysis (CA)

Abbreviation	Category	Constituent types
Amulet	Amulet	Quartz crystal, composite hide object, amulet box, figurine, bear claw, fossil
Antler deb	Antler debitage	Antler manufacturing refuse
Archery	Archery	Arrowhead, arrow shaft, feather setter, feather cutting board, sinew twister, bow, bow brace, bow backing, bow cable stop, wrist guard
Bird	Bird/small game hunting	Bird dart prong, bird dart shaft, gull hook, bola weight, bird arrowhead, snare, wolf killer, sling handle
Castoff—dep	Castoff—depilated	Scrap of cut hide, hair/fur removed
Castoff—fur	Castoff—fur	Scrap of cut hide, long hair/fur
Castoff—gut	Castoff—gut	Scrap of cut gut
Castoff—undep	Castoff—undepilated	Scarp of cut hide, shaved hair/fur
Clay	Clay	Lump of unfired clay
Clothing	Clothing	Clothing fragment, leather/hide patch, stitched birdskin
Community	Community games and performance	Ajagaq, ajagaq pin, gaming piece, drum handle, drum rim
Cord/fastener	Cordage/fastener	Thong, braided sinew cord, baleen line, toggle, buckle
Dom maint	Domestic maintenance	Lamp, lamp stand, pottery, pyrite, fire drill, wick trimmer, drying rack, snow beater, tinder, tinder bag, grass, sphagnum, whisk, "vessel," bag/bucket handle, bag, unstitched birdskin, "excelsior"
Dorset lithic	Dorset lithic	Tool, utilized flake, unmodified flake, debitage, core
Feather	Feather	Isolated feather
Fem manuf	Female manufacturing	Awl, scraper, needle, threading needle, burnisher, utilized pebble/block, needle case, thimble holder, thimble, needle case toggle, ulu, cutting board
Fem toy	Female toy	Doll, lamp
Fishing	Fishing	Fish lure, fish lure tinkler, fish arrowhead, fish arrow shaft, fish harpoon head, fish needle, fish spear prong, leister prong, leister barb, gorge/barb
Flesh	Flesh	Animal muscle tissue
Food cons	Food consumption	Meat dish, serving tray, composite baleen/wood vessel, marrow spatula, dipper, ladle, spoon
Food prep	Food preparation	Blubber pounder, maul head/handle, hammerstone, pot, meat/pot hook, pot tripod
Fur	Fur	Clump of fur/animalhair
Heath	Heather	Clump of heather

Table I. Continued

Abbreviation	Category	Constituent types
Heavy manuf	Heavy manufacturing	Adze head, adze blade, adze handle, diabase pick, wedge
House maint	House maintenance	Pick head/handle, mattock head/handle, snow shovel, misc. structural element of house
Ivory deb	Ivory debitage	Ivory manufacturing refuse
Knot baleen	Knotted baleen	Knotted baleen fragment
Light manuf	Light manufacturing	Baleen shave, end/side/composite knife, knife blade, engraving tool/bit, drill mouthpiece, drill bow, drill spindle, drill chuck, drill bit, hand drill, graver/bit, marlinspike, punch
Male toy	Male toy	Arrow, bow, dart, foreshaft, harpoon head, harpoon shaft, kayak, umiak, leister prong, paddle, sling, lance
Mica	Mica	Mica fragment, mirror
Misc animal tissue	Miscellaneous animal tissue	Unidentified animal tissue
Misc pendant	Other pendant	Drop pendant, pierced mollusc shell, ground stone pendant, chain pendant, zoomorphic pendant
Neut toy	Gender neutral toy	Bullroarer, top, top spindle, inserted bones, Norse draughstman
Orn	Ornament	Bracelet, brow band, bead, comb, hair stick, button, labret, ceremonial knife
Prov ref	Provisional manufacturing refuse	Whale bone/antler/ivory core, preform, blank, diabase core, metal debitage, peg/dowl, reinforcement piece, rivet, misc shafts, shim, plug
Sea hunt	Sea mammal hunting	Misc foreshaft, moveable foreshaft, finger rest, tension piece, seal drag, seal indicator, cord fastener, sealing stool, seal scratcher, wound pin, socket piece, harpoon end blade, harpoon head, harpoon shaft, ice pick, line stopper, atlatl hook, dart butt
Sinew	Sinew	Sinew strand, sinew coil
Tool maint	Tool maintenance	Abrader, utilized bear canine, utilized muskox postcanine
Tooth pendant	Tooth pendant	Drilled/grooved dog, muskox, caribou, fox tooth
Transp	Transportation	Trace buckle, swivel, harness, whip handle, sled shoe, sled runner, sled cross-piece, snow knife, snow probe/ferrule, toboggan
wb prim	Whale bone debitage - primary	Whale bone manufacturing refuse—tool marks but no completely worked facet
wb sec	Whale bone debitage - secondary	Whale bone manufacturing refuse—one worked facet
wb shav	Whale bone shaving	Whale bone manufacturing refuse—thin shaving
wb tert	Whale bone debitage - tertiary	Whale bone manufacturing refuse—more than one worked facet

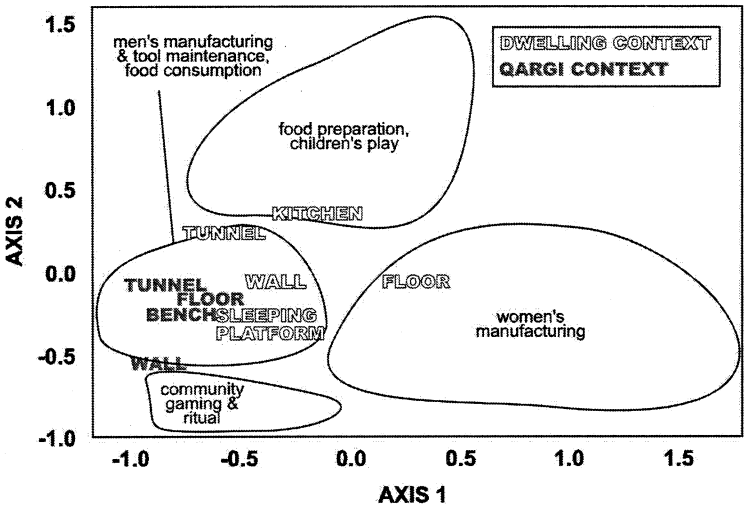

Fig. 7. Clusters of spatially associated artifact categories, with context types plotted as supplementary variables.

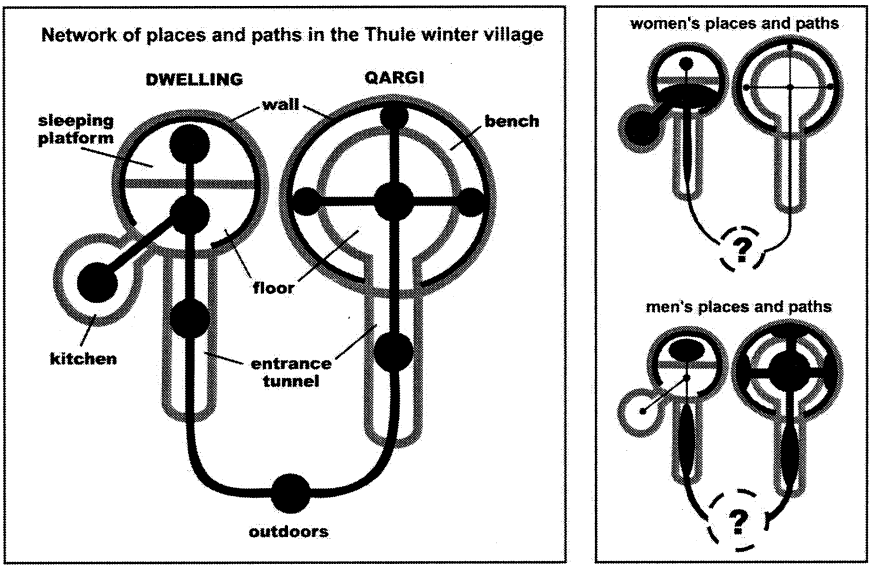

Fig. 8. Architectural places and paths in the Thule winter village.

for its parts (Braund, 1988; Petersen, 1986), but by the designation of places within it (Fortescue, 1988) that had functional, symbolic, and sociopolitical significance related to the hierarchical organization of whaling. These included the seat at the rear for the boat steerer, who was typically also the boat captain and owner, the *umialik* who not only coordinated the activities of the crew and the movement of the boat on the water, but whose gift-giving and alliance-building constituted the crew in the first place and ensured the continuance of the whaling enterprise, thus governing the social, political, economic, and ritual life of the community as a whole. At the front of the *umiak* was a place for the *kapukti* (Burch, 2003), the talented harpooner recruited by the *umialik* on whom rested the responsibility of fixing a harpoon head and float in the whale, and then lancing the exhausted animal. Between them lay seats for (typically) three pairs of paddlers. Crew members had a designated place in the boat and role in the hunt, which was recognized with a designated share of the whale carcass, varying by seniority, and corresponding to a distinctive social role and spatial situation within the whaling community (Whitridge, 2002b, in press). The boat's differentiated place world is manifested in depictions of boats and their crews, often engaged in whaling, on decorated Thule artifacts (Fig. 2; see also Holtved, 1944; McCartney, 1980; McGhee, 1984; Maxwell, 1983; Schledermann, 1975). Its importance in the socialization and enculturation of children is reflected in the high proportion of miniature boats, paddles, and harpoons in Thule toy assemblages (Park, 1998).

Other items of material culture reveal equally intricate topologies or "thingscapes" (indeed, the Arctic Bay drill bow is an exceptionally complex thingscape). The sled was a moving network of places, with the woman of the family up ahead breaking trail and leading the fan of dogs, children riding on loads or tucked under skins, the man pushing behind or driving the dogs on, and others following in their wake. The *amauti*, or women's parka, had an oversized hood for an infant to ride in, and women's oversized boots had room to carry infants or tools. Women's, men's, and children's clothing was distinctively regionalized mosaics of skins of various mammals and birds onto which were mapped additional meaningful signs in the form of fringes, beads, pendants, and amulets that possessed intrinsic aesthetic value and magical agency, while housing and enhancing particular parts of the body and referencing animals, people, things, and places (Issenman, 1997; Oakes, 1991; and see Hansen *et al.*, 1991; McCullough, 1989, for archaeological examples of well-preserved clothing).

Harpoon heads undergo relatively little change in gross functional morphology over 1500 years of Neoeskimo prehistory, but particular locations on them (spur, end blade, line hole, lashing arrangement, etc.) are the sites of an obsessive stylistic intervention and microfunctional adjustment (Whitridge, in press). The history of harpoon head forms reveals these zones of contact with seal or line or harpoon foreshaft as significant nodes on what must have been cognitively complex surfaces. Considering also traces of use, breakage, and repair, such places

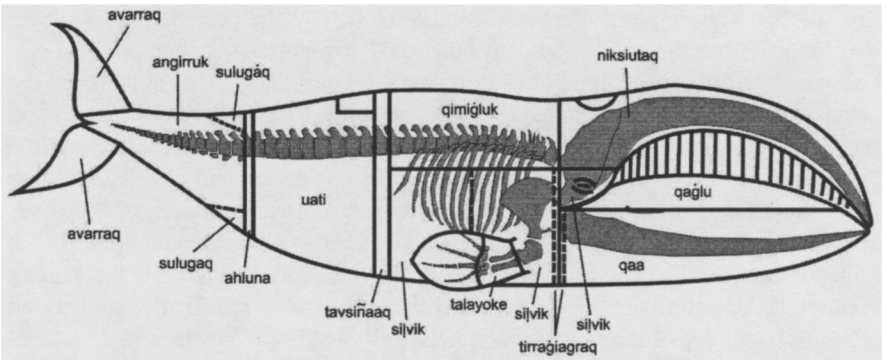

Fig. 9. Traditional bowhead carcass divisions at Tikiraq (after Foote, 1992, p. 31; Whitridge, 2002b, p. 67).

on tools were likely the topics of hunting stories, lessons to novice tool makers, and magical injunctions. The nature of the materials and decoration allows symbolic connections to be drawn from such sites to other cultural arenas (Whitridge, 2002a). For example, the inverted **Y** motif that occurs frequently on Classic Thule sealing harpoon heads is also found on brow bands, needle cases, and combs associated with women, suggesting symbolic linkages between seal hunting and women.

Bodies

The topology of an animal carcass was registered not only in an economic anatomy but in the social and political anatomies that inhered in the codes of game sharing (Fig. 9). The partitioning of a whale carcass was a perilous political act with tons of food and oil at stake (Spencer, 1959), forcing the butchers to attend carefully to conventional anatomical features and contours (Whitridge, 2002b). For historic Central Arctic groups, complex networks of social relations were mediated by the allocation of an elaborately partitioned carcass among seal-sharing partners (Damas, 1972; van de Velde, 1976). Dogs, which were important as hunting and draft animals, embodied patterns of human labor and violence that are preserved in the distribution of pathologies across the skeleton, such as frequent cranial trauma related to disciplinary practices (Morrison, 1984) and osteoarthritic exostoses related to lifetimes of load bearing. The regionalization of animal bodies can be assessed through the frequency, spatial distribution, and contextual attributes of skeletal elements and larger carcass portions, patterning in cut marks, and representations in figurative art (like the stylized skeletons incised on Dorset animal figurines; see, e.g., Taylor and Swinton, 1967). Marean *et al.*'s (2001) use of GIS

to map patterns of element survival illustrates the archaeological accessibility of a topologized animal body.

The human body constitutes a topological field still more densely imbricated with personal history, cultural significations, and political disciplines, what Adrienne Rich (1984) called "the geography closest in." Depictions of human figures in art (Fig. 2) point to a corpus of bodily techniques (Mauss, 1979) or hexis (Bourdieu, 1977) to which bioarchaeology also provides access. Musculoskeletal stress markers, osteoarthritis, tooth loss, and other activity-induced pathologies, like the grooves on the occlusal surface of women's teeth exacted by a lifetime of smoothing sinew for thread (Hansen *et al.*, 1991), map out the sites and zones of women's and men's bodies rendered significant by habitual practice. Indeed, the practical body extends, cyborg-like, beyond the skin to include the ergonomic tools and architecture with which practices are thoroughly articulated (Whitridge, 2003). The meaningful elaboration of particular bodily regions and sites can be approached through the material culture of bodily adornment well represented in the Thule record (see above), its forms, materials, and decorative tropes providing links between sites and regions on the body and other discursive domains. This includes elaborate clothing systems, jewelry, labrets, hairstyles, and tattooing, all associated with various paraphernalia and the by-products of production processes, and some with depictions in figurative art or actual modified bodies (Hansen *et al.*, 1991).

The idea of place can thus be made to illuminate substantial new worlds of archaeological interpretation. Significantly, in the Inuit case, linguistic analyses reveal these worlds to be connected through semantic homologies between their respective lexicons. The Inuktitut and Yuit terms for cardinal directions, key concepts for enabling navigation on the landscape, are frequently derived from sets of terms for the walls of the winter house (Fortescue, 1988). The same words or word stems were also employed for referring to regions of bodies and boats. There is a representational economy at work here, an efficiency of meaning achieved through the partial reduplication of topological schemata between semantic domains. This is manifested archaeologically in practical and symbolic homologies between Thule settlements and dwellings (Fig. 10), and in the meaningful juxtaposition of motifs in figurative art. An axis of semantic equivalency of houses and bodies and boats expressed in the Inuit word *ilumiulerpaa*, which can mean impregnating a woman, entering a house, or loading a boat (Nuttal, 1992), neatly parallels the preference for images of bodies, boats, and dwellings in Thule engravings (Fig. 2). These homologies are not precise and complete, like systematic structural transformations, but fragmentary, local, and historically transient. Tangled networks of meanings, practices, and things interpenetrate at significant sites of resemblance, conceptual resonance, or practical overlap, resulting in the bridging of semantic fields which in their hybrid conjunction release metaphorical equivalences that are then taken up in art, ritual, myth, song, and speech.

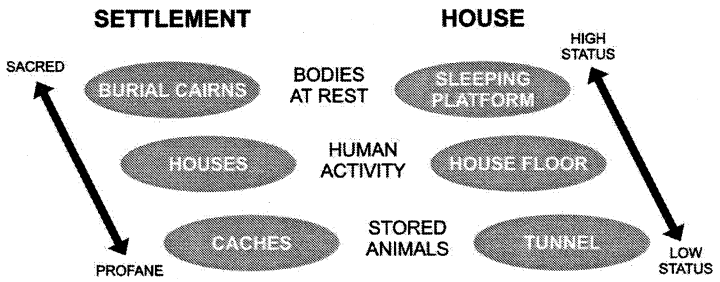

Fig. 10. Practical and symbolic homologies between settlement and dwelling space.

THE NOTION OF THE IMAGINARY

Places are thus significant not merely in and of themselves, but as the sites of attachment of the real to a space of circulation of socially intelligible significations, in which entities that are incommensurate with respect to their materialities—landscapes, houses, bodies, things—freely exchange properties in the form of conceptual attributes and symbolic associations. This representational space is what I refer to here as "the imaginary." In fields such as sociocultural anthropology, geography, history, psychoanlaysis, and cultural studies, imaginaries are thought of as simulacra that tend towards their own materialization, for example, a national imaginary that constitutes the unified state as an emergent political reality by setting the terms of a culturally bounded historical understanding (Anderson, 1991; Castoriadis, 1987), or a bodily imaginary that renders certain modes of embodiment more intelligible and legitimate than others (which it suppresses or marginalizes) (Butler, 1993; Gatens, 1996). These usages are indebted to Lacan's (1977) model of the formation of the human subject through the child's originary projection of the perceived wholeness and autonomy of the body (such as glimpsed in a mirror) onto the thinking self, thus concealing the true fragmentation and incoherence of subjective experience behind the imaginary, but serviceable, notion of a singular ego. Imaginaries have the important property of defining the possibilities of future states of the real by underwriting particular logics of practice—what is thinkable and doable—in the present. This overlaps with Bourdieu's notion of habitus, understood as a local, historically sedimented network of embodied meanings and practices that reproduces the social and material conditions of its own necessity and intelligibility, like a train laying its own tracks (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 57).

From the perspective of an archaeology of place, it is essential to recognize that imaginaries are nourished by their connections to the real and effectively *distributed across* the representational and the material (see also Escobar, 2001, on place-based imaginaries and Foucault, 1994, on heterotopias). Without flags, anthems, monuments, and other national symbols (not least, the ones generated

by archaeology), a national imaginary would never become fixed in practical consciousness, and neither would a particular bodily imaginary without the appropriate clothing, images, gestural repertoires, architectural settings, etc. Imaginaries are everywhere affixed to the real, but are not limited by it; they constitute a heterogeneous field of communication and translation between discursive arenas and material things, a space of the production and ramification of hybrid cultural logics. For example, the homology in Thule culture between sleeping platform and grave (Fig. 10) does not remain at the semantic level of a play of signifiers, but was materialized in practice through the use of heather (*Cassiope tetragona*) as both a bedding material and a grave lining (Whitridge, 1999). Economic organization, social relations, technical knowledge, ritual practice, the nonhuman environment, or whatever can potentially achieve semantic connectivity within the realm of the imaginary. A place could be thought of as *a nexus of imaginary significations at the site of its intersection with the real*, at which point the imaginary achieves a practical, and not merely a semantic, cohesion, and efficacy.

THULE IMAGINARIES

An archaeology of the imaginary attends to the hybrid conjunction of networks of representations and the materialities of practice, as place does with respect to landscape. Places are topologically grounded or spatialized imaginaries: heterogeneous, emergent networks of matter and meaning, not nodes within completed, hypercoherent lattices in the fashion of structuralist anthropology or economic geography. Attending to the placeness of Thule settlements, houses, bodies, and things brings their imaginary dimensions to light. The CA of artifact distributions generated one version of an interpretive grid for exploring a field of practical and semantic associations related to gendered labor and a household/community opposition, but a differently constructed data matrix would have produced a different grid, and brought different associations to light. Another approach would be to start from a particular location and follow its tendrils of associations outwards. For example, kitchens were linked to women and children (especially girls) by the CA. Ethnographic hints as to the kitchen's place in imaginaries of gender, the family, the house, etc., can be played off against the architectural details and contextual associations of real archaeological examples.

Thule kitchens are exterior to, in front of, below, and smaller than the main living area, hence distinctively emplaced with respect to the topological schemas noted previously. They are associated with lamps, hearths, wick trimmers, cooking pots, serving vessels, sea mammal oil, fire, smoke, heat, blood, meat, butchering and serving utensils, and the transformation of animals and clay into cultural products. Any or all of these could be taken up as discursive threads to be followed into other places and semantic universes. For example, the lamp was usually made from soapstone that was quarried from named places on the landscape (e.g., *ukusiksalik*

means "place with soapstone"; Wheeler, 1953) perhaps learned from Tunit predecessors, exchanged over long distances through partnerships and trade fairs, and used also to make pots, toy lamps and pots, beads, whale-tail amulets, and wick trimmers. Lamps were installed not only in kitchens but at the edge of the sleeping platform, bounding family space in multifamily houses. Lamp stands were sometimes situated at the focal center of the *qargi*, like the whale vertebrae column in a *qargi* at PaJs-4 (Savelle, 2002), the summer whaling village occupied by winter residents of Qariaraqyuk. Lamps rendered whale and seal blubber into oil that they burned as fuel, lit and heated interior space, held burning wicks of cottongrass, melted snow and ice for drinking water, boiled pots of food, dried wet snowy clothing, and generated the soot that was mixed with oil and used as pigment for tattooing with needle and thread. Merely by way of the lamp, the kitchen is linked to a host of other things, meanings, places, animals, and practices.

To take up another thread, at Qariaraqyuk the kitchens of four out of five excavated dwellings incorporated a whale skull in the wall (Fig. 5; Whitridge, 1999). The whale skull presences a large ethnographic body of symbolism related to whales and women, such as the notions that the soul of the whale resides in the skull, and that women attract the whale to the hunter (Bodenhorn, 1990; Lantis, 1938; Rainey, 1947; Taylor, 1985). The wife of the *umialik* gave the dead animal a ceremonial drink of fresh water, and menstrual blood figured in esoteric whaling rituals, although women were normally prohibited from handling whaling gear or participating directly in the actual pursuit (Lowenstein, 1993; Spencer, 1959). In a myth that is sufficiently widely distributed across the Inuit world that it likely derives from a common Thule cultural base (Sheppard, 1998), a young woman is abducted by a whale who makes a house for her out of his own bones at the bottom of the sea. Women enter into relationships of affinity with whales, allowing them to act as intermediaries between hunter and prey.

Archaeologically, whale skulls commonly occur as construction elements in the *qariyit* that served as clubhouses for male whaling crews and sites of community ceremonial (Habu and Savelle, 1994; Sheehan, 1997; Whitridge, 2002b), establishing an equivalency between the kitchen as a symbolically charged, domestic, female space, and the *qargi* as a ritually prominent, communal, male space. Bowhead crania also occur at the entrances of dwellings (Fig. 5; McCartney, 1980), as the major construction element of specialized ceremonial structures (Savelle, 1997), and on flensing beaches, where they often exhibit a perforation that may be related to releasing the soul (Savelle and McCartney, 1990). A significant juxtaposition of sexual activity and whaling occurs on the Arctic Bay drill bow (Fig. 2), recalling ethnographic reports of the *umialik*'s obligation to share his spouse with crew members (Spencer, 1959, 1972), and a whale tail motif appears in the design of women's combs, needle cases, needle case toggles, and tattoos. While some of these associations are occasional, hence perhaps idiosyncratic, others (like the skulls in kitchen walls and *qariyit* at Qariaraqyuk) constitute recurrent patterns that can be quantified and compared within and between sites. For example, the

presence of a kitchen niche (rather than a fully detached room) and lack of integral whale skulls in one of the excavated dwellings at Qariaraqyuk (House 29) points to intracommunity variation in architectural practices and meanings, in this case linked to other patterns of economic and ritual specialization that suggest overlapping arenas of heterarchical social difference (Whitridge 1999).

There is thus a complex field of semantic articulation of women and whales that is materialized at a major locus of domestic activity by the incorporation of whale skulls in kitchen walls. Through the translations made possible by this "gyno-cetacean imaginary" the whale skull attaches the kitchen, the people who occupy it, the activities that occur there, the temporal cycles of its use, and the things that are found there, to other times, places, activities, and things, including the *qargi*, the summer whaling camp, the flensing beach, the entrances of houses, communal ritual, care of the body, sewing, the bottom of the ocean, the society of whales, the reincarnation of animal souls, and the mythic past. Places such as the Thule kitchen are the inextricable sites of attachment and interpenetration of the real and the imaginary.

CONCLUSION

Place seems to occupy a middle ground between culture and nature, the ideal and the material, the individual and the social, and so helps us move between, and ultimately beyond, such polarities, as long as we can avoid reinscribing them in new distinctions, such as that between space and place. The constitution of meaningful places is not a process opposed to the symbolic and practical mastery of space, but an aspect of it. Space is a medium shaped by embodied experience, knowledge and discourse, sociality, material culture, and the nonhuman phenomena out of which these are constructed or with which they articulate. People do not move through an abstract biophysical matrix, but through meaningful cultural landscapes, within socially variable envelopes. Envelopes of mobility are molded by personal and cultural knowledge, skill, technological means, and positions within larger social networks. Landscapes are shaped by ongoing histories of place-making, the hybrid conjoining of heterogeneous semantic fields—imaginaries—with the material world. Places defy scale. Thought everywhere topologizes its objects, constituting seams, sites and surfaces on landscapes, houses, bodies, things, and creating the conditions—points and fields of metaphorical resemblance, symbolic homology, practical intersection—for the circulation of representations between objects. An archaeology of place implies an archaeology of the imaginary.

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