

Re-assembling Rural Places in the Global Countryside

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@globalrural



Farm (Pryor Creek, Oklahoma) 2015
John Gerrard



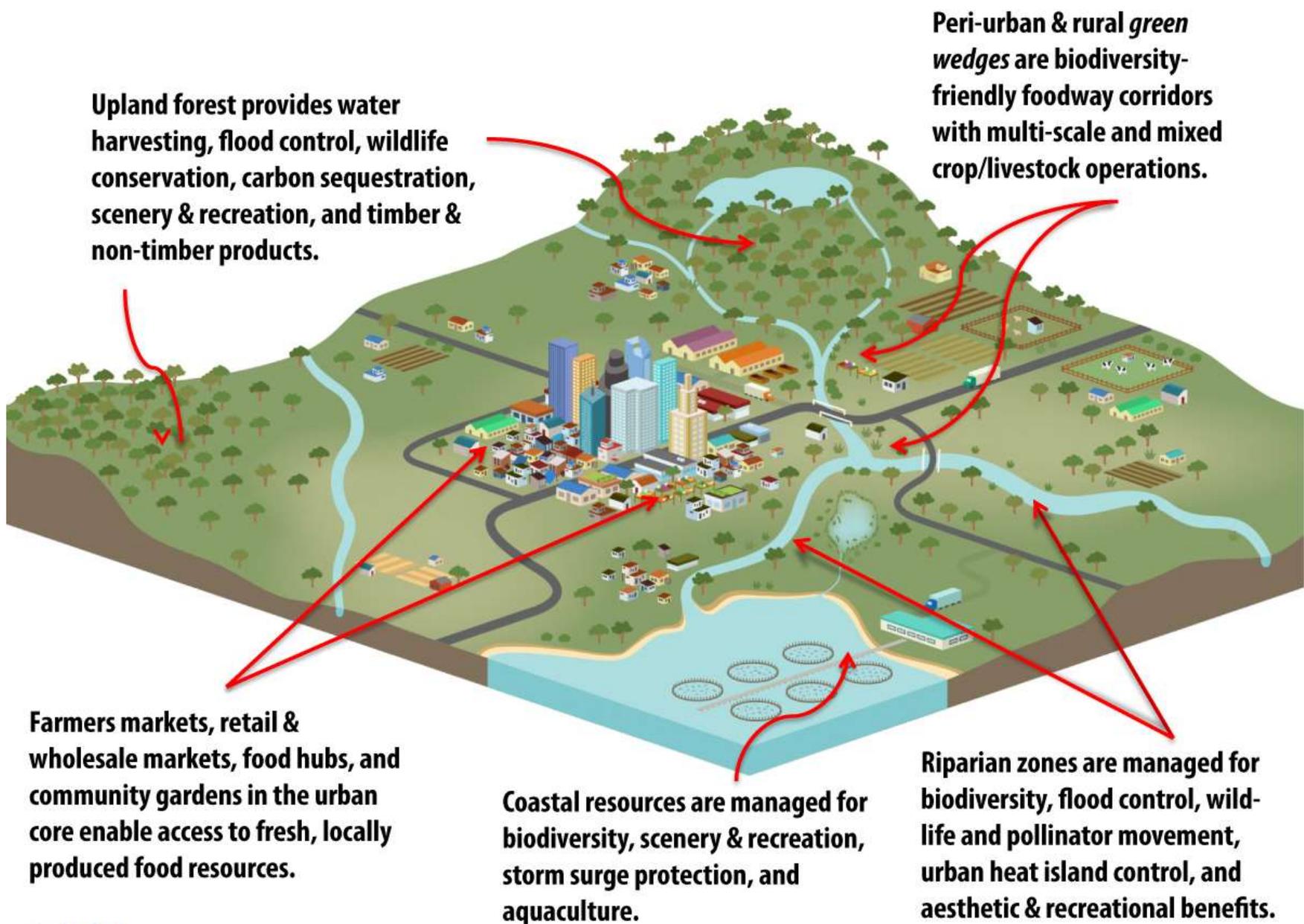


**Facebook server farm
Lulea, Sweden**



Goonhilly Downs, Cornwall







“The countryside is in urban hands already, as it has been since the city generated its trade and capital.”

Anthony Barnett (1998) in *Town and Country*, p. 342.





515019233

COUNTRYSIDE IS

GREAT

BRITAIN

DISCOVER THE UNTOUCHED BEAUTY
OF BRITAIN'S ANCIENT WOODLANDS



1 Goodway
Bryn, Rhondda, Wales

visitbritain.com



Llwybr y Mwynwyr 1½m / 2.4km

Miners' Trail

1 awr / hour



Llwybr y Grib

3m / 5km

Ridgetop Trail

2 awr / hours



no more

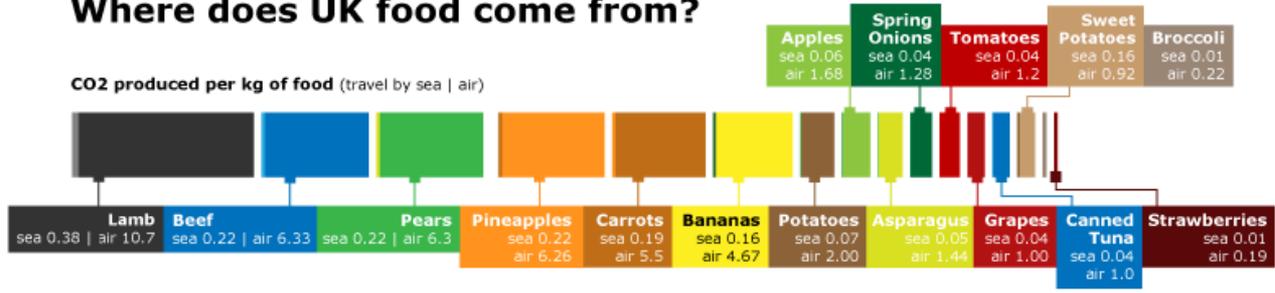


dim rhagor





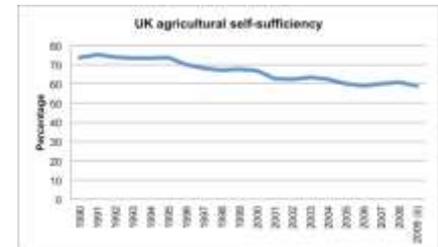
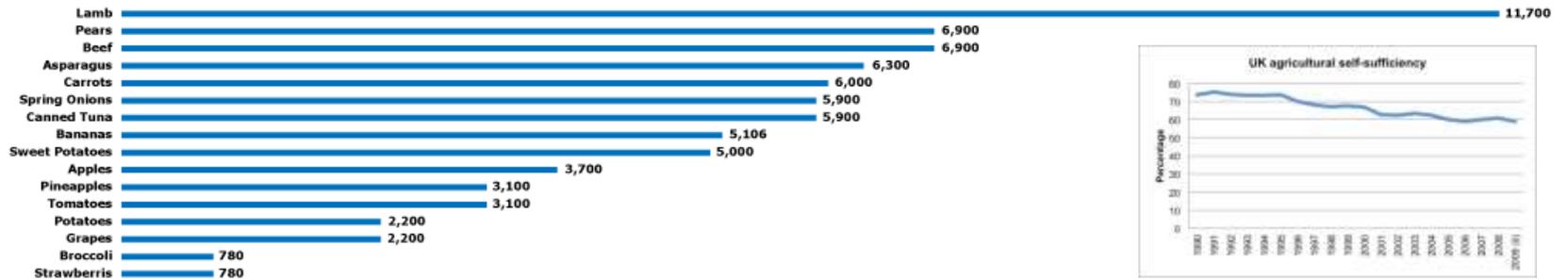
Where does UK food come from?



The countries of origin for the food



Food miles to Britain





Re-imagining the Rural

- Shifting scales
 - The countryside of the city
 - The national countryside
 - The global countryside
- How do we imagine the rural in the era of globalization?
 - Rural repositioned “to serve two new and very different purposes – playground and dumping ground – as the traditional rural economy declines” (Epp & Whitson, 2001, *Writing Off The Rural West*, p xv)
 - Too passive?
 - Rural actors as active agents in reproducing, negotiating and contesting globalization?

Assemblages

“a collection or gathering of things or people”

Dictionary definition.

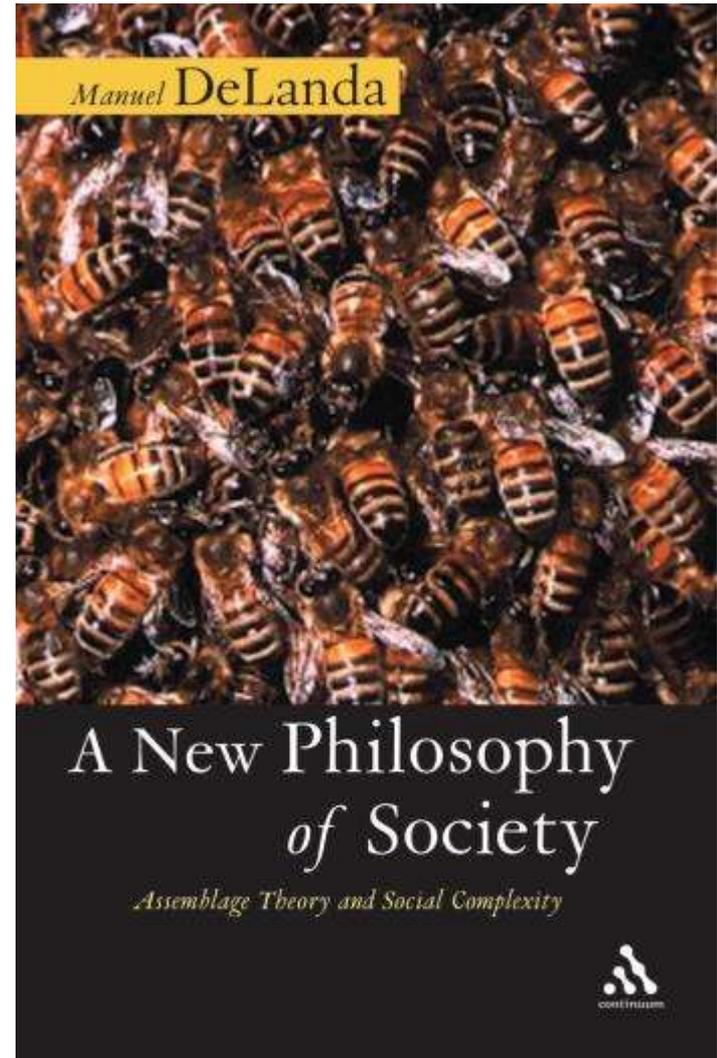
“assemblages are composed of heterogeneous elements that may be human and non-human, organic and inorganic, technical and natural.”

Anderson and McFarlane (2011) in *Area*, p 124

“The term is often used to emphasise emergence, multiplicity and indeterminacy, and connects to a wider redefinition of the socio-spatial in terms of the composition of diverse elements into some form of provisional socio-spatial formation”

Anderson and McFarlane (2011) in *Area*, p 124

Assemblage Theory



Assemblage Theory

- The components of an assemblage have both *material* and *expressive* roles
- An assemblage is stabilized and destabilized through processes of *territorialization* and *detrterritorialization*
- An assemblage is given an identity through *coding* and *decoding*

Assemblage Theory

- Assemblages are characterised by ‘relations of exteriority’
- “[The capacities of an assemblage] do depend on a component’s properties but cannot be reduced to them since they involve reference to the properties of other interacting entities” (De Landa, ANPS, p 11)
- “a component part of an assemblage may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage in which its interactions are different” (De Landa, ANPS, p 10)

Assemblage Theory

- Assemblages are dynamic and constantly changing
- “this can only ever be a provisional process: relations may change, new elements may enter, alliances may be broken, new conjunctions may be fostered” (Anderson and McFarlane, 2011, p 126)

Places as Assemblages

- Chapter of *ANPS* on 'cities and nations' as assemblages:
 - Buildings as material components
 - Iconic skylines as expressive components
 - Territorialization through residential practices
 - Deterritorialization through gentrification
 - Interactions between town and countryside as relations of exteriority

Rural Places as Assemblages

- **Material components:** Landscape, buildings, crops, livestock, wildlife, economic commodities
- **Expressive components:** Aesthetic qualities of landscape, 'rural idyll', folk culture, emotional attachments, sense of identity
- **Territorialization:** Working the land, family inheritance, administrative boundaries
- **Deterritorialization:** Migration, loss of rural services, amalgamation of municipalities
- **Coding:** Description as 'rural', eligibility for rural development programmes, media representations
- **Decoding:** Changing meaning of rurality

Rural Places as Assemblages

- Relations of exteriority:
 - Comparison of rural and urban
 - Interactions with local towns and the region
 - Migration flows
 - Economic transactions
 - Power relations
 - Intersections with ‘translocal assemblages’

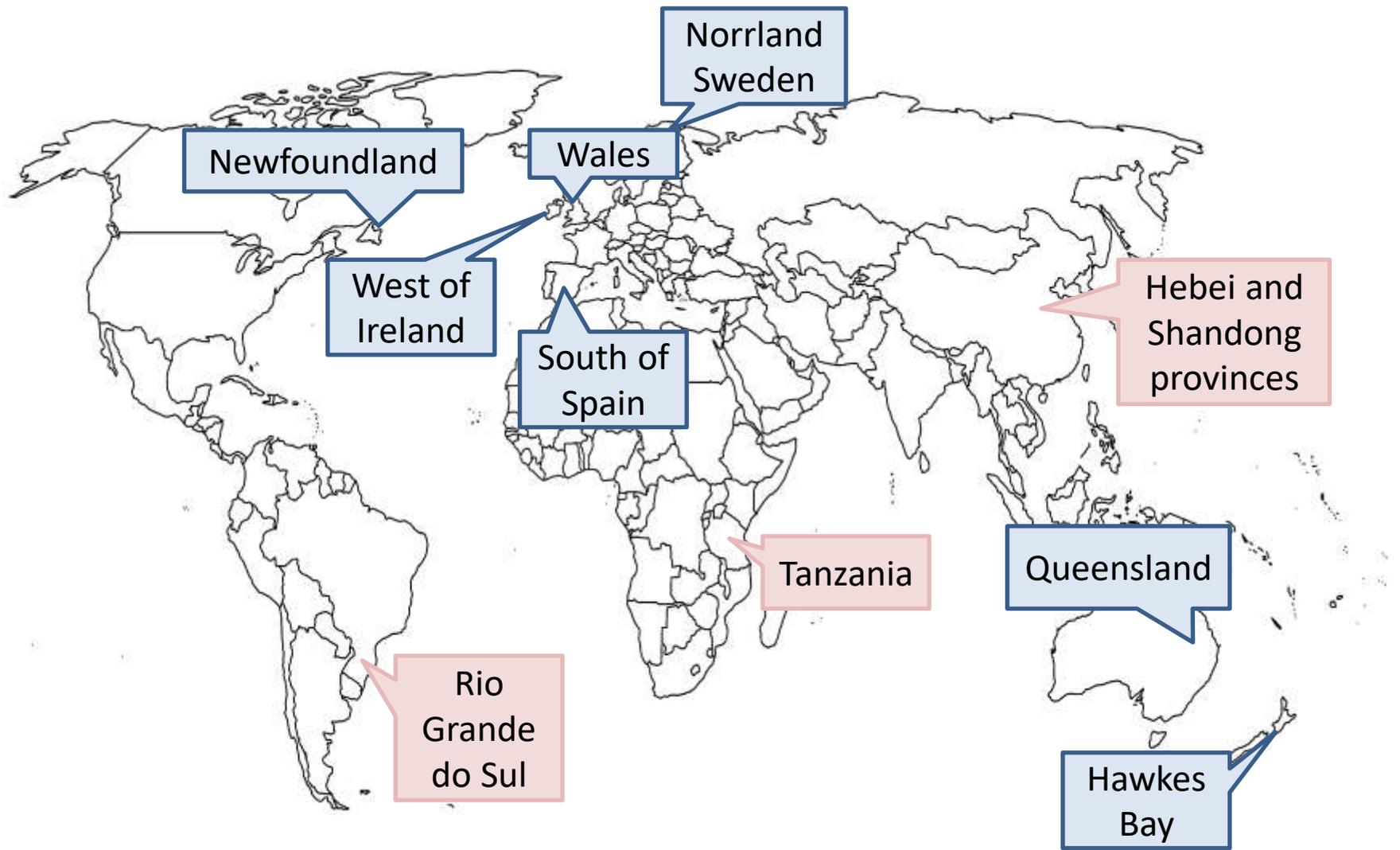
Understanding the relational constitution of rural place in the context of change, restructuring and globalization

Assemblages and Globalization

- How does globalization transform the material composition of rural places through the introduction, removal, substitution and circulation of material objects including commodities, technologies, crops, financial capital etc.?
- How is globalization 'performed' in rural space through the behaviours, cultural practices and mobilities of migrants, tourists, entrepreneurs and public officials? *What impact does this have on the expressive composition of rural places?*
- How does the stretching and multiplication of social and economic relations in globalization alter the territorialization of rural place? *Are rural places being stretched over more expansive territories?*

Assemblages and Globalization

- How is the rural discursively constructed as a global space in social, economic and environmental terms? *How are these translated to the local level through the coding and decoding of rural places?*
- How are contemporary rural experiences of globalization historically situated? *What are the legacies of earlier global engagements and the resultant assemblages?*



GLOBAL-RURAL project

European Research Council Advanced Grant
2014-2019

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www.globalruralproject.wordpress.com



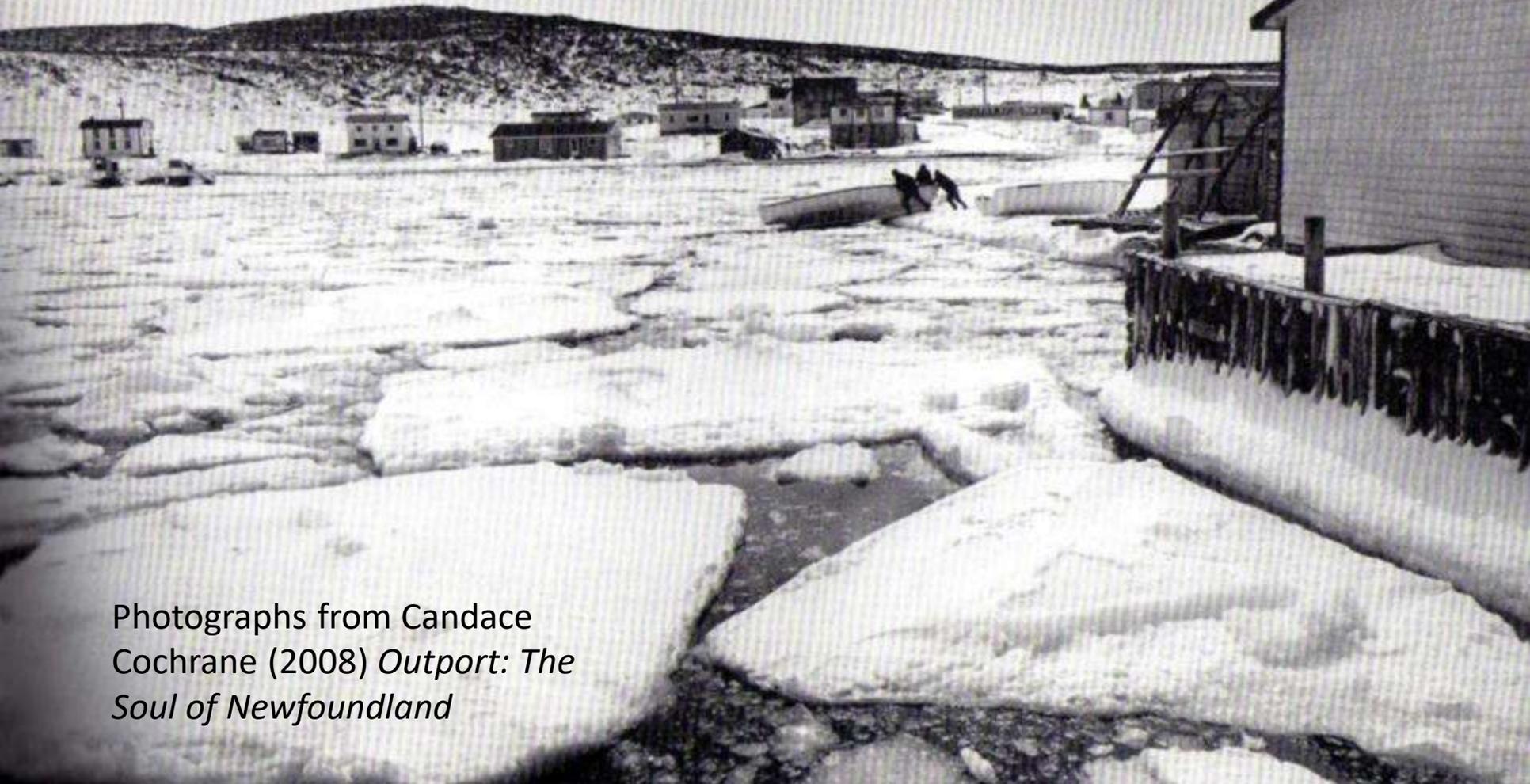
Outports of Newfoundland



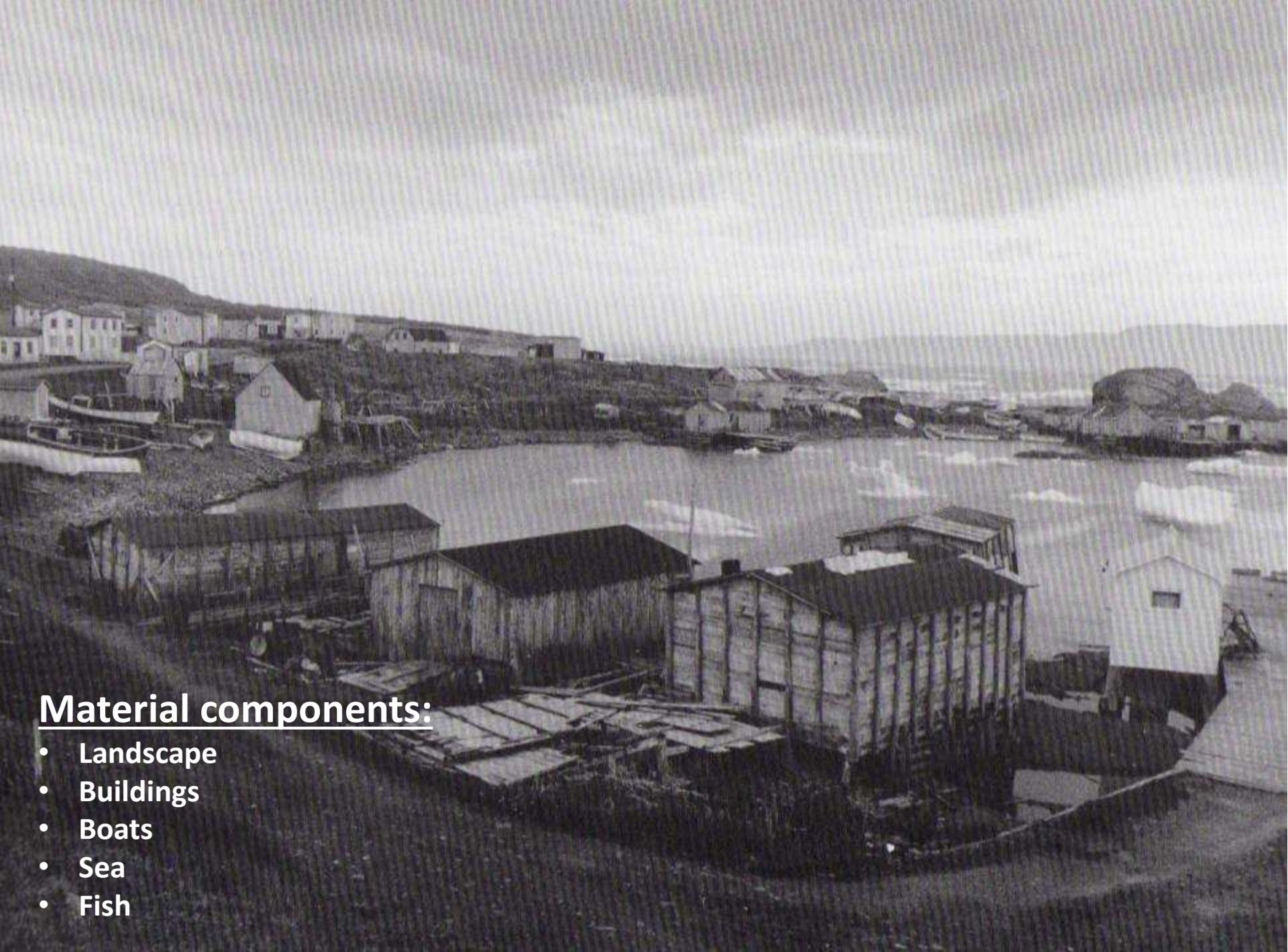


Expressive components:

Isolation, Harsh climate, Resilience, Community



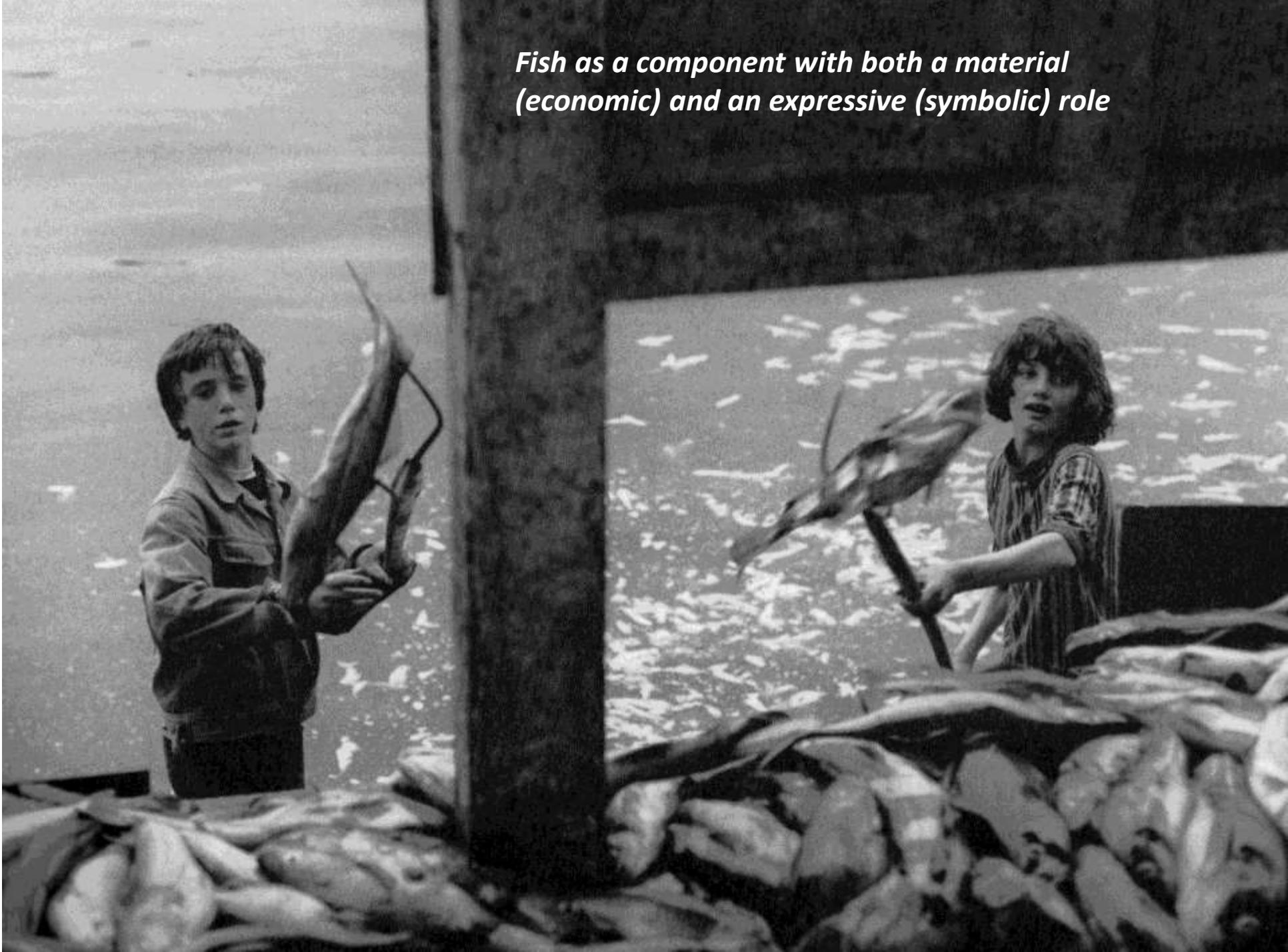
Photographs from Candace
Cochrane (2008) *Outport: The
Soul of Newfoundland*

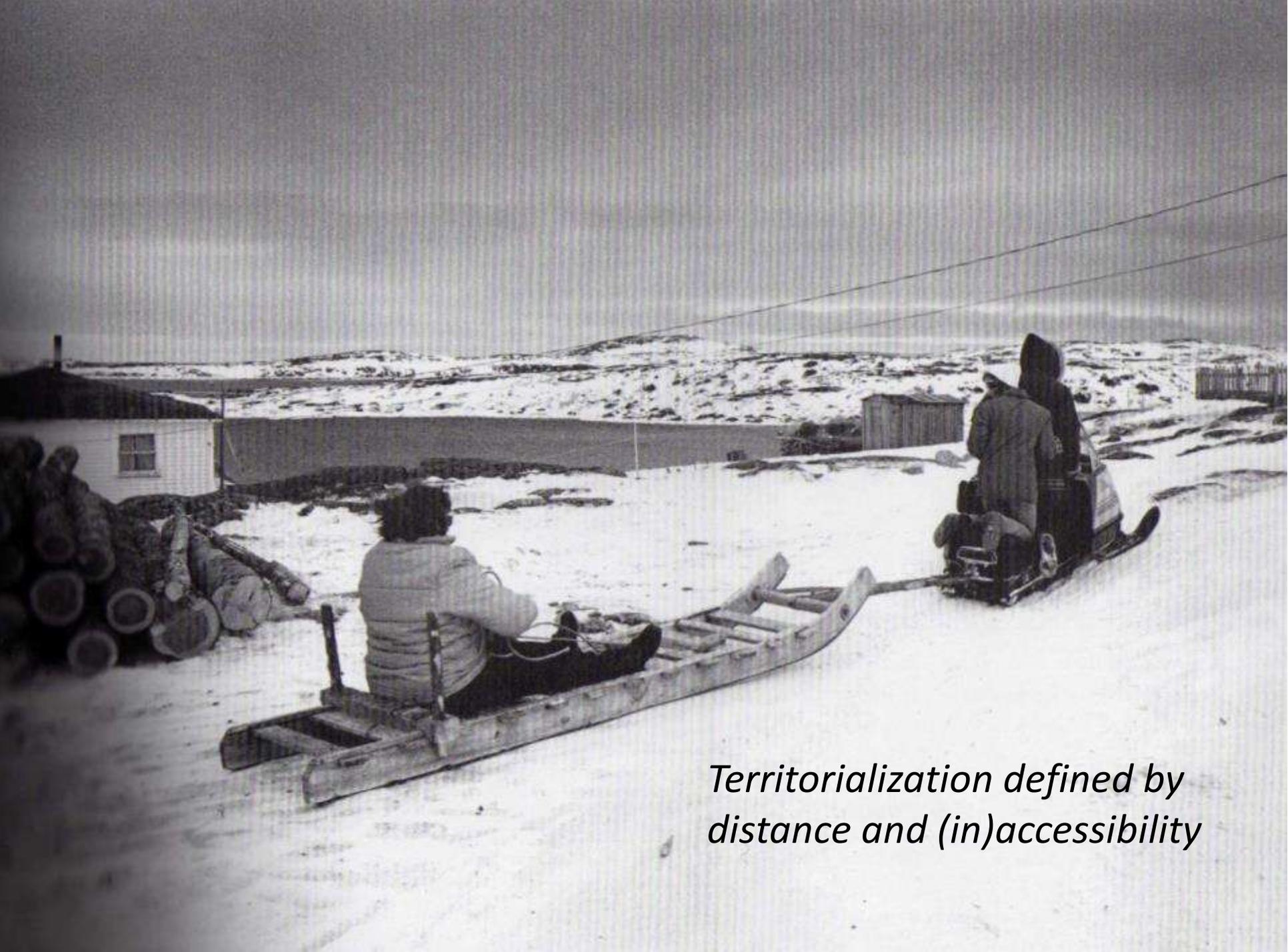


Material components:

- Landscape
- Buildings
- Boats
- Sea
- Fish

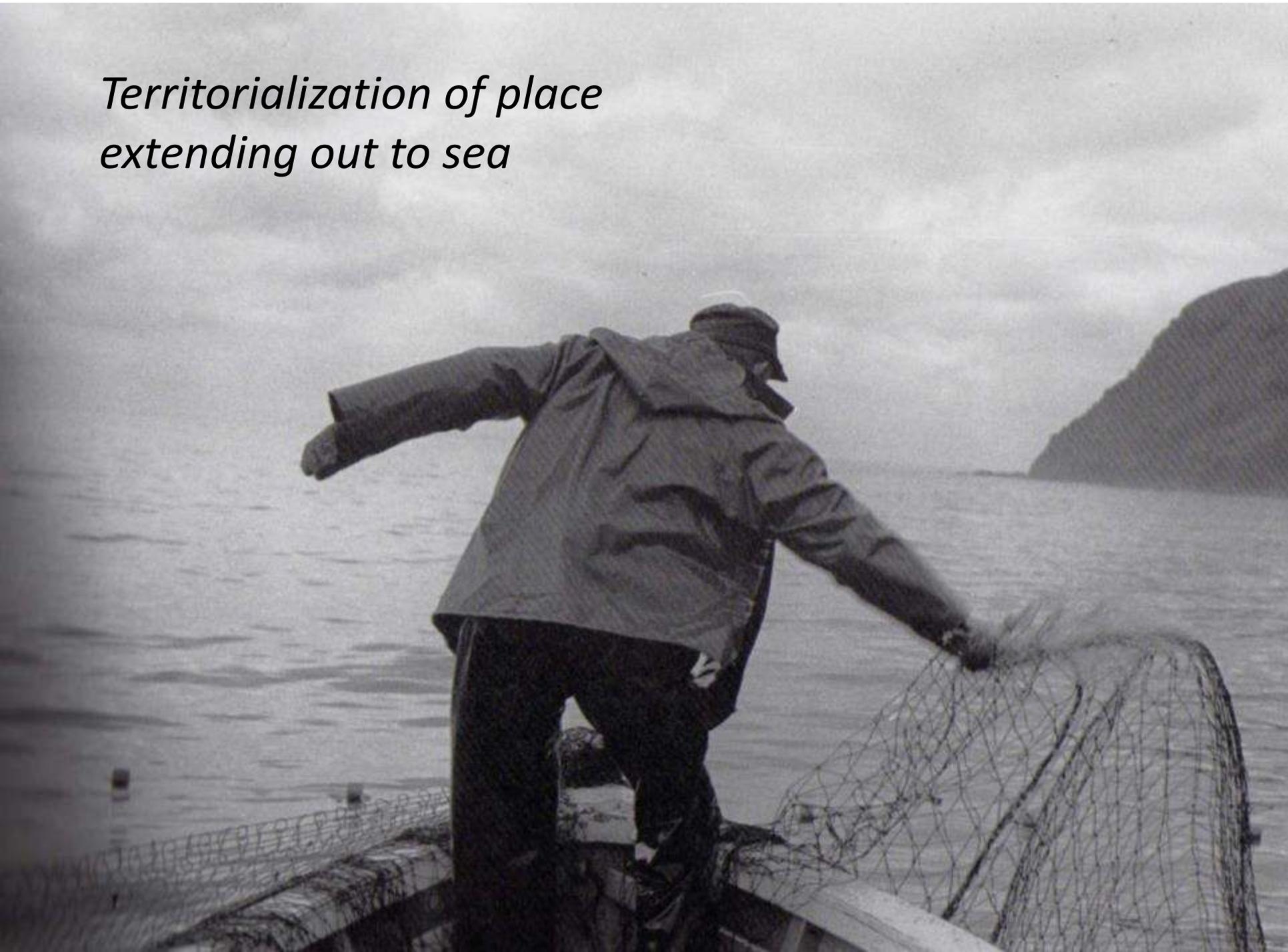
Fish as a component with both a material (economic) and an expressive (symbolic) role



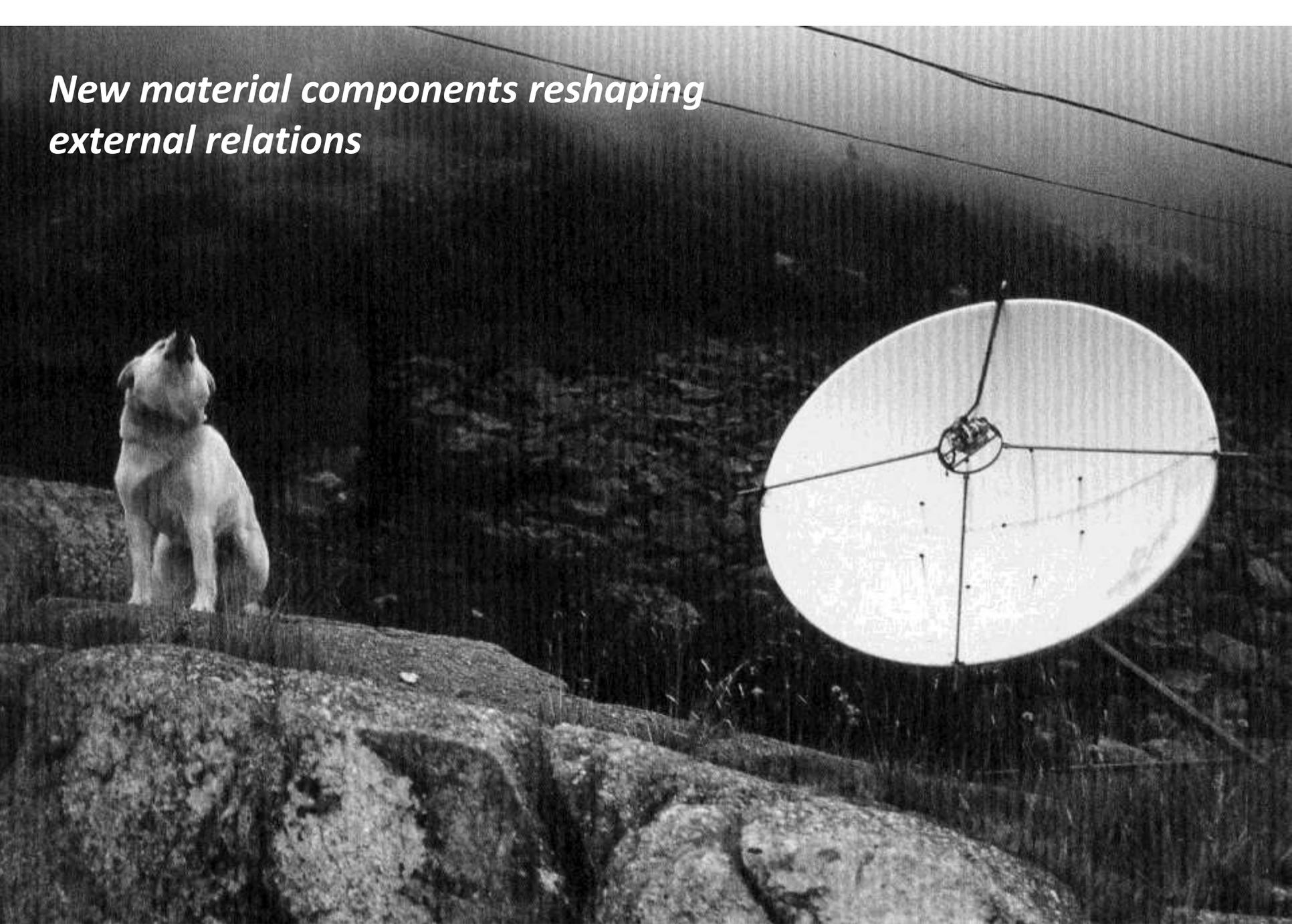


*Territorialization defined by
distance and (in)accessibility*

*Territorialization of place
extending out to sea*



*New material components reshaping
external relations*





FIRST DAY COVER

CANADA
WELCOMES

Newfoundland

INTO
CONFEDERATION
MARCH 31ST 1949

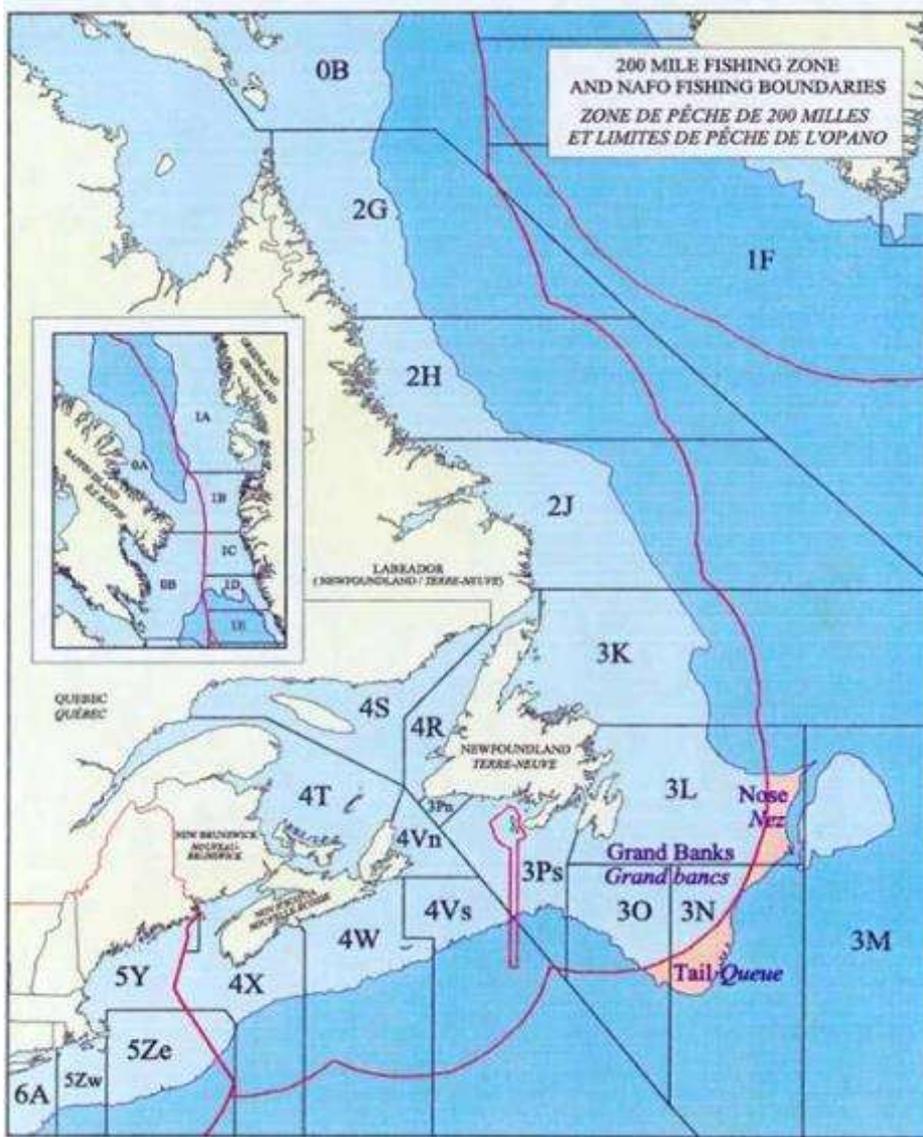


Families To Be Paid
For Leaving Villages



Outposts Likely To
Become Thing Of Past





Encountering the global fisheries assemblage...



THE COD FISHERY WAS 500 YEARS OLD.



OVER TIME, THE FISH STARTED TO DISAPPEAR...



THIS CAUSED 40,000 PEOPLE TO BE PUT OUT OF WORK. IT DEVASTATED HUNDREDS OF COMMUNITIES THAT DEPENDED ON FISHING FOR THEIR PRIMARY INDUSTRY.



THE CLOSING OF THE COD FISHERY CAUSED 75,000 PEOPLE TO LEAVE THE ISLAND.



MANY NEWFOUNDLANDERS HAD TO LEAVE THE ISLAND IN SEARCH OF NEW JOBS...

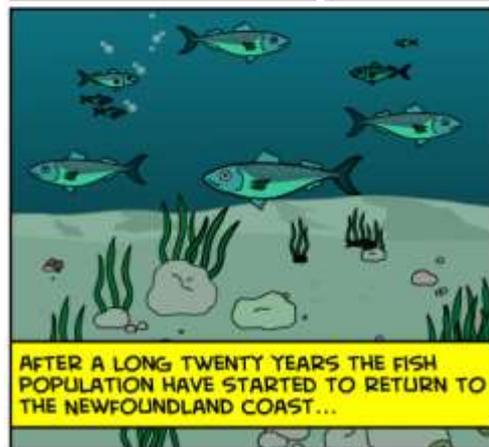
MOST OF THEM WENT INTO THE OIL INDUSTRY IN THE WEST.



WHEN WILL IT BE OVER...?

I MISS FISHING...

THE COD MORATORIUM WAS ONLY SUPPOSED TO LAST FOR TWO YEARS BUT HAS NOW BEEN IN PLACE FOR TWENTY YEARS



AFTER A LONG TWENTY YEARS THE FISH POPULATION HAVE STARTED TO RETURN TO THE NEWFOUNDLAND COAST...



YAHOO!

HOPEFULLY SOON, ALL THE FISHERMAN WILL BE ABLE TO DO WHAT THEY LOVE AGAIN... FISH!

THE END

Reterritorialization





St John's

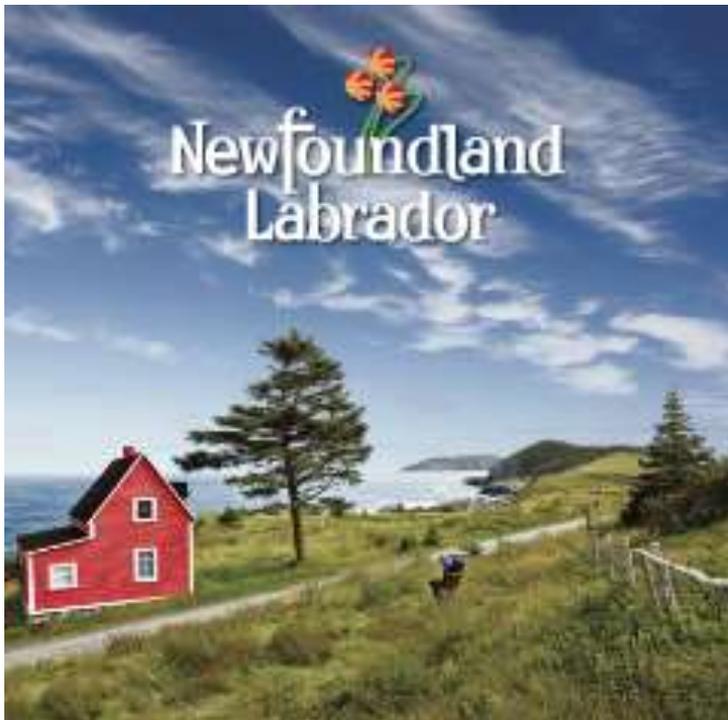


Hibernia oil field



Alberta tar sands

Re-coding place



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Re-assembling Rural Place

- An assemblage approach allows us to look in detail at the microprocesses and micropolitics through which rural places are changing
- Encompasses cultural and material change
- Emphasises the interconnection and interdependency of the rural and the urban, and the local and the global
- Recognizes the individuality of rural places

The continuing relevance of the rural and the persistence of rural places....

“Through these entanglements, intersections and entrapments, the experience of globalization changes rural places, but it never eradicates the local. Rather, the networks, flows and actors introduced by globalization processes fuse and combine with extant local entities to produce new hybrid formations. In this way, places in the emergent global countryside retain their local distinctiveness, but they are also different to *how they were before.*”

Woods (2007) in *Progress in Human Geography*