

4 *The Need for the Local*

Localism and its geographic expression

Localism

In this chapter, I examine the processes that link the human person, the social group and the physical landscape together to form repetitive spatial patterns, and review the most relevant literature relating to these processes. As a starting point, I shall argue that the desire for *belonging* is an extremely fundamental human trait, intimately connected with the development of our identity and sense of self-worth; in the widely accepted seven-level hierarchy of human needs proposed by Maslow (1970) affiliation needs (belonging, love, family, group) are placed third, after our basic physiological needs (first) and safety needs (second). I further argue that, taking an existentialist view of the role of spatiality in the development of the self, this process of acquiring a sense of belonging necessarily involves engagement of the individual with his/her molar environment, through which space is cognitively differentiated, given meaning and converted into place. In this process of place-making, very frequently if not universally the individual develops familiarity with, preference and concern for, or attachment to a piece of territory which s/he can at least loosely identify. In our society this process is only infrequently accomplished by an individual in solitude - rather it is intimately bound up with the process of socialisation. Depending on the individual's mobility and socio-economic status, the person's place-making horizons may be broad or narrow, or may exist at several different levels, but there is usually some degree of local concentration of social interaction which tends to blend the concepts of social belonging with territorial belonging. It is above all the spatial circumscription of the process of socialisation which gives rise to localism, which I define broadly to include all types of identification of individuals or social groups with a restricted territory, which may vary in scale from parish to nation state.

Community without propinquity?

The discussion above in no way implies that localism, or the need for the local, is the only dominant force shaping social interaction in today's rural Australia. A variant of 'community' may exist without propinquity (Webber, 1964). The high degree of personal mobility, the increasing penetration of advanced communication technology, the highly commercialised agriculture and the pervasive influence of the mass media are clearly influencing the way rural people are socialised, and increasingly adding a broader national and (increasingly) global outlook to their mental equipment, information fields and perceived identity. In a provocative paper, McKenzie (1994) draws attention to the rising importance of individualism in Australian rural areas, as opposed to the (in his view) former domination of the individual by homogenising localistic attitudes. He acknowledges the continued need for belonging, but suggests that this need is increasingly being met not by the traditional locality-based community but by wide-ranging "attachment communities". In McKenzie's study area (the Nyah Irrigation District, N.E. Victoria) these attachment communities are based on associations for specialist farm commodity production, which in only four

years increased in number from two to fifty-two. Rather than rural people focussing their attention and interests on the spatially invariant locality of their residence, McKenzie argues that a complex pattern of shifting coalitions between individuals and interest groups is coming to dominate the social fabric of rural Australia. The consequence of this, he suggests, is that the task of rural planners is to facilitate the formation and growth of such creative coalitions, rather than concentrate on existing locality-based social units as the building blocks whose perpetuation, socio-economic survival and local political interests rural planners have up to now sought to serve.

Because in his brief paper McKenzie very cogently states a case for a polar opposite to my own stance implied in the title of this chapter - "the need for the local" - a little more of the essence of his argument needs to be stated and evaluated. A substantial part of the following three chapters in fact boils down to an assessment, based on empirical evidence, of the balance between social commitment to and identification with the local, and the undoubted impacts of the global, near-spaceless domain of interaction being shared at least by the major industrial and trading blocs of the developed world. McKenzie (1994, pp. 4-5) states the case:

Traditionally rural people have grouped themselves according to their physical location. These groups were previously reinforced by kinship networks, single commodity production work patterns and a narrow band of recreational activities. However, ... economic enterprise diversification, the rationalisation of community services out of rural communities, the increasing mobility of young people, and their search for work far beyond their family location, has led to a steady decline in the significance of geographical communities.

Hence a town's name does not provide an adequate sense of identity to its residents. The name provides a history, but not an identity that helps people in managing their daily life in the 1990s. Thus people are fashioning their identity from their attachment groups. These groups which give recognition in a narrower focus of skills give credibility throughout the wider community. *Exporter of apricot fruit leather to China* is an example of such a label.

The commitment to these groups is therefore gaining in value and so when individuals have to choose between their neighbourhood group affiliation (church, sporting team, etc.) and non-local attachments, they favour the latter.

Later McKenzie (1994,5) suggests that "Research to establish the attachment pattern in a region, is an essential prerequisite for effective regional economic and social development strategy formation", and that "group commitment to the location is very turbulent and planners need to be aware of the changing nature of that commitment". With both of these two statements I thoroughly agree, though the *degree* of any such turbulence forms a major subject of inquiry to be conducted in the next two chapters. Before leaving McKenzie's at least superficially persuasive arguments for the demise of the local, a few pertinent points need to be made. First, like Pahl (referred to in Ch. 1), McKenzie is in fact constrained to use concepts whose value he calls into question - in this case, the concept of 'rural community', which as he uses it appears to imply a complex interaction system without fixed boundaries, but still grounded in a limited area which is implicitly regionally defined. Localism writ larger, networks are more open, but the very facts of economic geography are likely to regionalise any

attachment communities based on specialised production. Secondly, McKenzie explicitly recognises the tension between the traditional, ‘local-local’ neighbourhood based linkage patterns and the broader-scale (in theory, aspatial) linkages to the world beyond, and gives several examples of the persistence of aspects of the former. Third, excessive concentration on the way of making a living as a focus for development of human identity is an extremely partial and limited view of what it is to be human in rural Australia (or anywhere else). To be ‘an exporter of apricot fruit leather to China’ may be a source of satisfaction and pride in accomplishment, but on its own it is simply not enough to define *who* I am, either for myself or others. It also ignores the vitally important formative years of childhood and adolescence. In what follows, I make the argument that the local retains a very considerable importance for rural people, and indeed that it is likely to remain a fundamental human trait.

Three basic models

I now present three simple models which aim to set the conceptual framework I shall use for understanding the social organisation of space, and which are used in structuring the argument in the remainder of this chapter.

A model of spatial interaction patterns

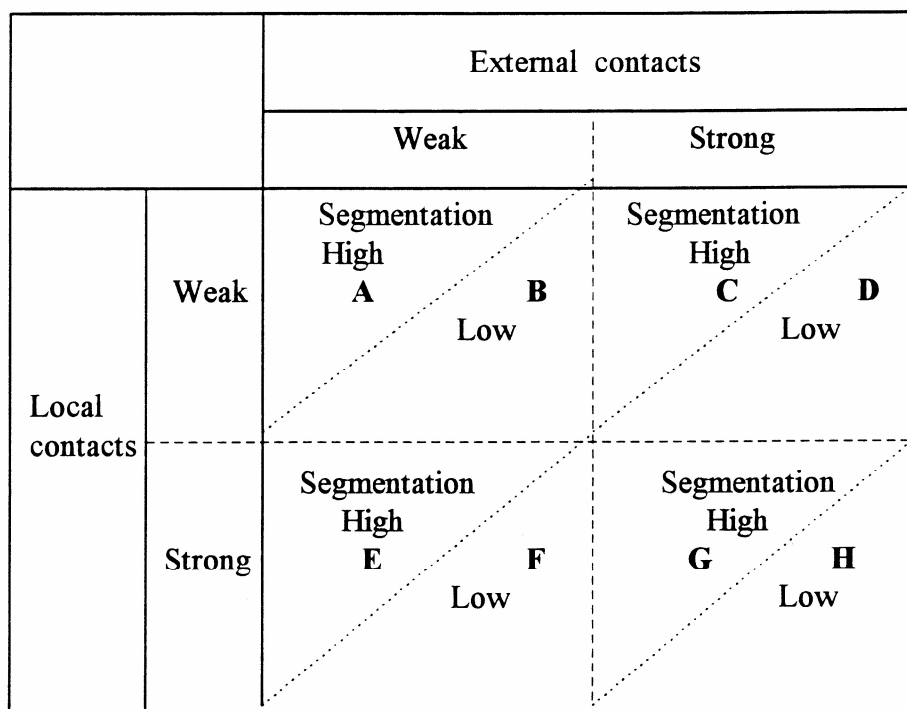
Following the discussion above, the first model (which may apply to either individuals or households) recognises that the need for the local is balanced by the need to look outward and beyond: person-group ties, and household/household or person-person interaction more generally, are far from exclusively locality-based, and in relative terms are likely to become less so. Many non-spatially bounded communities of interest (termed ‘stretched-out’ communities by Silk (1999)) exist alongside territorial groupings. Thus the model presents a highly simplified typology of human *social* contact patterns across space (Fig. 4.1), and classifies social links that are significant in some way to the people between whom the links are formed. (*Economic* interaction may take on a quite different spatial pattern, though it may be formative of social links¹). In most cases households, or individuals, will have both local, distance-dependent social links, *and* external social interactions. “Local” contacts are here conceptualised as those that are based on person-to-person interaction within the normal field of daily, weekly or similar relatively high-frequency movement, and “external” as those maintained with significant others beyond easy reach for face to face contact. Each of the two basic types may be strong or weak, giving a simple 2 x 2 cross-tabulation. There are many transitional possibilities, but this does not affect the argument.

Cutting across this simple fourfold division, however, comes another key variable, namely the degree to which the connectivity of the potential network of interaction between individuals (or households) is broken by segmentation into a pattern of high within-group and low between-group contact, irrespective of how ‘group’ membership is defined. At one extreme, society could be conceived as a seamless web of interaction, with any breaks in the maximum potential connectivity randomly spread; at the other extreme, it could be a patchwork quilt of separate tightly-linked groups

¹The extent to which social and economic patterns coincide is investigated below (Chapters 5 and 7).

with little interconnection between them. This framework allows us to place social interaction patterns within a framework of possibilities ranging from a population of social isolates to complex interaction with maximum social density².

Figure 4.1 A schematic representation of types of rural social contact network

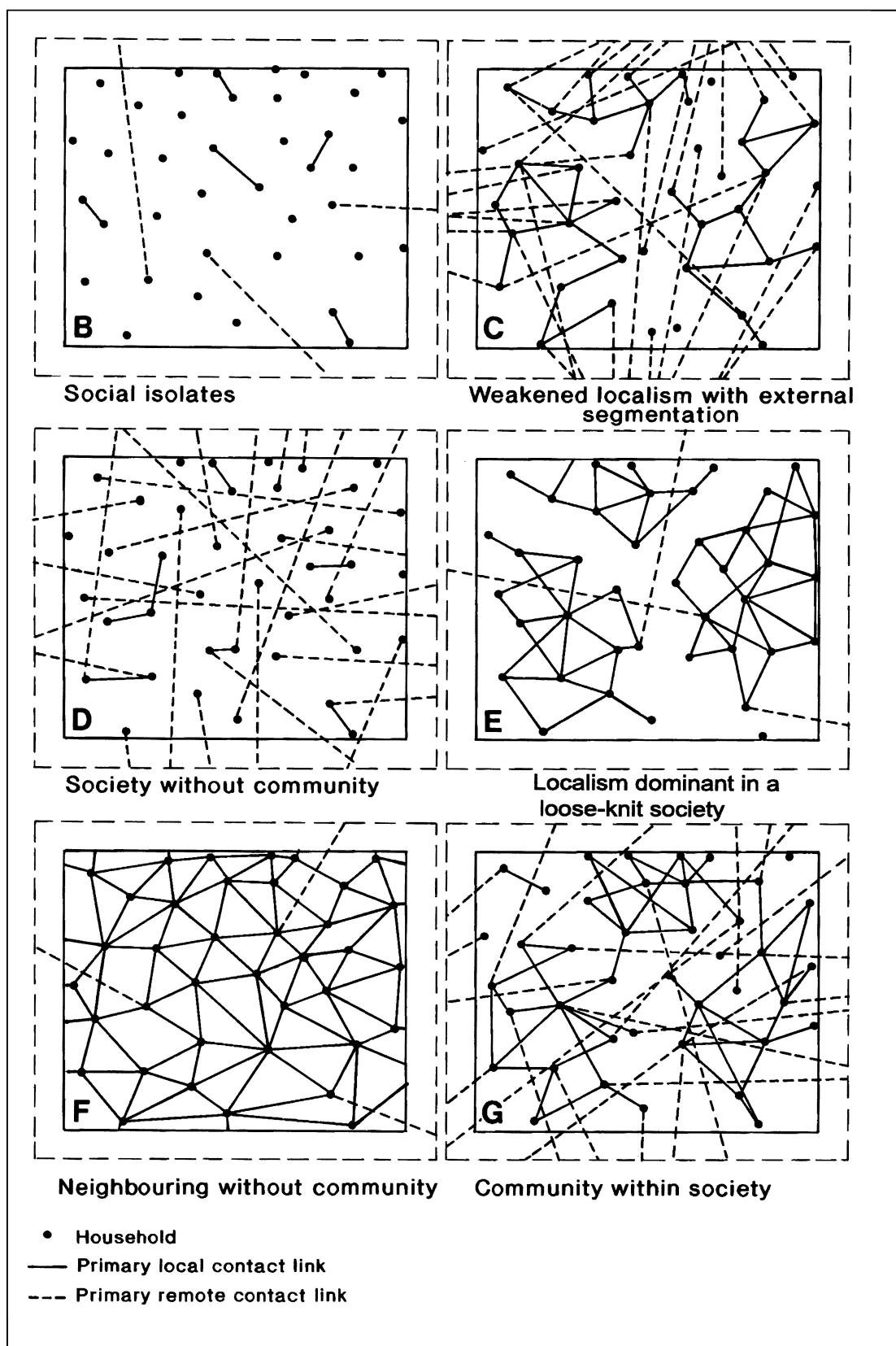


Source: present author.

Six of the eight possible types of spatial interaction pattern from Fig. 4.1 are illustrated conceptually in Fig. 4.2. Each represents a local segment (not to scale) of a broader society, symbolically bounded by the outer dashed line. In each segment the 'local' interaction field within the broader society is symbolised by the inner rectangle. Local contact links are indicated by solid lines, and more remote contacts with significant others by dashed lines. Clusters of linked contacts separated by breaks in the network indicate strong place-based communities. An unbroken network of local links indicates active neighbouring, not broken up into place-based communities. Some of the types are theoretical extremes rarely if ever met with in reality - eg. types A (not illustrated) and B represent populations of social isolates with minimal inter-personal contact. Type A might conceivably be met in prison or mental institution environments, B in the extreme isolation of hermits, lighthouse keepers, solitary trappers, etc. At the other extreme, type H (not illustrated, and again almost impossible in reality) represents societies with maximum local *and* external social connectivity, massive interaction, and little or no segmentation into groups.

²"Social density" is conceptualised as the aggregate volume of direct person to person social contact taking place per unit area, per unit of time. It is likely to correlate, though imperfectly, with population density. An interesting example of an attempt to measure social density appears in Irving and Davidson (1973).

Figure 4.2 The spatial expression of some types of rural social contact network



Source: Smailes 1995, 145

Two of the other types shown on Fig. 4.2 also represent polar extremes toward which social contact patterns rather more realistically might tend. Type D represents a society where localism is practically non-existent; the spacing of contact pairs is random, and contacts are equally likely anywhere within the society. To achieve this at the scale of a whole society would require either a hitherto unknown degree of personal mobility, or the cyber-space of the Internet and other communication technology; but something like it can be achieved at a lower spatial scale of resolution such as a metropolitan region. However, even at this spatial level, the absence of segmentation makes type D highly unlikely in its extreme form. The same applies to Type F, where localism reigns supreme, mobility is very low, external contacts are very limited, and each individual has contacts dominantly with surrounding neighbours in a seamless web. A version of such a pattern might be found among, say, young children's playmate and friendship patterns in suburban areas, or the initial stages of land settlement by pioneer households in the American mid-west.

This leaves us to focus on the three types on the right hand side of Figure 4.2; although these are ideal types they are more likely to be recognisable in rural Australia. Type E represents a highly localistic, low mobility society with the social network split into territorially based cells, each strongly connected internally but weakly linked to neighbouring groups and to the wider society. Such a pattern is still found in village-based society in developing countries; in commercial farming new world countries like Australia and North America it was never so extreme, but could none the less be recognised in the pre-motor age. More realistically, Type G has been and still remains characteristic of Australian rural areas, where a strongly linked and spatially segmented local community network has been retained, but is (and always has been) overlain by a superstructure of external contacts linking community with society, home with distant kin, dispersed childhood friends and so on. Type C represents the system towards which McKenzie (1994, discussed above) suggests the social contact pattern is moving: i.e., the network remains segmented, but increasingly the need for belonging is being met by fragmentation into non-spatially based interest groups, while the strength and interconnectedness of the locality-based groups declines. The extent to which real contact patterns in rural Australia are changing in their patterns of localism and segmentation is a major question to be investigated in this thesis. This will involve the identification of the actual spatial patterns on the ground.

A model of place-bonding

In this section, I move to the forging of *social group* identity and links with place. This involves a conceptualisation of the processes that produce locality-bound or territorial social groups with a shared sense of belonging. 'Territorial' groups (the most basic of which is the nuclear family) are here simply defined as those regularly interacting social groups that occupy a particular local setting in space, as opposed to non-space specific groups such as national bureaucracies. Their spatial patterns should be at least approximately mappable. In the next chapter the reality and distribution of such groups in rural South Australia will be demonstrated empirically; here we are concerned with the processes leading to their formation and persistence.

It will be clear that in identifying areas of social identification, we are in fact looking at the links between people, space and place, the concept of place being particularly important, since it incorporates elements of both physical setting, the human interactions that are carried out there, the symbolic meanings which such interactions acquire, and an elusive 'spirit' of the place (Relph, 1976). Particularly since the early 1980s, the place concept has attracted an increasing degree of attention both from geographers and from other disciplines. For example Browett (1984) concluded that a potentially valid, integrating core element in geography was its role in providing an understanding of place and places as embedded in capitalist society. But as Dovey (1985) has pointed out, the depth and quality of the individual's sense of place depends on the quality of his/her place experience and the depth of meaning. These meanings often arise parallel with the development of affective feeling of attachment to the place. A full and valuable discussion of the genealogy of the place concept has been provided by Cresswell (2004), who traces its development from the descriptive, idiographic and essentially empirical approach of traditional regional geography, through the phenomenological approach of humanistic geographers, and the view of place as essentially socially constructed typical of Marxist, feminist and post-structuralist geographers, to post-modern views of place fleetingly constructed in a hyper-mobile brave new world. Here the second of these four approaches, modified by the third, is most relevant to understanding the strong localism so clearly evident in the study area.

The different ways in which people become 'bonded' to their 'own' places is a fascinating and still imperfectly understood riddle, but the fact that many people *do* have strong and special ties to their home (or sometimes other) places is indisputable, and that attachment - ranging from the jingoistic to the maudlin - can appear at any level from the national to the very local. Such feelings certainly affect behaviour, and relate strongly to our system of values, as well as being a significant component of identity. Consider the following diagram (Figure 4.3).

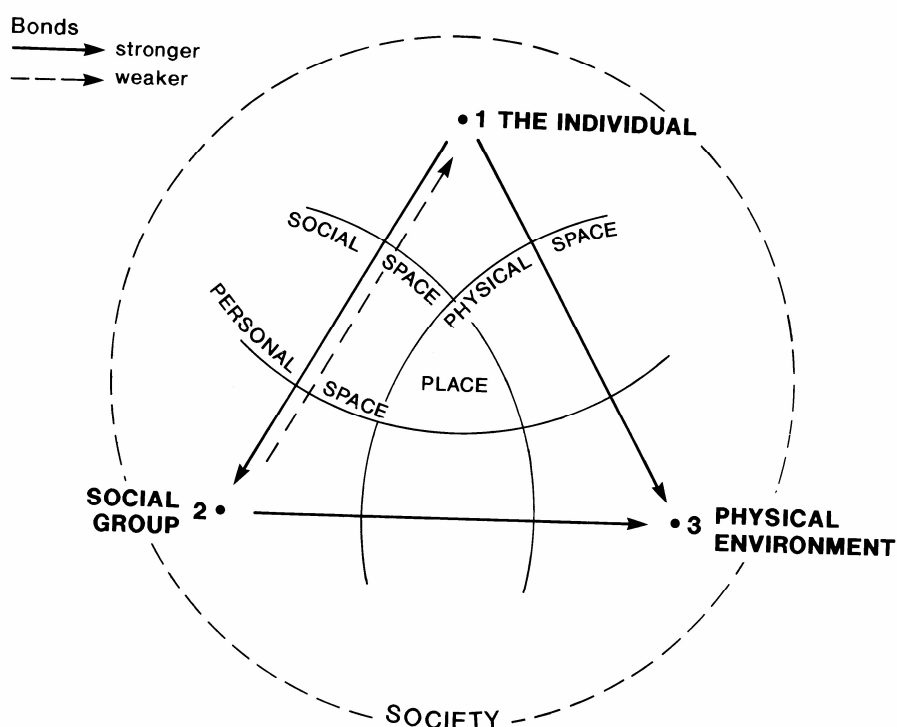
There is nothing about a bit of the physical environment that makes it a 'place' (as far as our species is concerned) without some kind of human linkage with it. The Glasgow 'anthem' - "I belong to Glasgow - dear old Glasgow town" for example expresses the ideas behind the above linkage adequately enough. It implies that the individual has a strong attachment to the physical environment - the tenements, pubs, streets, banks of the Clyde - but much more than this, an attachment to the social group also, which gave the Glaswegian his distinctive dialect, ethos, "common or working chap" class identification, etc. And if the social group he belonged to had not shared this common lifestyle, ethos and restricted territorial space, the fierce allegiance of group to a symbolic space expressed at, for example, Ibrox Park football ground would hardly exist.

What I am suggesting is that the creation of distinctive places is the result of three basic sets of bonding mechanism: a) those that tie the individual to a social group, including the family group;³ b) those that tie that social group to the shared piece of the physical environment which it collectively inhabits, knows and uses and where a

³ To these is added a minor return-flow mechanism: the bonding that some social groups may form with certain of their individual members, such as charismatic leaders.

major part of its social and economic interaction takes place; and c) the direct bonds which develop between an individual and the physical environment. The latter links may be developed not only with the individual's home base or community, but with a variety of other places - a former home or a favourite holiday spot, for example. It is in the development of these bonding systems that distinctive 'places' are created out of mere space, whether that space be defined as personal, social or physical space.

Fig. 4.3 A view of place-bonding.



Source: present author.

It is worth recalling Houston's early distinction between the two concepts:

“What is clear is that space is not place. Space is the area of freedom that has no accountability, no commitment, no meaning other than a mathematical one ... Place, on the other hand, has human context: space with historical associations where vows are made; encounters and obligations, met; commitments, fulfilled; limits, recognised. Place implies belonging.” (Houston, 1978, p.226).

Gattrell (1983, p.143) drew the same distinction and substantially excluded the place concept from his treatise on distance and space in geography. The interaction of these three sets of bonding mechanisms in fact complicates things for social geographers

wishing to identify 'places', for in discussing some locality such as say a country town the setting of the place, the buildings and streets, and the people that occupy it tend to become fused into a single concept which is difficult to split analytically. Much the same applies to the related concepts of neighbourhood and community.

Nevertheless, in studying this complex whole individual disciplines (or schools within disciplines) have for analytical purposes concentrated on particular aspects of it, involving just one corner, or one, maybe two, of the three sets of linking mechanisms postulated above between people and their environment. Thus the sociologist Stacey, in her now classic paper, was concerned very dominantly with the local social system: i.e. the local social group, its structure and functions, relation to society at large, and to some limited degree with its links to the space it occupies. (Stacey, 1969). Yet the importance of the spatial factor is recognised by many sociologists, even if only incidentally to the main focus of study. The (1963) words of the American sociologist Roland Warren hold good after more than four decades:

People's lives and their behaviour are significantly influenced by their propinquity. Living together in close physical proximity calls for social structures and social functions which sustain life in the locality and provide the satisfactions which people seek. By living in the same geographical area, even in today's conditions of rapid transportation, people must share common local institutions and facilities. ... The intertwining of their lives on a locality basis, even in these days of specialised interests, urban anonymity, and depersonalization, provides an important social reality and an important focus of study, fraught with theoretical difficulty though such study may be. (Warren, 1963 p. 9).

This meshing of interaction and social exchange patterns is termed "local ecology" and later "community field" by Wilkinson (1986, 1991) in his spirited defence of the relevance of rural communities in sociological research.

From a social anthropological point of view, the contributors to an important work on "belonging" (Cohen 1982a) concentrate on the factors that tie individual to social group, and to a somewhat lesser extent social group to occupied space. Ethologists such as Malmberg (1980) and some psychologists have concentrated on the role of hereditary and learned human territoriality in forging the links between the individual and the molar environment. From a totally different viewpoint, humanistic geographers such as Tuan (1974, 1975, 1980) and Buttner (1978) have examined the phenomenological base of both the individual person's attachment to place, and the bonds ethnic groups develop with their territory, in some cases involving a cosmological system. More examples could be quoted, and the fact that these mechanisms can apply at a variety of geographical scales is a great advantage. The essential point I am making here is that to understand the phenomenon of definition of and attachment to locality, the threefold place-making bonding system illustrated in Figure 4.3 needs to be treated by social geographers as an integrated whole, even though (at least in my case) the primary interest is in the spatial manifestations of the phenomenon. A very similar conclusion is reached by Harper (1987), in her approach to place-making under the banner of symbolic interactionism. Entrikin (1991), who suggests that place-bonding at a level below that of the nation state has become a casualty of post-modern society, makes the interesting point that

The weakening of the social and cultural glue that binds individuals to groups and groups to places has put a greater burden on the individual to construct meaning in the world. ... The weakening of social attachments that contribute to an objective sense of group identity, or “we-ness”, has increased the individual subject’s need to create new forms of attachment, as a means of gaining at least a “borrowed” sense of centredness. (Entrikin, 1991, p. 63)

In terms of Figure 4.3, what this means is that weakening in links 1-2 and 2-3 need to be compensated by a strengthening in link 1-3, or leave the individual to compensate his/her placelessness by some other form of centring. I would argue, however, that although the rural population is a dwindling part of most western societies, within it there is still a considerable amount of this “social and cultural glue” at work in place-bonding, and in the discussion below I explore the question of what makes it stick.

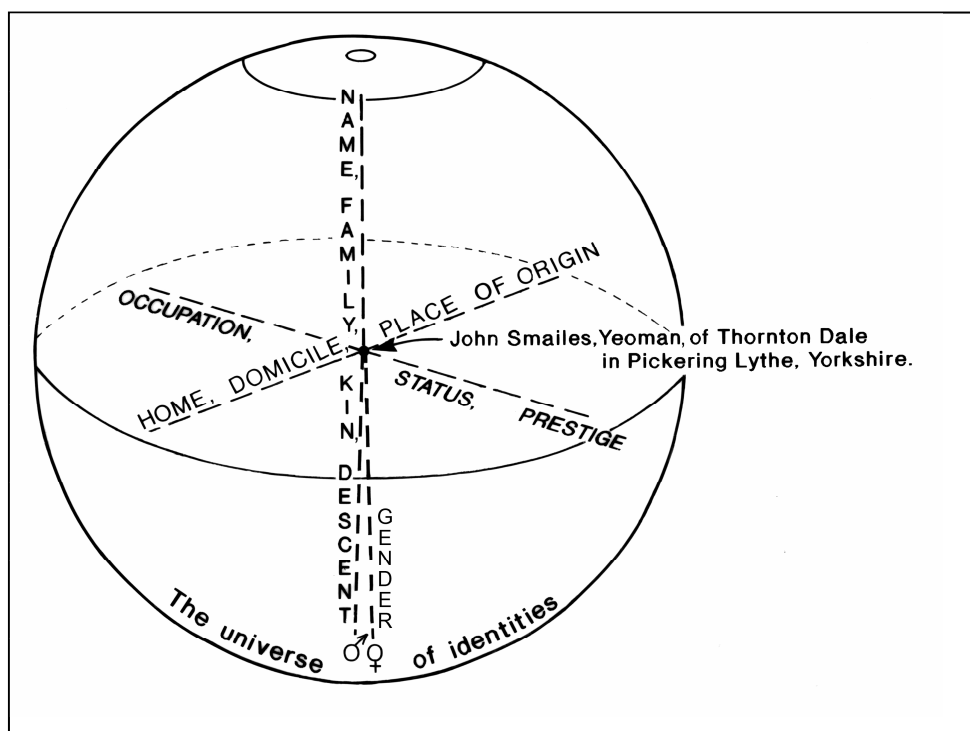
A model of personal identity formation

Of the three corners on Figure 4.3, the individual is placed in position 1, at the apex. Although studies of the human individual are at best peripheral to the traditional scope of geography, some model of ‘man’ is implicit in all ontological and epistemological systems. Here the interest lies in the development of individual identity. The third model expresses the view that a person’s sense of who s/he is, which is intimately related with self-esteem and security, results from a series of interconnected influences affecting our socialisation and growth. The nature and development of the human self has preoccupied many philosophers, including Descartes, Hume, Kant, Dilthey and Heidegger, as well as accounting for a large slice of the discipline of psychology. Any attempt to review this huge literature would be presumptuous as well as unwarranted in this work. However, the concept of identity is important here. Some consideration of the findings of workers in the above disciplines is necessary, since I later seek to show that for a large number of rural people place, locality and neighbourhood play a significant part in their patterns of social identification and behaviour.

Useful overviews of thinking on the nature and development of human identity have been provided, from different philosophical positions, by Gale (1974), Fowler (1981), Baumeister (1986a, 1986b), Yardley and Honess (1987), Lapsley and Power (1988), and Gregg (1991). Many of these contributions draw heavily on the earlier work of pioneers such as Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, and George Herbert Mead, and are much concerned with the development of identity through the lifecycle. A persistent theme running through these and other works is the tension between the “I” - the continuing aspects of the self, unifying and *relatively* stable - and the “Me”, in which the self takes on a multiple nature, presenting differently in different social settings. This tension is otherwise expressed by Schlenker (1986) as one between the “private self” and the “public self”; according to him, self-identification is “the process, means or result of showing oneself to be a particular type of person” through systematically defining and categorising oneself (Schlenker 1986, 23). This brings up a further tension between the voluntaristic (self-chosen) and the received aspects of personal identity establishment, and also the interplay between the individual’s *own* limited and indirect ability to perceive and mould the self, and the influence of the perceptions of *others* (the ‘audience’). Fowler (1981, 17ff) postulates this interplay as a continuous

triadic flow between the developing self, significant others, and shared centre(s) of value and power - i.e., the recognised and unrecognised collection of formative myths and values shared by the reference group, particularly the family. While the subject is extremely complex, Gregg (1991, 199) points out that much confusion in the psychological literature results from failure to distinguish between the use of the concept of identity - self-representation - at the superordinate ontological level where subjective consciousness is split into self and not-self, at the metaphorical or intermediate level, and at the indexical or surface, more or less directly observable level. He holds that while self-representational terms and symbols are found at the indexical level, the relations that constitute self-representation appear only at the metaphorical level (Gregg 1991, 207). This is important here, for much of the evidence that geographers can bring to bear on spatial patterns of identity and self-reference is bound to be indexical in Gregg's terms, simply because to derive spatial patterns a large number of synchronous observations are needed. I hope to demonstrate, though, that the consistency and repetitiveness of the indexical information allows us to infer something of the metaphor beneath.

Figure 4.4 Some major components of personal identity



Source: present author. The identity shown is that of an ancestor of the writer, married at Thornton Dale on 27th June 1569, and buried there on 3rd November, 1588.

Despite its complexity and multi-layered nature, and the various ontological positions one might start from, at a common sense level self-identification is an extremely familiar human experience with a great significance for spatial behaviour patterns, as will appear later. For this thesis some kind of operational working definition is therefore required. A suitable model has been proposed by Baumeister (1986b, 11-28). For him, the concept of identity has two essential *defining criteria*: it must signify a certain *continuity*, stability or constancy over time, and *differentiation* or

separation and distinctness of the self from others. Further, having an identity has three *functional aspects* - i.e., three answers to the question ‘what good does it do a person to have an identity?’ These beneficial functions Baumeister proposes for a well-defined identity are a) it assists one in making significant choices; b) it is almost essential in establishing relations with other people; and c) it confers a sense of strength and resilience, assisting its possessor to cope with setbacks and crises. Thus “whatever differentiates one from others and makes one the same across time creates identity” (Baumeister 1986b, 26) and a strong identity confers functional advantages. The *components* of identity are units or dimensions of self-definition, each identity being constituted from multiple components, some major (eg. gender, occupation, age) and some minor (eg. club membership, one’s old regiment). All components will contribute in some way to the three functions of identity; all will assist the person to answer the question “who are you?”; but the same component may be major for one person, minor for another. Finally, recognising that some aspects of one’s identity are inherited or ascribed, while others are deliberately acquired or striven for, Baumeister recognises five *self-definition processes* through which identity is acquired, ranging from Type I (involuntary acquisition of *assigned* identity components such as gender, family, kin) to Type V (identity acquisition resulting from a *required choice*, such as choice of a career). In between are Types II (identity change resulting from a *single transformation* or major event like motherhood or a crippling accident), III (changes resulting from gradual incremental processes) and Type IV (changes resulting from *optional choice* of identity-producing commitment, eg. joining the National Front). Of course, many self-definition processes cross the boundaries of these five types. For instance, for boys born into a traditional farming family, the ‘choice’ of taking over the family farm as a career may have some of the attributes of types I, II, and III as well as V above.

Using Baumeister’s terminology, the conceptual sketch illustrated in Figure 4.4 picks out a small number of key components of identity and represents them as axes within the infinite universe of social space, wherein the individual seeks to establish an identity. The identity position of the individual is located at the intersection of a very large number of potential dimensions or axes that help to constitute one’s identity, in large ways or small. *Gender* is arguably the most important distinction of all, though its role is not specifically investigated in this thesis. A person’s *age* is of course crucial in identity formation: thus the entire diagram is conceptualised as moving constantly through time, with the identity evolving as the person’s age and life experience increase. Gender and age apart, I would argue that for people whose formative years are spent in a restricted area within an ethnically homogeneous society, the three key dimensions of Fig. 4.4 are most important both in terms of self-reference and as a reference system wherein one is placed by others. For either gender, the first expresses name/family/kinship/descent, the second place/territory/belonging, and the third occupation/status/prestige - these being placed in the approximate order of their acquisition, not necessarily in the order of importance accorded to them by a mature adult. This identity is in part unconsciously or consciously acquired by the individual, and in part imposed, or reinforced, through stereotyping by others, who may come to ascribe common characteristics and behaviours to families, national or regional groupings, and occupations (Cohen, 1982b; Anderson, 1987). If Baumeister’s components of identity and self-definition processes are arranged along a continuum from the assigned/ascribed to the

voluntaristic/achieved, the above three components would lie towards the former end of the spectrum, generally corresponding to the infancy/childhood/young adult stages of the life-cycle. In multi-dimensional space, one can imagine many other identity dimensions, of which one of the most important would be leadership/dominance/courage - in former times including personal prowess. Other components of Types II, III and IV are added throughout life, and for members of minority groups in particular, stereotyping by the majority group may force other vital identity components such as race, language or religious adherence into equal or greater prominence to those considered above. Nevertheless, for rural South Australia I would contend that those illustrated have major importance. Given gender and age, together they give a shorthand overview of some central aspects of personal identity - 'who am I?' (name, family, kin); 'what am I?' - or in the vernacular, 'what do I do for a crust?' (occupation, role in society); and 'where do I "come from"?' (territory, community, belonging). This 'skeleton' identity will of course be filled out by dozens of other components, but if any of the three are perceived as missing a serious gap may be felt in the identity - as in the adopted child, the long-term unemployed, the stateless person. Press reports of incidents regularly use these shorthand dimensions to characterise people: thus James Morgan, 45, company director, of North Adelaide gives a very different impression to John Smith, 19, unemployed, of no fixed address. The use of this model in no way implies that Australian rural people are homogeneous in the way they form identity; for example, many current rural residents are relatively recent migrants, who may well have formed all or most of their identity in metropolitan areas.

It will also be obvious that the mechanisms postulated in Figures 4.4 and 4.3 overlap: some of the components and processes which together give the individual a well-defined identity (Figure 4.4) also operate in links 1-2 and 1-3 in Figure 4.3. Basically, however, the former model presented above deals with the development of identity in the individual person; the latter deals with the formation of that individual's ties with social group and with place. An enormous literature, in a variety of disciplines, of course exists relating to the three corners and three sides of Fig. 4.3; and although relatively little of it is directly concerned with the specific relation of people to place, each approach yields some insights on the forces that produce place-bonding. We turn our attention next to corner 2 of Figure 4.3, the social group, and the community studies tradition within rural sociology.

Community theory and the local social system

Community in spatial setting: the work of the classical American rural sociologists

Rural sociologists, particularly in the United States, laid the groundwork for the recognition of spatial patterns of *identification of rural people with social groups*. In much of Western Europe the inherited settlement pattern of nucleated villages within a quasi-stable territorial system of parishes or the equivalent has allowed many community studies to sidestep the question of how to define the study object spatially. Thus two volumes of reviews of the status of rural community studies in Europe (Durand-Drouhin et al., 1981, 1982) pay very little attention to the operational question of how to bound the study areas. In areas of dispersed settlement such as most of the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Ireland and large parts

of contemporary Scandinavia, however, the problem of spatial definition requires a solution, though even here many studies use some arbitrary delimiter such as a county line or local government area.

The classical American rural sociologists were the first to recognise and map spontaneously developed community boundaries. From the early decades of the present century, the correspondence of community with place was noted by pioneers such as Cooley (1912), Galpin (1915), and later Kolb (1921) and Kolb and Brunner (1952). The settlement of the United States in the era of horseback and horse-drawn transport, together with the dominance of place-bound farming occupations, constrained the horizons of social interaction and ensured that the total social interaction system had a dominant local component. In the era of the pre- and early Fordist production system, and the prevailing small scale of service enterprises, much of the regular social *and* economic interaction coincided spatially, confined as they were to the radius of the 'team-haul' journey. The analogy of social drainage basins or catchment areas around each service centre capable of providing the most needed goods, services and social contact was compelling.

Social space was not seen as a simple patchwork, however, for a two-fold spatial structure of rural identification above the level of the family was clearly established by the American rural sociologists. At the most local level, and temporally the first to develop in the process of settlement, was the rural neighbourhood, based on primary, face-to-face contact and the mutual knowledge of members of each other as 'whole persons' rather than only in some specialist role. Too small to be in any sense socially self-sufficient, the populations of these neighbourhoods often created the most local and rudimentary social structures for themselves - church, school, meeting hall, grist mill, etc. - and in the United States, were not infrequently formed by some kinship, co-religionist or immigrant European ethnic group. In a series of oft-quoted studies, Kolb (1921, 1933, 1957) mapped and traced the changes in the pattern of rural neighbourhoods over time in Dane County, Wisconsin. Kolb divided his neighbourhoods into 'active' and 'passive' types - the former having some organised social or economic function about which interaction revolved, eg. a school or church - and the latter, which Kolb treated as relicts, having a self-recognised collective identity but no such (surviving) concrete economic or social focal function. In an important later study relevant to the mechanisms of place-making, Munch and Campbell (1963) re-studied parts of Dane County and challenged the assumption that collective identification in territorially based groups was necessarily based on functional interaction. They showed that symbolic groups recognised by their own members and immediate outsiders ("recognised but invisible collective units") might involve considerable ego-involvement (affective identification) on the part of members, yet have no functional *raison d'être* (Munch and Campbell 1963, 21). They demonstrated, in other words, that the place-bonding elements 1-2 and 2-3 in Fig. 4.3 above could be formed by affective processes alone, and though various types of functional system (eg. exchange work rings, church congregations) might partially overlap with or reinforce symbolic groups, in many cases the latter were quite independent of any recognised functional system (Munch and Campbell 1963, 24). Neighbourhoods were shown by Brunner and Kolb in a nation-wide study to exist in a broadly comparable form throughout rural areas of the United States.

Above the level of the neighbourhood, and sometimes including many of them, the rural community in the United States continued to be centred around some country town, and is frequently referred to by classical rural sociologists as a 'trade centre community' (eg. Loomis and Beegle, 1957; Haga and Folse, 1971). The overwhelming importance of these socio-economic catchment areas in the pre-motor age is recorded in many studies. For example,

Social customs do not proceed further than the team haul. Visitation, which is an accepted mode of social organisation, does not go further in the country than the customary drive with horse and wagon ... The team haul which defines the community is a radius within which men buy and sell ... It is the radius of social intercourse. Within this radius of the team haul families are accustomed to visit with ten times the frequency with which they pass outside the radius ... The community is the larger social whole outside the household; a population complete in itself for the needs of its residents (Wilson, 1912).

Examples of the spatial patterns of community overlapping and including neighbourhoods were frequently provided, eg in Kolb and Brunner (1952, p.168, 176). The work of Haga and Folse is significant here, for they demonstrate that by the 1970s the boundaries of trade areas for country residents had noticeably begun to part company with the boundaries of community identification, due to the rapid improvements in personal mobility. Yet,

Nonetheless, these functionally inactive communities remain alive in the perception of rural residents. The scope of identity remains tightly bound to the immediate area of the community. It does not expand its circumference concomitantly with economic activities. (Haga and Folse, 1971, p. 46).

Supporting the conclusions of Munch and Campbell, Haga and Folse conclude (1971, 50) that community identity as a social phenomenon is an affectual process that helps the individual to locate himself within his symbolic environment. Later a case study by Freudenburg (1986) showed how social control of deviance, caring for the weak, and socialisation of the young according to community norms, was facilitated by the high density of acquaintanceship in the small communities studied, but reduced by rapid 'boom town' growth in one of them.

The idea of the dual spatial patterns of neighbourhood and community as a norm in rural society continued to be included in American texts in rural sociology well into the 1970s, and to some extent also in the UK (Jones, 1973; Lewis, 1979) though writers have become more and more at pains to point out the decreasing dominance of these local networks in the total structures of rural society. Of much greater concern to rural sociology in the 1980s and 90s has been the impact of national and global forces on rural people, as in the work of Buttell, Larson and Gillespie (1990). However, the classic studies demonstrated that spatial patterns of local identification could readily be established, exist(ed) widely throughout vast rural areas, and could not simply be equated with some functional surrogate.

Australian rural sociology and community studies

In comparison with the discipline in the United States, in the 1960s, 70s and 80s Australian rural sociology was “one of the most neglected areas in Australian sociology” (Nalson and Craig, 1987, 341). The classic Australian rural community studies, reviewed by Wild (1981), did not dwell particularly on the relation of social groups to space and place, spatial boundedness or the processes of place-making that are of principal interest here. To quote Wild (1981, 26) “the relationship between geography and people - or more accurately, between territory and social relationships - has not been at all clear”. Oeser and Emery (1954) used a trade area surrogate (a radius of about 30 Km.) to define “Mallee Town”, Wild (1974) focussed on a particular country town, excluding its trade area, while Oxley (1973) compares two adjacent towns, also contrasting them with the surrounding rural populations. In each case the focus was on the structure and workings of one or two individual communities.

From the 1970s, along with the rural-urban continuum concept, rural community studies *per se* began to lose academic respectability throughout the English-speaking world, not least due to the influence of Pahl as discussed in Chapter 1, and the equally influential critiques of the community concept by Newby and Bell in the United Kingdom.⁴ An exception was a collection of essays (Bowman 1981) on the ‘anatomy and ecology’ of various types of country town community, including a particularly useful analysis of class structure in a Queensland town (Montague 1981). Some sociological overviews of Australian society (eg. Encel and Berry, 1987; Najman and Western, 1993) contain specific chapters on rural Australia, but these pay relatively little attention to community structures. More recent locality-based Australian studies have concentrated strongly on local manifestations of more general processes, eg. Gray (1991) on power and local politics in a N.S.W. rural shire, Poiner (1990) and Dempsey (1992) on gender inequality, and Coorey (1990) on domestic violence, in particular rural communities. Bryant’s (1999) interesting study on the ‘detraditionalisation’ of identity formation in South Australian farmers concentrates entirely on occupational (explicitly *not* place) identity.

However, the Australian sociological literature does contain some studies which specifically link social process with space, notably at the neighbourhood level in connection with practical problems of agricultural extension work requiring the identification of spatially determined rural reference groups (Engel, 1970; Seeliger, 1976; Young, 1993). Moreover, in spite of its unfashionable status, the empirical strength of localism and ties to place in rural Australia (and elsewhere) remained too strong to be ignored. Stehlik (2001) acknowledges traditional sociology’s failure to include and understand space, and incorporate it into theory. In seeking to reinstate community as a legitimate object of study Leipins (2000a), following Day and Murdoch (1993) treats it as a key concept in social space, which has been “quietly reinserted” by many authors in the social science literature, though in many cases with “negligible conceptual definition”. Leipins’ useful review identifies four phases of use of the concept: a structural-functionalist view typified by the early American rural

⁴This chapter makes no attempt to review the extensive parallel literature on the nature of symbolic neighbourhood and community within large urban areas.

sociologists, an ethnographic school of community studies such as that of Wild (1974) referred to above, a ‘minimalist’ approach which simply treats communities as (undefined or weakly specified) small-scale localities; and finally a symbolic constructionist school which essentially regards ‘community’ as an artefact with socially created meanings constructed by human agents. The first two of these in the words of Liepins (2000a, 26) “shared a pre-given belief that ‘community’ existed and therefore had an authentic function or character that could be studied” – a belief which will be shown in Chapter 5 to be amply justified, and a genre that provided ample evidence of the place-bonding role of community membership. Liepins herself goes on to provide an updated model which seeks to integrate all four approaches, and to encompass both place-based and non-spatial communities of interest. Her discussion strongly (and in my view substantially over-) emphasises voluntarism and the role of human agents in actively constructing community. However, the model does incorporate *reciprocal* flows between each pair of her three main constructs: meanings, spaces/structures and practices. In a related paper Liepins (2000b) provides some evidence of the bonding effects of these reciprocal flows in three small Australian and New Zealand case studies.

Insights on community from the British literature

Defining community: social interaction, or ecological relationships?

A much wider range of community based studies exists in the British Isles, and despite the obvious dissimilarities of cultural and settlement patterns, some of this work is relevant here. In a critical review of community studies up to 1970, Bell and Newby (1971, pp.27-29) neatly summarise and extend Hillery’s widely-quoted review of 94 different definitions of the concept ‘community’ (Hillery, 1955). Definitions of ‘community’ as a generic term are classified into two major subtypes - (A) those based on social interaction, and (B) those based on ecological relationships. Type B is in a small minority; and in the classification of ‘*rural* community’ definitions in particular it does not appear at all - neatly underlining the *selectiveness* of classical sociology’s contribution to understanding the complex whole shown on Fig. 4.3. The social interaction-based definitions of ‘rural community’ do, however, strongly reflect the importance of restricted geographic area in such definitions.

Three usages of ‘community: locality, social system, communion

Bell and Newby (1976) make an important contribution to reducing the confusion produced by the indiscriminate use of ‘community’ in three different senses: community as a shorthand term for a town, location or suburb; community as a social system of people in regular interaction; and community in the sense of belonging to some wider social group with something important in common, but which can be completely independent of space - eg. the Anglican community, the medical community. The term ‘communion’ is aptly suggested for the latter type. In strong rural communities as in Type E on Fig. 4.2, of course, all three components are likely to coincide.

“Local social systems”

A good example of the rejection of classical community studies in the post-Pahl period is the classical paper of Margaret Stacey (1969), who eschews the by then suspect term 'community' in favour of 'local social system', and from a strongly positivist social science stance suggests no less than thirty-one potentially testable hypotheses in relation to such systems. Her insistence on the continued importance of the local, and the need for locality studies to be integrated into broader empirical and theoretical frameworks (Stacey 1969,145) remains valid advice to social geographers as well as sociologists. Stacey, however, has to work hard to avoid *de facto* use of the community concept, and she almost totally ignores the spatial setting in which the 'local social system' must operate. She also fails to recognise that in order to test *any single one* of her hypotheses empirically, some spatial boundary would have to be placed around any study locality, and its placement would have a significant impact on the study and its outcome.

From single community studies to community dynamics and macro-social processes

Following Newby's (1985) review of twenty-five years of rural sociology, an excellent review of British rural community studies to the end of the 1980s has been provided from a social geographic viewpoint by Harper (1989a). By this time a revival of interest in the field was becoming apparent, after being temporarily sidelined as mentioned above. Harper traces the development of community studies through a series of stages, beginning with the work of Arensberg and Kimball (1940) in Co. Clare, western Ireland. The early studies in this *genre* were set in a functionalist/structuralist mode, focussed on the individual community in depth as a study object in its own right, seeking in particular to relate their studies to the *gemeinschaft/gesellschaft* notions of Tönnies (discussed in Chapter 1). Such studies gave much empirical evidence on the workings of rural life, but many are of little direct significance to the present work, except to the extent that some of them were at least in part ecologically oriented - eg., some aspects of the Irish work of Arensberg and Kimball, and later of Williams (1963a, 1963b) in the Devonshire parish of Ashworthy. In particular, the question of the relationship between farm family, social group and the land resource is a significant one for rural societies generally.

Following Pahl's attack on the rural-urban continuum in 1966, and Bell and Newby's (1971) critical review, attention thus swung away from individual community studies for their own sake, to the use of community as a setting to examine process, including the phenomenon of group belonging and the inside/outside dimension (Harper, 1989a, 167-169). During the 1960s and 1970s, partly under the influence of structuralist, and notably Marxist, thinking, the attention of social scientists moved from the unique, the local and the micro-scale, to the broad general forces producing change in the whole society. A reflection of this in rural sociology was a growing interest in class- rather than place-based processes - eg. Newby's (1972, 1977) analyses of the class situation of agricultural labourers. However, by the middle 1970s a reaction against the excessive adverse influence of Pahl on studies of locality-based social formations was gathering strength, and attention focussing on the processes of community change, not least through the work of Thorns (1968), Lewis (1970), and the influential spatio-temporal model of change proposed by Lewis and Maund (1976). These and other studies, including Harper's work (1987, 1989) focus

on the impact of change arising from urbanisation and migration flows on communities, particularly in peri-urban areas. The two most prominent themes of the late 1980s seen by Harper in British rural community research were community as an organisation within which power at a local level is exercised and power structures elucidated (a theme picked up by Cloke and Little, 1990); and community as a microcosm in which processes operating at a broader regional or national level can be studied. An important review of more recent developments in the field is provided by Silk (1999), outlining *inter alia* the conflicting views on the importance of localism and community versus individual self-interest in the debate between ‘communitarians’ and ‘liberals’ – a clash that resonates directly with the central theme of this thesis. In his words,

Communitarians argue that the self is relational, that individuals’ understandings, values and projects are constituted by inescapably communal experiences and interactions in specific and concrete circumstances, not by the abstract and universal precepts of liberal theorising. People inhabit ‘constitutive communities’ (like the family or neighbourhood) which are prereflective components of their identities ... Community refers not to relationships which people choose, but to attachments which they discover. (Silk 1999, 6)

Further,

There is a sociospatial hierarchy of duties, responsibilities and loyalties. Although the last of these generally diminish in intensity with increasing social and geographical distance, ties over any given ‘distance’ do not totally over-ride those which are more extended. Such hierarchical relations sustain a ‘community of communities’ (Etzioni, 1996), at least up to the level of the national state. (Silk 1999, 6)

The next chapter will provide empirical evidence of exactly such a system. However, equally, the *previous* chapter has shown the mechanisms through which this prereflective system is overlain, challenged and constantly modified by the (neo) liberal view of the social contract between the individual and the state. Within the ‘imagined community of the national state, liberals postulate a totally voluntaristic view of associations people choose for themselves and the loyalties, identities and life-spaces they construct and constantly develop and change. Silk again:

Responding to the communitarian emphasis on communities as constitutive or ‘found’, liberals argue that people are quite capable of assessing such attachments, choosing to maintain and strengthen them, to sever them, or to reconstitute such aspects of their identities by joining or creating ‘communities of choice’ ... the degree of identification with and loyalty to a community being a crucial factor in determining whether individuals opt for exit, that is, physically leaving the community or dropping out internally, or for voice, that is, remaining in the community while protesting and working for change. (Silk 1999, 7).

Silk’s important contribution goes on to review work on community, instrumentalism and collective action. As he says, the key question is the extent to which community action and mobilisation maintain or strengthen communal bonds, versus the extent to which they are more narrowly instrumental – a question taken up in Chapter 10.

Social anthropological studies of the phenomenon of 'belonging'

Among the newer generation of community-based studies relating directly to the conceptual structure of Fig. 4.3, the enduring importance of place-belonging and the mechanisms by which it is achieved and reconciled with change are best illustrated by the work of Anthony P. Cohen in the peripheral island community of Whalsay, in Shetland. In Whalsay,

'Belonging' implies very much more than merely having been born in the place. It suggests that one is an integral piece of the marvellously complicated fabric which constitutes the community; that one is a recipient of its proudly distinctive and consciously preserved culture - a repository of its traditions and values, a performer of its hallowed skills, an expert in its idioms and idiosyncrasies. The depth of such belonging is revealed in the forms of social organisation and association in the community so that when a person is identified as belonging to a particular kinship group or neighbourhood he becomes, at the same time, a recognisable member of the community as a whole and its cultural panoply. (Cohen, 1982b, p. 21).

The above suggests a somewhat fulsome glorification of a past social organisation, lost from most places some generations ago and never experienced by most urban and many rural people alive today. Yet for me personally Cohen's work vividly recalls my own childhood and adolescent socialisation into a close-knit rural community, and he goes on to develop a brilliant analysis of the actual processes by which this belonging arises and is socially structured - in this case principally by kinship, neighbourhood and fishing crew. How the islanders succeeded in blending individualism and collective ethos, and traditional structures with technological change, is a fascinating study dealing skilfully with elements 2, 1-2 and 2-3 in Fig. 4.3. At the time of writing, however, Whalsay was unusual in that its economic base was largely intact, and the community role structure had not been depleted by excessive out-migration and stress. From a spatial point of view, belonging in Whalsay as in most other places is a nested hierarchy of spatial allegiances, moving in this case from household through township, locality-based fishing crew, North versus South of the island, and Whalsay itself, to Shetland, with pride of place - to coin a phrase - going to Whalsay. An even stronger example of place-identification in remote Atlantic islands is provided by Gaffin for Sumbøur, on Suðuroy, the southernmost of the Faroe Islands. Here, as in many parts of rural Norway, place names become conflated with personal names to the extent that the people themselves become landmarks - "local identities" in the literal sense, and as Gaffin puts it "In their geographic embeddedness Faeroese villagers see themselves as integral parts of an ecological system of human interaction with the environment". (Gaffin, 1994, p. 26).

The newer generation of community and place-oriented studies from the 1980s onward has not been restricted to remote islands. A significant contribution to the study of rural localism within capitalist economies was made in an interdisciplinary volume of essays whose major themes were the culture or ethnography of localism, localities as local social systems, and the political economy of capitalist recombinations in rural areas (Bradley and Lowe, 1984). Of particular interest here is Quayle's essay on the Allendales (two valleys in Northumberland, U.K.), which exemplifies the interconnectedness of the three themes, and illustrates the strength of

place-bonding. “Indeed I would argue”, writes Quayle, “that in the Allendales ‘place’ provides both the symbol and the framework of community. Attachment to place not only underlies and transcends the local sense of community, it also establishes the basis of community itself” (Quayle, 1984 p. 225). In Quayle’s particular study area, it seems that in terms of Fig. 4.3 mechanism 1-3 (individual-place bonding) is co-equal to 1-2 (individual-group bonding) in achieving belonging to the community, for acceptance is gained by immigrants who demonstrate commitment to and care for the place over a respectable period of time, just as well as it is acquired by birthright, dialect and membership of an old local family. That this is not always so is clearly illustrated by another case study in the same volume (Strathern, 1984) in which the importance of being ‘local’ as opposed to ‘outsider’ is illustrated, and claim to true local status is disputed among subgroups.

The hierarchy of place-bound social groups in Ireland

Of all the British and Irish studies known to me, however, the one most directly relevant to the spatial focus and scale of resolution of this thesis is the little-known work of the Irish social geographer William Smyth (a native speaker of Irish), whose approach as a geographer relates directly to territorial social systems and place-making (Smyth, 1975a, 1975b). With the whole of Ireland as his canvas, but using local areas as examples, Smyth tackles the question of the social organisation of space into a complex hierarchy of territorial belonging and social interaction. Ireland’s ancient culture, dense rural population, and relatively recent emergence from a semi-subsistence agricultural system, is bound to produce a more complex social organisation of space than (white) Australia’s much more recently established rural cultural landscape. Noting the traditional concern of rural geographers with settlement form, house types, field systems and land-use, Smyth points out that

The emphasis has thus been placed on the *visible* expressions of a rural community’s organization of its space or territory. However, there is a less apparent but nonetheless important spatial ordering of social and economic relationships both between individuals and groups located in rural areas and between such communities and urban centres. (Smyth, 1975a, 51)

Examining the invisible social networks linking Irish rural people to territorial groups, and the wider networks binding the society together, with all its rich regional variation, Smyth goes on to trace successive layers of social identification, starting with familial ties to the farm house and land, then proceeding to the neighbourhood level of the order of four to ten farms. In Ireland such units commonly had deep historic roots in the ‘townland’, in which co-operative farming practices were normal, later reinforced by their use as ‘stations’ for the Catholic Church’s rotational Masses at the sub-parish level. Next above this comes what Smyth terms the local community zone, based around some village, hamlet or very small town, with basic services and most importantly the parish church. Rural Ireland, unlike rural Australia, is characterised by near-homogeneity of religious adherence, and as Smyth puts it (1975a, 65) “the all-embracing character of the institutional Church brings the overwhelming majority (95-100%) of the rural community - whether young or old, rich or poor, married or single - under the same roof at least as frequently as once a week”. Despite the decline in religious observance even in Ireland, the *homogeneity*

of the church catchment has a powerful formative influence on social interaction. Above this level again, linking local communities through bonds of kinship, friendship and occupational connections, comes what Smyth calls the 'social field' or 'community information field' for which he uses the surrogate of marriage fields, though the funeral is the main event triggering interaction at this level - as he puts it (Smyth 1975a, 74) "The communal landscape comes alive at death". The final level Smyth examines is the essentially urban trade area catchment of the more substantial country towns, whose superimposition on and ecological integration with what had been essentially a rural world for perhaps 5000 years, dates in Ireland mainly from the latter half of the eighteenth century. The particular value of Smyth's approach lies in the way he tackles not only the invisible spatial formations, but also their regional variations, and the mechanisms leading to their change over time.

Scandinavian local community research

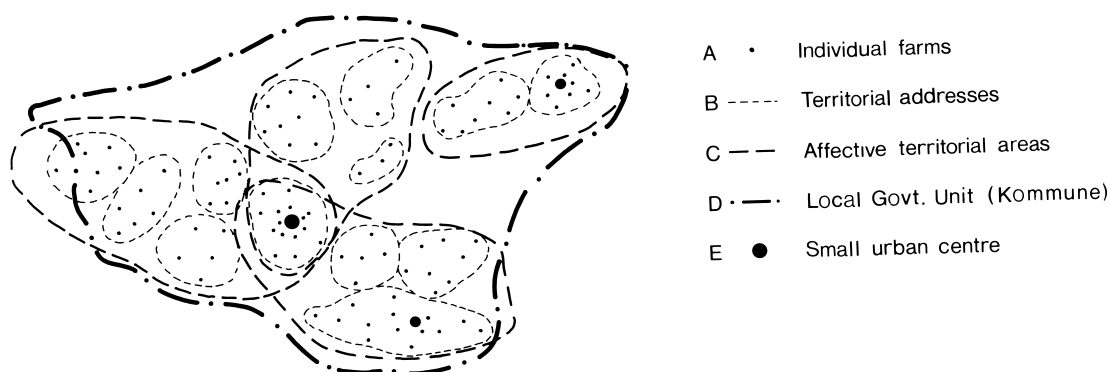
Akin to Ireland in the age and complexity of rural cultures is the Scandinavian peninsula, and particularly Norway where, as in Ireland, dispersed settlement rather than nucleated villages has been the norm for many centuries. Norway is also similar in the homogeneity of religious adherence and well-defined ecclesiastical spatial structures. During the 1970s and early 1980s, while local community research was somewhat out of fashion in the English speaking world, in Scandinavia it became a matter of intense academic and political interest to rural sociologists, social anthropologists and politicians, both as an ideological credo of the populists or 'green socialists', and as a potential object of rural planning (Brox, 1970, 1971, 1974; Aarsæther, 1972, 1974; Reiersen, 1974; Thuen and Wadel, 1978). Norwegian social scientists were more or less agreed on the content of the local community concept, and its roles and functions. Thus the intense network of local interaction, friendship, knowledge, contacts, obligations, and mutual responsibilities which people may develop in their own local setting, sometimes called a 'system of owed favours' (*utestående fordringer*) or 'social mooring' (*sosial forankring*) (Eriksson 1977), is recognised as an important welfare dimension (Ringén 1976), and is regarded by Thuen and Wadel (1978, pp. 424-425) as a form of social capital that has to be largely written off in the event of migration. The geographical dimension of these territorial units, and their hierarchical, system-within-system nature, is well recognised in principle by many Norwegian social scientists; however very few attempts have been made to identify these patterns on the ground.

In the early 1980s, therefore, together with a Norwegian colleague I sought to develop a method to identify and map the various layers of affective identification with place, making minimal prior assumptions about the existence and nature of territorial social groups, and none about their size, spatial extent, distribution or relation to official boundaries (Smailes and Kristiansen, 1985). This work, using culturally neutral terms to describe spatial units of identification, was carried out in a lowland rural area of southern Norway overlapping the outer edge of Oslo's commuting field. It found a four-level hierarchy of such spatial units somewhat akin to the situation reported by Smyth in Ireland. Since this approach has relevance to that to be used for South Australia in the next chapter, a brief summary of these levels and the way they link together in space is relevant here. From the smallest to the largest they are:

- a. 'Territorial addresses' - the smallest territorial area above the individual farm, recognised by the local inhabitants as sharing a common identity and locality name, often with some residual neighbouring functions. These are similar in some respects to the Irish townland, or the United States rural neighbourhood.
- b. 'Affective territorial areas' operationalised as the area within which a person feels able to move house without being considered a newcomer needing to establish a new set of contacts - a new niche in the local social network - rather than one who 'comes from' the area and is entitled to membership. In Norway such areas were small and well-recognised by local groups, but were not necessarily mutually exclusive in a spatial sense. They fell somewhat between the United States 'neighbourhood' and 'community' levels, though in some cases they might approach community status - particularly in the larger local government areas, or those sharply segmented by terrain
- c. 'Linked territorial areas': more usually, local communities consisted of a number of affective territorial areas which often overlapped so that two or more of them each contained the (same) settlement acting as a social hub, such as a small country town. Thus, people who lived in say the valley or road network on the north side of such a central town might include all households in the their own side of town in their affective territorial area, along with the town itself. However, they would most often exclude the districts on the southern or opposite side of town. Households on the southern side of town would do likewise, in reverse. These linked territorial areas correspond to the community level of United States rural sociology, and perhaps to the town-based community of Smyth. Within a small local government area, there might be only one linked territorial area, but in large ones there could be two or more
- d. the 'Kommune', or local government area, was itself a strong focus of identity. As a spatial unit it is of great antiquity in this part of Norway, although its formal origin dates only from laws of 1837. Spatially the Kommune inherited a deeply ingrained ecclesiastical system of strongly centred territories many centuries old.

The way that communities are constructed of a series of partly overlapping affective territorial areas, each containing the social hub but excluding or uncertain of certain other outlying districts, is I believe also characteristic of the pattern of community identity in Australia, and is illustrated in Fig. 4.5.

Fig. 4.5 The spatial construction of communities as linked territorial areas



Source: present author

Place and place-making: humanistic approaches

Humanistic geographers have devoted an enormous amount of attention to the sense of place, and the lived, experiential affinity of people for places they have made their own. While they have helped to underline the widespread nature of place attachment, and done something to elucidate the processes that characterise it, they have in general done little to examine its spatial characteristics, and to lift their project from the status of a corrective critique of positivist science, to that of a true alternative mainstream approach to the 'real-world' problems which geographers are called upon to help deal with. In 1981, as the humanistic movement was beginning to gather strength, Edward Relph wrote:

In its emphasis on the subtlety and meaning of environmental experience and on the distinctive character of places and landscapes humanistic geography seems to provide a counterbalance to scientific geography. As yet the proponents of humanistic geography have been unable to demonstrate agreement either on the direction or on the methods they wish to adopt. (Relph, 1981, p. 142)

Later Daniels (1985) also criticised the humanistic school for its poorly developed methodology, philosophical base, and historical understanding. According to him,

Most humanistic geographers acknowledge the implication of process in place - a sense of place is something that develops through time - but few explore or explain it. This is not just because some see place as an essentially static concept, but because the form of writing they use cannot adequately account for issues of process and development. (Daniels, 1985 p. 186).

This criticism is rather sweeping, however, and some very significant contributions have been made by humanistic writers, and more recently by the new movement in cultural geography. A very selective summary of those relevant to this thesis follows.

Phenomenological and existentialist grounding of humanistic approaches to place

The early work of Tuan established the universality of the deep love of place among human cultures, particularly in pre-industrial societies. Tuan called these phenomena, varying in scale from a garden to one's native land, 'topophilia' or 'geopiety', the latter concept specifically incorporating the cultural group's deities into the place-bonding process (Tuan, 1974, 1975). The formally stated philosophical home of much humanistic geography lies in existentialism and phenomenology, the essence of the former having been set out as a blueprint for humanistic geography in the 1970s by Relph (1976), Ley and Samuels (1978) and Samuels (1978), among others. Later expositions of the value of a phenomenological approach in humanistic geography, grounded particularly in the philosophical writings of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, include those provided by Relph (1981, 1985), and Pickles (1985, 1988). Citing Martin Buber, Samuels suggests that one of the distinctive and necessary features of being human is the 'primal setting-at-a-distance' of the human individual from the world in order to enter into a relationship with it, producing a fundamental spatiality in the person. In Samuels' view (1978, 27) spatiality is more than a necessary condition of human consciousness - it is the beginning of consciousness, and there is a constant tension in the individual between estrangement and alienation from the world on the one hand, and on the other the desire to overcome it and be one with the world - with 'nature', 'the environment', the earth or similar conceptualisations.

Existential insideness and outsideness

This tension can have very different outcomes in different individuals, however, and Relph (1976, 49-55) has a classification of states of existential being which is of considerable relevance here. The first division is one between 'insideness' and 'outsideness', and the second the degree to which the state of being results from the individual's conscious adoption of it. Insideness expresses the degree to which a person is encapsulated into a society whose culture and values he shares so intensely yet unconsciously, that a sense of belonging to some localised social formation is deeply internalised. This is existential insideness, where one does not have a *sense* of belonging, but simply and unreflectedly just belongs, without sensing it. Tuan (1980) distinguishes here between rootedness, which is an unconscious state of being equating to existential insideness, and sense of place, which *can* be acquired by conscious effort (or at least one can be conscious of the process of its acquisition). At the other extreme is existential outsideness - a state of being in which alienation is so profound that nowhere is home and there is nothing shared and sacred; belonging is existentially denied, and one's existence is a kind of ongoing damnation akin to that of the fabled Flying Dutchman of Richard Wagner - or perhaps the kind of wretched existence depicted in the haunting song "Streets of London". To the extent that this extreme occurs in reality, it would represent a form of serious mental illness, deprivation or disability: most people's existential state of being is somewhere between these two, or in one of Relph's alternative categories. But it seems reasonable to expect the existential insider pole to occur more commonly under intense localism and perhaps even *gemeinschaftliche* social formations, while existential outsideness could be found either in the socially excluded stranger in such a setting, or in the anonymity of *gesellschaftliche* and shifting social relations. Later

attempts were made to illuminate the concepts of rootedness and existential insideness/outsideness by Middleton (1981) and Seamon (1981) respectively.

Home, reach and the sense of place

The lead set by Ley and Samuels, Relph and Tuan in humanistic approaches to the sense of place, and place-making, was quickly followed by many others, among whom Buttimer and Seamon are prominent (Seamon, 1979; Buttimer and Seamon, 1980; Buttimer, 1976, 1980, 1985). Particularly significant here are Buttimer's key concepts of home, reach and the sense of place; drawing on the Heideggerian notion of 'dwelling', conceived as a symbiotic process, she suggests that most life-forms need both a home and horizons of reach outward from that home. Comparing this duality to the reciprocal needs for breathing out and breathing in, she suggests that the dualities of territory and range, rest and movement, security and stimulation, are essential elements of life. (Buttimer 1978, 19). Home and reach may be applied to either the 'home ground' of affective belonging, the social patterns of one's physical location, or the realm of ideas and imagination⁵. Associated with this is the process of "centering": as she puts it,

If all three are synchronised or harmonized then one could speak of centeredness and hypothesize that one's sense of place is a function of how well it provides a center for one's life interests. Taken in a more general way the question becomes how many of a local area's life interests may be centered within it and how many of them have their "home" elsewhere. (Buttimer 1978, 19).

In a later paper, Buttimer sets out in summary her notions of lived space. Because these eight points mesh with much of the empirical work of social anthropologists and social geographers discussed above, they are worth setting out in full (her choice of words):

1. Space is an indispensable element in man's lived experience
2. Unlike geometric space (a matrix which provides loci for the identification of objects), lived space is a dynamic continuum which the individual actively creates, molds and modifies.
3. Unlike geometric space which is homogeneous, lived space for each individual has a fixed co-ordinate framework whose zero point is the individual himself.
4. Man does not consider all points or places in space to be equally his; usually there is one natural place to which he belongs, and this place can be correctly identified as the zero point of his spatial reference system.
5. This natural place is generally man's home, and it is usually nestled within the protective residential area surrounding the dwelling.
6. Besides possessing a "home ground", man differentiates out of his lived experience a series of spaces that thin out slowly from the relatively known to the completely unknown; these spaces may include city space, regional space, national space ... or qualitatively speaking, psychological spaces or other lived spaces which have experiential meaning for the individual.

⁵It is not difficult to associate these three domains of home ground, ideas and social patterns with the Bell and Newby distinction between the three elements of the community concept - locality, communion, social system.

7. Each lived space has its own set of elements which form a spatial gestalt meaningful to the individual in terms of his own experience in that space.
8. Lived spaces are not necessarily homogeneous; various parts of the same lived space may be conceived differently in the individual's experience of that space. (Buttimer, 1985)

Place-ballet, movement and rest in social interaction

Building directly on Buttimer (1978) in attempting to extend humanistic understanding of place, Seamon (1979, especially pp. 131-142) extends the notion of a dialectic between movement and rest in the shaping of sense of place. This dialectic obliges the individual to encounter stimuli, which may on the one hand reinforce habituality of social interaction, or on the other it may produce openness, new insights, and a heightened awareness of reality. In either case, the alternation of movement and rest creates repetitive patterns in space, for which Seamon suggested the term 'place ballet'⁶, and which he felt could eventually lead to a strong sense of place and even existential insideness. Although the term never took off, Seamon touches on an important point in stressing the intangible meanings that the actual perceived scene and its animate activity - and the perception of being a part of it - may have in place-making. Such an ambience and participation is in fact far more than the quantifiable interactions/transactions measured in the strictly defined 'local social system' of the sociologists, and Seamon makes the important point that it is fragile. Perceptively, he writes

Its pattern arises not from conscious planning, but from the pre-reflective union of people usually unaware of the whole they help create. Only when the place ballet is weakened or destroyed do its members normally realise their participation. They are surprised, angry or regretful, but the feelings are too late: place ballet once destroyed is almost impossible to resurrect.⁷

In the same book, Seamon seeks to reinforce the notion of place-attachment as a need or precondition for a fulfilled human life. Quoting Jager (1975, p. 249) he argues that "To be without origin, to be homeless is to be blind. On the other hand, the sphere of dwelling cannot maintain its vitality and viability without the renewal made possible by the path". (Seamon, 1978, p. 137).

The "betweenness" of place

The humanistic geography of the late 1980s and the 1990s continued to deal with the theme of place, but in ways which introduce few new conceptual ideas on the actual mechanisms producing place-bonding, beyond those discussed above. Entrikin's thought-provoking work (1991) emphasises the difficult position of the place concept between the subjective and the objective, the unique and the general, centred and de-centred, the existential and the naturalistic/concrete, producing a dilemma. As he says (p. 45), "In geography it takes the form of a theoretical balancing act between the role

⁶The term 'place ballet' did not achieve wide acceptance, perhaps because of its conceptual overlap with the more widely accepted notions of time-geography.

⁷This phenomenon is reflected in countless stories, poems and songs expressing nostalgia for remembered places and their people. Eg. the Irish ballad 'O the song of the Kerry dancers - O the hum of the pipers' tune - filling all our hearts with gladness. Gone, alas, like our youth, too soon.'

of consciousness in creating meaning, and the role of structural forces in creating consciousness". Merrifield (1993) seeks to resolve this dualism by a dialectic approach based on the work of Lefebvre, criticising the Cartesian ontology which led Entrikin to posit such a dualism in the first place. Both these essays, however, are more concerned with development of appropriate epistemology than with concrete demonstrations.

Time geography and place-making

The notion of repetitive, meaning-filled 'place-ballet' producing a heightened sense of place clearly ties in closely with the Lund school of time-geography - indeed both Buttner and Seamon were working in Hägerstrand's department in Lund in the mid 1970s. The question of exactly how time played a role in place making and repetitive interaction was taken up by several contributors to the 'Timing space and spacing time' project (Carlstein, Parkes and Thrift, 1978), which included contributions written from a variety of philosophical positions. Tuan (1978, p. 14) makes the important point that place-making requires not only repetitive movement, but also still-stands in that motion. "Place is a break or pause in movement - the pause that allows a location to become a centre of meaning with space organised around it", he writes. How long must the iterative processes of movement and pause continue to allow the sense of place to develop? This question is unanswerable in any general sense, but Tuan suggests that there is only a general correspondence between the length of time spent in a locality and the strength of the sense of place: the years of childhood have special significance; intense but brief experience of place may count for more than years of unreflected existence; and the imagination can invest distant places with meaning even before they are actually visited. Elsewhere Tuan elaborated on this theme, and also suggested that as the individual ages, s/he may require aids or markers to preserve (place) identity across the lifespan: Thus "To strengthen our sense of self, the past needs to be rescued and made accessible", and "The passion for preservation arises out of the need for tangible objects that can support a sense of identity". (Tuan, 1977, pp. 187, 197). Later Creswell (2004, 61-2, 85ff), in his review of the place concept, emphasises the same point, quoting Harvey's (1996) characterisation of place as the 'locus of collective memory' in which identity is created through the construction of memories linking a group of people to their past (a process eminently capable of political manipulation).

The very general observations by Tuan on the role of time in place making are incorporated into a theoretical model by Parkes and Thrift (1978), using the notions of '*realised place*' and '*timed space*'. For Parkes and Thrift, 'timed space' is the pattern of spaces available within the corresponding patterns of time-use, and a 'realised place' is one among the infinite variety of possible locations that is actually occupied by an actor within the constraints imposed by his/her time budget. They propose (1978, 119) that "*timed space* is the essence of place, that it is the timing component which gives structure to space and thus evokes the notion of place", and go on to propose a formal model in which information received by individuals passes through four levels of filtering, then through perceived space and time dimensions to a decision-making phase which determines whether or not a place will be "realised". At first blush this model appears to be more related to the functional world of service consumption than to experiential or affective notions of place, but Parkes and Thrift

intend it to apply to either. However, their model only deals with the provision of opportunity for place-making - a necessary but not sufficient condition.

Language and place-making

A further mechanism by which social groups bond to specific places, brought out in humanist work but also basic in the work of social anthropologists, psychologists and social geographers discussed above, is the role of language and/in the giving of names in taking mental possession of one's place - indeed, as is well recognised, language and semiotics are at the base of all work in the social sciences, and indeed of all human knowing. As Adam in Genesis 2-19 takes possession of his inheritance by giving all creatures their names, so territorial social groups take possession by naming and imprinting their culture on the ground, developing their own nuances of expression to describe and differentiate the landscape. This process is inherent in imperialism, conquest and sequent occupance of territory, as in the naming of prominent South Australian features by explorers like Flinders and Baudin in complete disregard of their Aboriginal names. The Icelandic Landnámabók of Are Frode records, following the coast by the path of the sun, how the taking of land in Iceland between about 870 and 930 AD by some 430 Norse men and women⁸ stamped a new humanised landscape, culture and language on the only formerly uninhabited large country in Europe first colonised by humans in possession of a written language. Good examples of the cultural meaning of landscape-naming are found in Gaffin (1994). As Mugerauer (1985, 62-63) puts it, the homogenised language of science stands in the way of the understanding of place-making, for "dialect holds together local environment and mother tongue, place and local language", and "where dialect continues to function and has not been reduced to a quaint or curious specimen, its interpretation is what makes possible a coherent, meaningful and valued way of life for those who share the dialect".⁹ Pointing out the critical role of language in understanding human/environment relations, Mugerauer (1985, 67) calls for greater effort to develop what he calls 'environmental hermeneutics', which would "interpret the emergence, persistence and changes of the relationships of language-scapes and landscapes (and other dimensions of culture and environment)". Tuan (1991) returns to this theme, pointing out the essential role of language in all human agency, and in particular the role of spoken or written communication in endowing bits of land with meaning - both in terms of the initial *making* of places, and also in their *maintenance* as centres of meaning. "Words", he writes, "have the general power to bring to light experiences that lie in the shadow or have receded into it, and the specific power to call places into being." (Tuan 1991, 686).

Place and the 'cultural turn'

A new and much more critical view of place and place-making was a strong feature of the 'cultural turn' which has increasingly overtaken human geography during the

⁸Described by Hallvard Magerøy, (1980) Aschehoug & Gyldendal's Store Norske Leksikon vol. 7, Kunnskapsforlaget, Oslo. p. 454

⁹The present writer can vouch experientially to the profound truth of this statement. For example, on the unfenced moorlands of Ryedale and Bilsdale sheep flocks develop local territoriality and are difficult to transfer. In dialect they are *heeafed ti t'stray* (heafed to the stray). Place-bound people are sometimes described in the same way: "Yon'l nivver flit. He's ower heeafed ti t'stray."

1990s and early 2000s, a movement whose strength and impetus prompted Philo (2000) to warn that its very success was becoming a threat to the social geography from which it originally grew. Dropping the overt label 'humanistic', the new cultural geography has moved from the Sauerian study of visual landscape as an artefact or palimpsest produced by past cultures, to culture as a process, in which people actively create and construct their symbolic spaces. Thus "In the course of generating new meanings and decoding existing ones, people construct spaces, places, landscapes, regions and environments. In short, they construct geographies." (Anderson and Gale 1992, p.4).

Essentially, the 'new cultural geography' regards place (and even, to some degree, identity) as always culturally constructed, often manipulated as an exercise of power, capable of conscious creation and dismantling at will. With the focus on process, the place itself is more or less incidental and its boundedness (in a spatial sense) is not a major issue. The idea that places may have an enduring, mappable existence in collective consciousness is eschewed in favour of the concept of place as a fluid process. Thus Massey (1994), in her influential paper 'A global sense of place' explicitly rejects the identification of place with community, and particularly rejects the notion of boundaries to places, emphasising their global connections. For her, place is the momentary locus of intersection of fields of interaction and social relations. Many in the 'new cultural geography' school emphasise the drawing of boundaries as a mechanism of exclusion of non-privileged 'others' or rendering them 'out of place' (e.g. Cresswell, 1996). An extreme example is provided by Shurmer-Smith and Hannam (1994) in their savage rejection of the whole concept of sense of place, and particularly of Heideggerian-inspired humanistic geography. Relph, who formerly labelled the chaotic, voluntaristic, normless post-modern city and its extra-mural outposts as "placeless" and lacking authenticity (Relph, 1976) now dwells on the difficulty of even describing landscapes and places in the context of postmodernity (Relph 2001, 150ff).

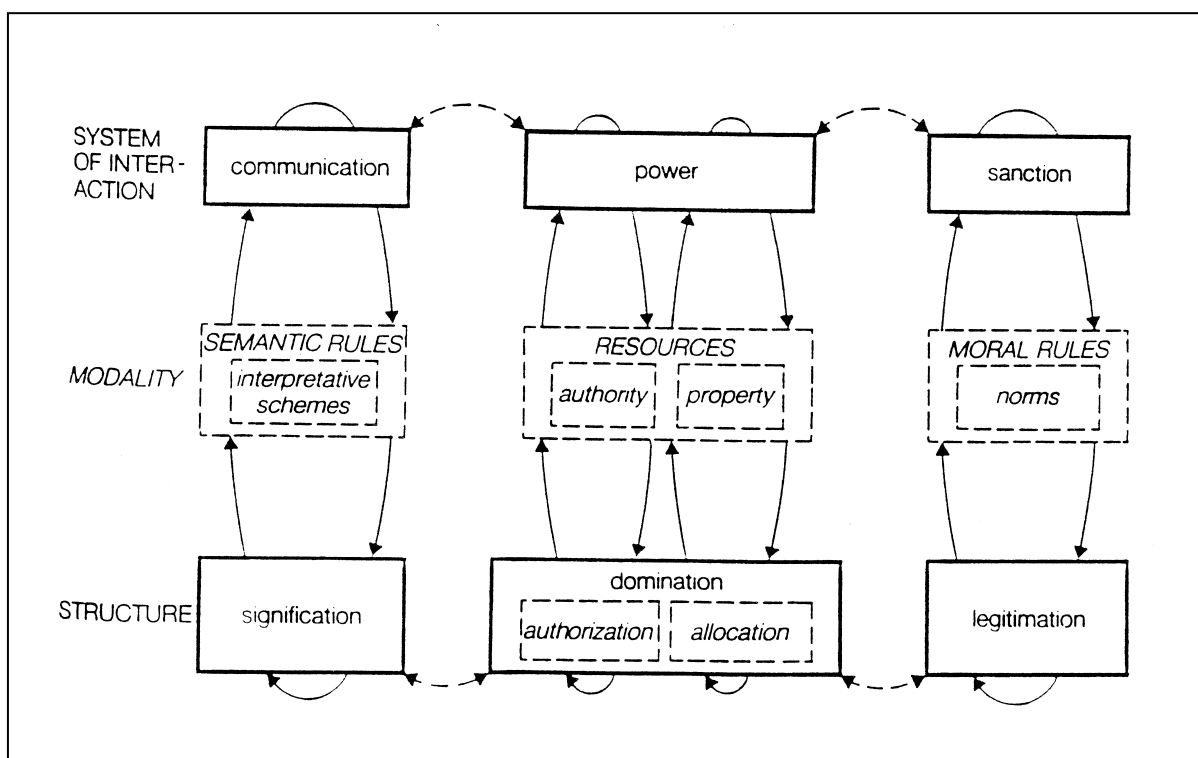
In focussing on the cultural construction of place, work in this genre does not deny the process of *place-bonding* as a self-induced or consciously acquired phenomenon, implying a voluntarism and purposiveness in the creation of places which may be overstated (though Tuan (1980, cited earlier) had already recognised that a sense of place can be acquired by choice). Among the new cultural geography's substantive contributions to the understanding of place-making, good examples are Anderson's (1987) study of external imposition of identity in Vancouver's Chinatown, or Smith's study of the phenomenon of stubborn and complex local resistance to the imposition of broader societal values, as expressed in a small-town carnival in southern Scotland. (Smith, 1993). An important contribution is the understanding of how power groups such as planners and developers seek to transform existing place identities through such processes as urban renewal (Oakley, 2005 provides a South Australian example), marketing of desired new images for cities or regions (Kearns and Philo 1993), commodification of places such as the Barossa Valley as tourist attractions, or deliberate attempts to create and disseminate identity for entirely new 'places'. At a further remove, place as contextual setting is superseded by hermeneutics: as Daniels (1992, p.319) puts it, "At issue is not how places function, but what they mean. Metaphors, not models, are in vogue; and the fashionable metaphor for places is not that of a system, but that of a text". Furthermore, the "reading" of the place as

text by the direct observer, as in Violich's study of four Dalmatian towns (Violich 1985), is bound to be subjective and to reveal as much about the observer as it does about the places observed; at the next remove, reconstructing that very subjectivity by past observers may become the main goal, as in Anne Godlewska's (1995) brilliant study of the 'Description de l'Egypte'.

The locale and structuration theory

A major effort to bridge the gap between structuralism and the primacy of human agency is made in Giddens' theory of structuration, interpreted for geographers notably by Gregory (1984, 1986, 1989), Thrift (1983, 1985) and Pred (1983, 1984, 1985). A detailed overview of the work of Giddens, and geographic reaction to it, is provided by Cloke, Philo and Sadler (1991) from the standpoint of geography; sociological critiques are provided by Cohen (1989) and Bryant and Jary (1991).¹⁰ Although structuration theory is not primarily concerned with place-making, it does provide strong mechanisms whereby places may be created, - more or less as a by-product - through the continuous flow of interaction between human agents and the structures which partially constrain them. Gregory's version of how this process operates in the abstract, (also reproduced by Cloke, Philo and Sadler, 1991 p. 103) can hardly be bettered (Fig. 4.6).

Fig. 4.6 Derek Gregory's interpretation of the mutual and continuous reproduction of structures and systems of interaction between human agents



Source: Gregory, 1986, p. 465, reproduced in Cloke, Philo and Sadler, 1991, p. 103)

¹⁰Giddens (1984, p. 377) defines 'structure' thus: "Rules and resources, recursively implicated in the institutional articulation of social systems. Structure exists only as memory traces, the organic basis of human knowledgeable, and is instantiated in action".

The diagram tries to capture the way in which people, in their normal daily interaction patterns, communicate through a set of semantic rules which determine what such speech and action *signifies*. This signification becomes a structuring force which moulds communication. Similarly, as people exercise power over one another through a set of rules relating to their unequal access to property and authority, structures of domination are set up; and as they apply sanctions to one another for non-acceptable behaviours, through a set of moral rules, they set up structures of legitimation. Clearly, the form these structures and interactions take will vary greatly, producing a social outcome anywhere between heaven and hell; these outcomes will be contingent upon many types of circumstance. The fact that these contingencies do not occur in a time-space vacuum, but must be located, has caused Giddens to incorporate many ideas originally drawn from the Lund time-geography school. Interaction flows that link agency and structure occur in particular settings which Giddens terms *locales*, (rather than ‘places’). This locale, in which the continuous interplay between structure and agency operates to reproduce (and gradually change) both of them, is defined by Giddens (1984, p. 375) as “A physical region involved as part of the setting of interaction, having definite boundaries which help to concentrate interaction in one way or another”. The further space-relevant concept of ‘region’ as used by Giddens, is a different kind of compartmentalisation of interaction clustering in time/space, either within or between locales: the boundaries of regions may be determined by markers along many dimensions, including non-spatial ones.

To what extent, then, may the space occupied by a rural territorial group be described as a “locale”? Certainly, it forms an arena in which regular and repeated everyday interactions involving communication, the exercise of power, and the applications of sanctions are being carried out, and the structures and institutions of society are being reproduced and slowly modified. (Giddens, 1984 pp. 118-119). Certainly, too, rural society conforms to Giddens’ further differentiation between the ‘regionalisation’ (in his sense) of interaction through *social integration* (routine interaction between co-present actors, as in shopping), as opposed to regionalisation through *system integration* (broader interaction systems carried on independent of distance, as in bureaucracies, computer networks). Indeed the intersection between the local and the global is exactly the point of departure of this chapter. However, when we attempt to use structuration theory in an empirical study such as the present thesis, a number of problems emerge.

Firstly, despite Giddens’ emphasis on boundaries, structuration theory is at best vague on the appropriate scale of delimitation, and on the hierarchy of levels at which locales might appropriately be defined. Second, although Giddens does insist that the concept of locale includes the physical characteristics of the setting, ‘locale’ is something less than the concept of ‘place’ of humanistic geography. It has much more to do with the sociologist’s local social system than with the humanistic geographer’s affective sense of belonging and rootedness, incorporating interaction but not communion and cultural aspects of life. Finally, to quote the pessimistic conclusion of Gregson (1987, p. 90):

If, as I think is currently the case with structuration theory, we cannot move backwards and forwards between the theoretical and empirical levels in a continual

flowing dialogue, then, I think, we are in serious problems ... Perhaps this is why we have heard so little about the deceptively simple question: how exactly do we use the insights of structuration theory?

The main work which has attempted to answer Gregson's question in a rural setting is that of Pred, who has specifically tried to apply structuration theory linked with time-geography to the sense of place, first in principle (Pred, 1983) and then in a practical case-study of rural transformation due to enclosure in the Swedish province of Skåne (Pred, 1984, 1985). In the latter study, Pred certainly produces a fascinating historical geography of the constant "becoming" of places through the constant interplay of action and structures, but the approach incorporates time-geography much more explicitly than structuration theory. The results would, in my view, stand alone as historical geography; but then, as Giddens says,

There is, of course, no obligation for anyone doing detailed empirical research, in a given localized setting, to take on board an array of abstract notions that would merely clutter up what could otherwise be described with economy and in ordinary language. The concepts of structuration theory, as with any competing theoretical perspective, should for many research purposes be regarded as sensitizing devices, nothing more. (Giddens, 1984, p. 326)

Warf (1989) has also criticised structuration theory for lacking any theory of production, and for being a "bottom-up" approach better suited to repetitive, local level human interactions than to understanding broad global forces that act in a "top down" fashion. However, it is precisely at the level of local-scale interaction that it is of interest here.

Human territoriality

Ethology and the disputed genetic component

A final avenue of understanding what links humans so intensely to place, across so many and varied cultures and environments, is the vexed question of territoriality, invoking at least the possibility that some of our propensity to claim and defend territories is genetically based. This view, popularised by authors such as Lorenz (1966), Morris (1967) and Ardrey (1966) and critically reviewed by social psychologists such as Edney (1974), raises the question of whether instinctual territoriality is at the root of tendencies toward appropriation of space, aggression and defence, as in the behaviour of urban gangs in establishing "turf", "no-go areas" etc. After a wide-ranging review of territorial literature and behaviour Malmberg (1980, pp. 10-11) includes an "instinctive nucleus" as well as emotional attachment in his definition of the phenomenon. Edney, more cautiously, defines the phenomenon broadly as "a set of behaviours that a person (or persons) displays in relation to a physical environment that he terms "his", and that he (or he with others) uses more or less exclusively over time", and follows this by examining and classifying a series of other definitions, reminiscent of Hillery's famous examination of definitions of "community". (Edney, 1974 p.959, pp. 962-3). The chief variable in this classification is the extent to which *defence* of the territory is included in the definition. Among the various advantages of territoriality in animal populations is

distanciation and conflict minimisation; if boundaries are well established and well known rather than open and in dispute, conflict is less likely. Bell et al. (1984, p. 264) quote several studies tending to confirm this in humans. Edney (1974, p. 963) suggests that the same function of distanciation [in *social space*] is performed by well-established social hierarchies or “pecking order”. However, much of the strictly ethological research on human territoriality is of little use to rural social geography, as it refers mostly to individual, micro-level behaviours, often studied in semi-experimental situations such as institutions, dormitories, and other confined areas.

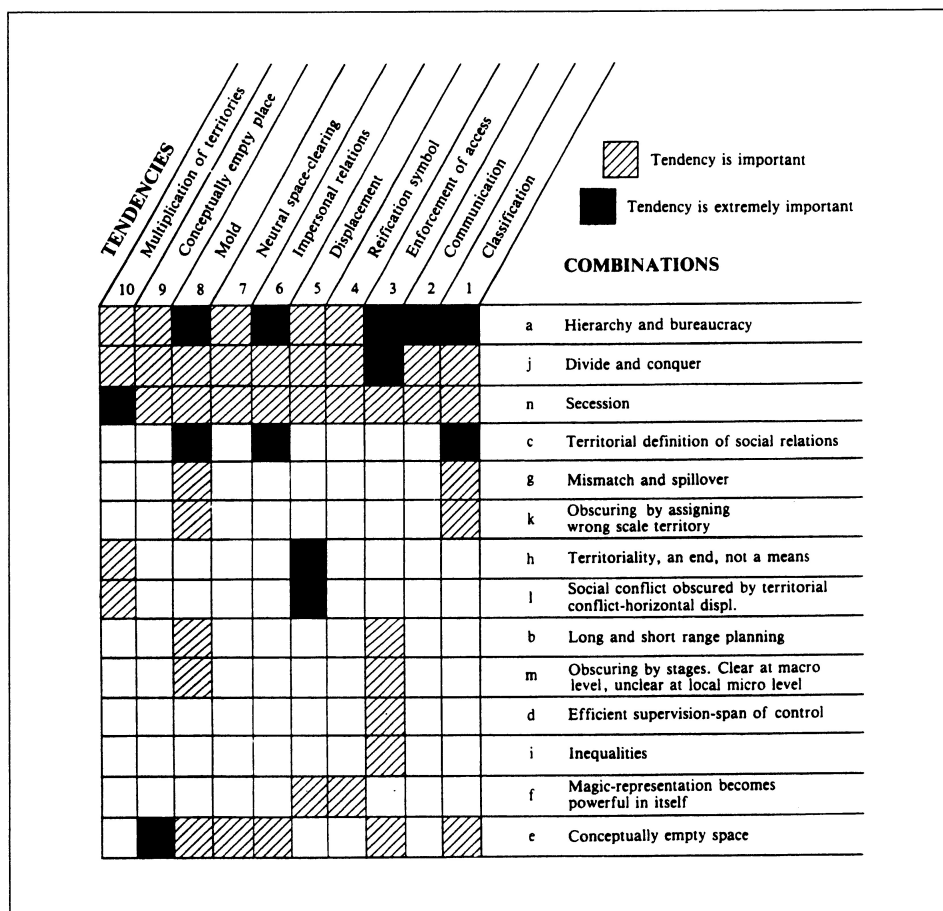
A definition of more direct value to social geographers is that of Eyles (1970, p.2), drawing on the work of Ardrey and Fraser Darling: “the space, which may be continuous or discontinuous, used by an individual or group for most interactions, and which, because of this, goes a long way towards satisfying the needs of identity, stimulation and security”. This definition, though grounded in an entirely different academic tradition, obviously meshes closely with the views of humanistic geographers like Buttimer. Eyles’ ‘identity’ is similar to her ‘centering’; his ‘security’ is her ‘home ground’; and his ‘stimulation’ is her ‘reach’. Security is felt most strongly at the centre of the territory, stimulation at the perimeter, and in crossing beyond the territory boundary. Indeed, if one rules out any instinctive component of territoriality altogether, by definition it must be a purely learned set of behaviours. The social psychological literature on territoriality thereby becomes almost a positivist mirror image of the humanist literature on sense of place. However, the possibility of a genetic nucleus to territorial behaviour remains and gives rise to some interesting hypotheses on place-making, particularly in the work of Dyson-Hudson and Smith (1980). For them, territoriality has a genetic component but is not an ‘imperative’; rather, it is one available strategy for occupation of space, both among animals and humans. Resources required for subsistence may be either densely or sparsely scattered, and at the same time predictability and reliability of the resource may be either high or low. Geographically stable territorial systems tend to develop in situations where density and predictability of resources are both high, (as in settled agricultural areas among humans). Where resources (as known and perceived by a given group) are ephemeral, sporadic and scattered, territoriality does not develop and is replaced by increased dispersion and mobility. This idea shows an interesting parallel to the different nature of (white) social organisation in Australia’s rural and remote areas.

Territoriality as a deliberate strategy

One step further from the notion of a genetic component in human territoriality is the important work of Robert Sack (1986), who explicitly rejects any biological component. In relation to the task of this chapter - understanding the processes whereby the links that bind individuals and groups to the space they occupy are forged - Sack’s theory of territoriality is full of tantalising promise, which is not completely fulfilled due to some missing links and inconsistencies. However it is introduced here because it adds a significant dimension to place-making theory. Moreover, it is highly relevant to understanding bureaucratic strategies attempting to impose an administrative “solution” to the crisis-affected social organisation of rural space. As such it will be drawn upon particularly in Chapter 9.

Sack (1986, 2,26) avers at the outset that territoriality “is intimately related to how people use the land, how they organise themselves in space, and how they give meaning to place”, and describes it as “the geographical bonding agent”. In his concluding chapter, too, he claims that it is “the device through which people construct and maintain spatial organisations” (Sack 1986, 216). These claims, however, would be better expressed as showing how some people attempt to control how others use the land, to organise the space of others, and to impose place-meanings to their own advantage. For Sack, territoriality is a power-strategy to influence others through the control of area. More precisely, it is defined as “*the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence or control people, phenomena and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area*” (Sack 1986, 19). It is thus a strategy which may be turned on or off. Territories must be defined and maintained, requiring continued effort by the dominator, but they need not be ‘defended’ against outsiders; and the use of territorial strategy may be either *bene-* or *male-*volent. The three definitional elements of territoriality are that it involves some form of classification by area, communication by boundary, and use of these for enforcement or control. In addition, it has some seven other characteristics, or ‘tendencies’ which derive from the first three; and a series of fourteen ‘primary combinations’, or common strategies through which territoriality is deployed, are recognised, using various combinations of the ten tendencies (Fig. 4.7).

Fig. 4.7 An illustration of Robert Sack’s theory of territoriality



Source: Sack, 1986, p. 35.

The various ways the tendencies are combined into strategies of territoriality are arranged roughly so that those with the best-developed combinations of tendencies come first, and heading the list is the principle of spatial hierarchies of territories - indeed the idea of use of a spatial hierarchy of areas to dominate, control and administer a subject population is an ancient and powerful means of territorial control, closely linked with the divide and rule strategy - and, if carried to excess, provoking secessionist movements in the subject population. Examples of territorial spatial hierarchies are the parish, diocese, archdiocese structure of the Church, or the three-tier Australian hierarchy of government. The social organisation of space in rural South Australia will be shown in the next chapter to form a spatial hierarchy, as does the urban system of central places. However, Sack (p. 221, note 9) explicitly rules out central place hinterlands as territories, except for Christaller's administrative principle where $k = 7$ (each central place of order x serves seven places of order $x-1$). In the latter system, central place hinterlands can coincide with administrative boundaries; this is impossible where $k = 3$ (marketing principle) or $k = 4$ (traffic principle).

This leaves the spontaneously evolved, nested hierarchies of place-bound social groups (neighbourhoods, communities, social regions) in a somewhat indeterminate position. Territorial hierarchies (section, Hundred, County) in South Australia have in part been responsible for the origin of community nuclei, and the growth, maintenance and struggle for survival of individual communities is much influenced by the exercise of power by power groups within them. Yet they have no formal status politically, except in so far as local government boundaries happen to coincide with functional community boundaries. One could hypothesise that territoriality such as place-linked social groups exhibit still involves classification by area, boundary recognition and exercise of power to maintain it. But in the case of such social groups these behaviours are *endogenous*, and directed towards self preservation, aggrandisement or survival, whereas Sack theorises the territorial strategy as *exogenous*, involving efforts by outsiders to influence locals by establishing control over area.

Summary: place-making as consequence and cause of the need for the local

In this chapter, I have argued that despite the rising importance of the non-local, or external, element of social contact patterns, the need for the local remains strongly entrenched in human society. This is particularly so in rural areas where time and distance inputs still exercise much stronger constraints over potential interaction partners realisable locations in space than in densely peopled metropolitan areas. The chapter begins with a typology of societies based on the relative importance of local and external interaction networks, and the degree of connectedness/ fragmentation in these networks; societies combining localism with distancing of interaction are shown to be the most likely scenario.

The process whereby localism becomes entrenched in rural populations, iteratively serving as both a consequence of local attachment, and a cause for its constant reproduction, I have termed 'place-bonding'. This has been theorised as a three-way structure of linkages between the individual, the social group, and the molar (natural and/or built) environment, in which I have sought to integrate the partial

understandings of it found in a series of different literatures - social geographic, sociological, ethological, social anthropological, structurationist, humanistic and territorial, with some contribution as well as a critique from the 'new' cultural geography. The place-bonding model has three nodes and three sets of linkages. The three linkages are of roughly equal importance; of the three nodes, most attention has been focussed on the individual and the development of his/her identity, and on the social group in the shape of the neighbourhood or community. Little attention has been given in this chapter to the third node, the nature of the molar environment, for in my experience people can develop local attachment to an amazing variety of environments - even the Black Country of midland England, or the Mallee scrub. However, in Chapter 7 characteristics of the environment will be shown to play a key part in the trends of *differential change* affecting rural communities.

The factors which form the 'glue' holding the place-bonding structure together are many, and strongly interlinked, though most of them do not affect all of the three linkages equally. They are listed below, grouped according to the linkage(s) in which they are most important.

Individual to group:

- propinquity, and the time limitations that constitute realisable space;
- kinship networks, including nuclear family;
- networks of mutual obligations, responsibilities and friendships sanctioned by local social mores;

Individual to environment

- the dialectic between human need for both home and reach, security and stimulation;
- individual topophilia;
- learned, or residual genetic, territorial behaviour patterns;
- cognitive construction of a sense of place

Individual to group and environment

- The role of the group and the environment in shaping individual identity;
- local information fields and information exchange networks;
- long periods of residence, particularly in the formative childhood and adolescent years;

Individual and group to environment

- regular, repetitive movement patterns ('place ballets'), bringing the same actors together at the same locations;
- pauses or interludes in such place ballets;
- direct relationships between individual, group and the working of the land, sea or other local resources;

Group to environment

- the role of long-established and stable territorial hierarchies in shaping collective interaction;
- collective affective identification with place developed through neighbouring *without* specific functional interaction;
- localised traditions and cultural traits, deliberately maintained and refashioned to accommodate change;
- localised place-naming, and speech patterns;

- mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination against group-defined 'others';
- deliberate territorial strategies seeking to regulate access to space; and
- the constant 'becoming' of place through slow mutual adjustment of structure to human agency and vice-versa.

Finally, the literature suggests that bonding of individuals and groups occurs with differing intensity to places at different geographical scales up to that of the nation state. While taking due account of postmodern suggestions of the demise of localism and the end of place as a semi-stable phenomenon in an increasingly mobile, spaceless world, I would suggest that the forces producing the need for the local are too strong to succumb lightly. We now move on to an empirical examination of the social organisation of rural space in South Australia in the early 1980s.