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THE STRUCTURE OF A NEW ZEALAND
COMMUNITY

An Essay in the Sociology of Place

A Thesis

submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of

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at the

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by

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ABSTRACT

The study is concerned with the development of a sociology of place arising from observations made in 1969 - 71 in a small town (pop. 1759) in the Auckland region. The ecological approach used by Roger G. Barker and his associates (see for example, Barker, R.G., 1968, Ecological Psychology, Stanford) is used as the starting point for a sociological analysis of the ways in which meaning is embodied in the physical environment and the ways in which these meanings affect social life.

Part I of the thesis, Preliminary Considerations, deals in three chapters with the problems of a phenomenological analysis of the community. Barker's approach is critically reviewed and the main analytical concepts, "place" and "milieux" (its concrete isolates) are examined.

In Part II, Place as a Social Fact, the discussion proceeds by applying and refining the ideas developed in Part I, with particular relationship to the analysis of the Harbourtown milieu inventory. The problems of milieu analysis including those of ecological relationship, of time, and of symbolism are examined in detail.

Part III returns to a more theoretical consideration and sets out the main structure, problems and applications of the sociology of place. Community is seen as an intersection of time, place and social structure, and this triangle is transposed to deal with other problems. The application of the principles of the sociology of place to problems of planning is discussed.

In the final chapter the problem of the relationship between place and community is reformulated as one of aesthetics; it is concluded that community is not compassed in an understanding of its functional or moral aspects but is the object of feeling as an ideal cultural form.

. . .space is not the vague and indetermined medium which Kant imagined; if purely and absolutely homogeneous, it would be of no use, and could not be grasped by the mind. Spatial representation consists essentially in a primary co-ordination of the data of sensuous experience. But this co-ordination would be impossible if the parts of space were qualitatively equivalent and if they were really interchangeable. To dispose things spatially there must be a possibility of placing them differently, of putting some at the right and others at the left, these above, those below, at the north of, at the south of, east or west of . . .space could not be what it is if it were not, like time, divided and differentiated . . .

* * *

The rationalism which is imminent in the sociological theory of knowledge is thus midway between classical empiricism and apriorism. For the first the categories are purely artificial constructions; for the second, on the contrary, they are given by nature; for us, they are in a sense a work of art. . .

Emile Durkheim,
The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life
Introduction.

PREFACE

The essay which follows is a discussion in defence of the thesis that place is a social fact. It has its origin in two sources, the first is a number of discussions, in particular with Gerhardt Rosenberg of the Town Planning Department of the University of Auckland, when we were planning a seminar for the (then) University Extension Department - and subsequently with Professor James Ritchie of the University of Waikato, who directed my attention to the work of R.G. Barker. The second source was the actual attempt to study the small town, here called Harbourtown. It was during the latter experience and later, while attempting to organise the data gained during a number of visits over a period of two years extending from 1968 to 1971, that I recast the study and became particularly concerned with the problem of the community as a meaning system.

I may trace this change to a single fact. Having gone to Harbourtown with a basic presumption that field work should be carried out with the least direct intervention possible I had decided to use no measuring instruments or interview schedules and indeed, to seek no interviews and to ask the minimum of questions. I assumed, wrongly as it turned out, that I might be able to adopt to the town the position of an impartial observer. To aid in this I made no attempts at concealment, explained myself as briefly and clearly as I could to the Editor (who was also the printer and publisher) of the newspaper and set to work as a first task to photograph the town systematically from end to end.

The work of taking photographs left me with a large collection of undistinguished pictures of houses, buildings, parks and streets, but in the process of selecting my subjects led to conversations with a large number of people who went out of their way to explain their town to me. It was only when I showed some of these pictures to an acquaintance made in this way that I became aware of the fact that I had been probing a system of meaning which was clear and comprehensible to the townspeople - and therefore taken for granted - but of which I had gained only the roughest approximation in my study of maps and documents, and in my more consciously directed conversations with informants.

The way in which Harbourtown people thought about the places which I had photographed, I discovered, was many levelled, but Harbourtowners perceived these places as unitary and moved from one level of understanding to another with complete ease as the circumstances required. The process was not thus, one of enquiry, but one of disclosure. Direct questions interrupted the process; listening with only the slightest of prompting, and looking, led to the disclosing, a thread at a time, of a complex and subtle web of meanings which linked people and place. The problem became that of finding the means to interpret, and through interpretation, to understand, these meanings.

In the study which follows I have attempted to systematise some of this material and, on the basis of it, to propose a sociology of place.

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Two other debts are unrepayable, to the late Ralph Piddington, my first teacher in Anthropology, and to the citizens of Harbourtown.

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P A R T I

Preliminary Considerations

CHAPTER I

The Problem

1. The Source of the problem

It is a commonplace of everyday experience that the physical environment is filled with meaning. As people go about their day-to-day affairs they continually modify their behaviour according to the cues offered by the environment - they avoid some places and seek out others according to the needs of the present moment, they observe rules such as looking to the right before crossing the road, and standing in the queue at the bus stop, they can tell a stranger with no more than a glance out of the bus window what sort of neighbourhood he is passing through, and they treat features of the physical environment as reference points for many different kinds of statements.

For the ordinary person living his day-to-day life, the environment is not problematic; like speech it is given as part of the business of living and though it may call for modifications and decisions about what to do, for example when there is unexpected rain or he has to go to an unfamiliar part of the town, nevertheless there is no particular problem in making these decisions, there are precedents, past experiences and rules to go by, as well as the possibility of consulting some other knowledgeable person. In the epoché of the natural attitude, to use the language of the phenomenological viewpoint on which this study is based, physical environment is taken-for-granted. That it is not so when considered from the viewpoint of social science, and that that viewpoint may reveal aspects of the physical environment that are not considered in the natural attitude, is what this study is all about.

The previous paragraphs have indicated the phenomenon (or rather the group of phenomena) which is the focus of interest, namely, that the physical environment has meaning for the people who use it. From this arise a number of "primitive" questions, that is, questions that arise simply from speculating about the phenomenon. Without going beyond the everyday sense of "meaning" then, it is relevant to ask what sorts of meanings might be conveyed by the environment, how they are communicated, bestowed and maintained, and what their status might be in relation to the other things that people do. Such questions clearly take us beyond the ordinary map-making or dimensioning carried out by a geographer or a surveyor and focus upon the relationship existing between what people think, say and do, and the physical places which are the milieux for such actions. This, it is maintained, is a sociological problem; the reasons for believing that it is are set out in the next section.

2. Why the Physical Environment is Sociologically Problematic.

In the previous section it was taken to be fundamental that the physical environment carries meaning for the members of a society. The presumption that this is so is based upon the fact that even were one to disbelieve it oneself, it is possible to observe many other people acting in ways which are not readily explained by any other hypothesis. The meanings which are evidently conveyed by the environment are of different kinds, people seldom, if ever make mistakes about the identity of shops, hotels, churches, farmed land and so on, and they often draw other information from these features as well. The environment is thus a collection of environments which are different from one another; and these differences

are taken for granted by their users. The problem then, is how best to account, in sociological terms, for this differentiation.

The various accounts within which the reason for the differentiation of environment might be sought, historical, economic, psychological and so on, have in common the fact that they seek to explain the differentiation of environment (or would do if they were to consider it) in terms of the particular kinds of facts that each deals with. Thus an economic account would attempt to relate differentiation to the functional differences between the items of the environment and would be able to show that differentiation was an economic fact, as indeed, in some respects it is likely to be. When we turn to a consideration of those environmental parts which do not fulfil any obvious economic function such as preserved uneconomic buildings, or the unexploited natural resources of national parks and forests, however, the economic account falls silent. Such facts are facts of a different order and fall within a different sphere of discourse.

If we accept that psychology in viewing this problem is mainly concerned with the individual as the responder to the environment, and to other features such as the presence of other people, language, perceptual features and the like which are given as part of the total environment, then it seems that another aspect remains unexplained. Differentiation arises in the context of interpersonal action and common understanding; in Schutz's terms, it is a fact of intersubjectivity. The differentiation of the environment is open to economic or psychological explanation, but such explanations remain partial and incomplete. The explanations which might be sought in history or sociology are in competition insofar as they may be claimed to give more or less complete accounts of the differentiation of the environment. The difference in viewpoint goes deeper than this however, if history is not merely contingency, but in fact necessity, then

more than the differentiation of environment is at stake; the structures of a society are given inexorably by the pre-existing conditions, and more particularly by the material conditions. On the other hand, if society is seen to be sui generis, with laws and imperatives of its own, the problem becomes a-historical, determined in fact by societal dynamics operating by means, and in ways, of which we are only dimly aware. History in these circumstances becomes only the memory of what has happened, not the determinant of what is happening or will happen.

Do the historical and sociological accounts compete in fact? The matter has been one of some concern, more particularly to those sociologists who wish to adopt a Marxist position. The major exponent of the position is Claude Lévi-Strauss, who as a syncretist of differing sociological perspectives, seeks to reconcile the historicism of Marx with the structuralism of Durkheim in a new synthesis. Although Lévi-Strauss has discussed the relationship of history to sociology in a variety of different works, the following quotation from an early work, Structural Anthropology (1958, trans. 1963) seems to encapsulate the theme which he develops, writes variations upon, inverts and recapitulates in later books.

The issue can thus be reduced to the relationship between history and ethnology in the strict sense. We propose to show that the fundamental difference between the two disciplines is not one of subject, of goal, or of method. They share the same subject, which is social life; the same goal, which is a better understanding of man; and, in fact, the same method, in which only the proportion of research techniques varies. They differ, principally, in their choice of complementary perspectives: History organises its data in relation to conscious expressions of social life, while anthropology proceeds by examining its unconscious foundations.

If we accept this view then the difference between history and ethnology is one of perspective only. The syncretism is achieved by an appeal to the unconscious sources of social life, to the models which lie buried beneath the conscious representations of the life of the collectivity.

Thus anthropology cannot remain indifferent to historical processes and to the most highly conscious expressions of social phenomena. But if the anthropologist brings to them the same scrupulous attention as the historian, it is in order to eliminate, by a kind of backward course, all that they owe to the historical process and to conscious thought. His goal is to grasp, beyond the conscious and always shifting images which men hold, the complete range of unconscious possibilities. These are not unlimited, and the relationships of compatibility or incompatibility which each maintains with all the others provide a logical framework for historical developments, which, while perhaps unpredictable, are never arbitrary. In this sense the famous statement by Marx, "Men make their own history, but they do not know that they are making it", justifies first, history, and second, anthropology. At the same time it shows that the two approaches are inseparable.

2

The discussion can hardly proceed without noting however, Lévi-Strauss's distinction between "ethnology" (social anthropology) sociology and history. If these disciplines share common ground, their difference in perspective is nevertheless fundamental. In his discussion of methodology ³, Lévi-Strauss contrasts the models built respectively by history, sociology, ethnography and social anthropology. The diagram below is reproduced from page 286.

	History	Sociology	Ethnography	Soc. Anthro.
Empirical observation/ model building	+	-	+	-
Mechanical models/ statistical models	-	-	+	+

History and social anthropology, according to Lévi-Strauss, are a contrasting pair, but what is more important there is an absolute contrast between sociology and ethnography. Leaving aside what Lévi-Strauss means by "model" (and it is not entirely clear how the term is to be understood) it seems that sociology stands as the science which syncretises both social anthropology and history, carrying out the scientific mandate of the one and organising its thought in the same way as the other. It seems that we are intended to understand that sociology will be able to translate the model building activity of social anthropology and combine it with the type of generalising which is appropriate to history, and if this is so, it must be because sociology takes the same stance as history toward "the conscious expressions of social life".

In Lévi-Strauss's view then, sociology and history do not compete, nor are they complementary as history and social anthropology are, they overlap, history is to an extent sociology, and sociology is also history. The elegance of this formulation should not distract attention from the fact that Lévi-Strauss regards his view of history as Marxist ⁴, and for this reason sociology is to be regarded as an analysis of the superstructure. At the risk, however, of rendering inelegant this model of models, it might be suggested that there is another view of history possible. A Marxist reading of history is of the relations of base to superstructure, manifested now in the struggles of opposing classes, and now in the unconscious working out of the conditions set by the material dialectic, ⁵ a non-Marxist view of history promises less in the nature of general theories of the changes

of human society. If we see history as an account of the set of causal links which are uniquely constituted for a given society then the posited determinism of base to superstructure becomes an incident in a particular culture, not a universal determinant of all culture, and the possibility emerges for innovations in the superstructure which cause change in the base. Ideas can be a basis for social change even when the material conditions of existence do not prompt it. How else does one explain the revolution of 1917? Somewhat differently phrased, Badcock makes a similar point when he says:

. . . as I argued in my chapter on Marx and Lévi-Strauss, to accord an independent, detached and genuinely critical role to the intelligence would be to undo the basic dogmas of dialectical materialism and open the way to a return to Comtean positivism, or at least to a sort of sociology which did not accord a primary role to the collective, or to history, or to the dialectic, etc. etc. The suspension of rational criticism so clearly seen in Marxist political regimes actually originates in the sociological analysis of Marx and means that, even considered from the diachronic point of view, the ultimate explanations of social reality must appear totally arbitrary. They are not arbitrary in this case because unmotivated but because they are determined beyond the scope of rational criticism considered as an independent and objective under-
taking.

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If Badcock's criticisms are accepted the problem is not to explain the differentiation of physical environment but to do sociology at all, since if we assert the essential synchronicity of sociology as a Lévi-Straussian, or any other kind of structuralism must, we are forced into the reduction of sociology to psychology or brain physiology, if we assert the diachronic nature of society then we become involved in a reduction of sociology to history. There must be some sort of middle ground, some foothold for the beleaguered practitioner who wishes to assert the worth of the sociological approach if for no other reason than that it appears to do what neither history nor psychology do at present, namely to enquire into the nature of the cultural universe, that is to say, the consensually held norms and valuations as well as the varieties of human expression, customs,

rituals and so forth, which human groupings undoubtedly exemplify, whether on the scale of the tribe or village, or of the historical nation-state ⁷. This is not to reduce sociology to ethnography but to make the enquiry deal with a central problem - meaning. Rather now, than question the ground of meaning, or to look for the primal facts within which meaning is located, the sociological task starts with the presumption that there is such a thing as meaning (people certainly seem to act as if there were) that meaning, whether it be arbitrarily given to a system of signs or given in human nature, exists and persists in collectivities of humans and in their artefacts, that it exerts an influence on both individual and collective action and thought, that it stands in a complex relationship to previous meanings held by the same group and to meanings held contemporaneously or in the past by other groups, and that meaning itself may be held to have both obvious or patent, and subtle or elusive forms. In other words meaning is a characteristic of human existence, its creations, maintenance and elaboration being a specifically and diagnostically human characteristic, carried out in interaction with others. That the enquiry touches respectively philosophy on the one hand and psychology on the other is not of itself important; but it is neither of these and is not reducible to either.

Under the view taken here the differentiation of the environment is a sociological problem if it is considered as a problem of meaning, that is, of culture ⁸. Though historical facts, economic facts, geographical and perhaps a number of others might be called in to explain the cause of the differentiation, both the structure of it and the content, must be regarded as part of the general system of meaning which is called culture. What we are concerned with is not the contingencies which gave rise to a particular weight, or valuation, by the people who occupied that environ-

ment, they were awarded a significance such that they held them to be worthy of consideration and embodied them in their meaning system. Thus for example, the appearance of a supernova in our own time would be regarded as something that was properly within the sphere of the astronomer for explanation, it is unlikely that it would be interpreted as a sign of great changes to come in human affairs, even though there is a strong cultural precedent for doing so among people raised in the Christian tradition. Supernovae are embodied in our meaning system at a particular point, science, whereas the Christmas Star remains a unique event embodied in religious story.

The sociological approach then deals with the differentiation of the environment and the relation of human action to the environment in a way that is different from other concerns. The environment is embedded in a context of culture, that is why it has meaning, but the nature of that meaning, and how it is to be set out and ordered remains a problem to be explored.

3. Elements of a sociological approach.

The elements of a sociological approach may be found in the view of the social world which is derived from philosophical phenomenology. Phenomenology offers two things to sociology, a stance toward the world, and a methodology. The former, the stance, consists of a particular view of reality. This is summarily put by Maurice Roche:

All philosophers, wittingly or unwittingly, make use of ontological axioms and assertions, concerning what kinds of things in the final analysis, can and do exist, and in what way they exist. Phenomenology, unlike most other modern philosophic fashions, makes explicit its ontological commitments. Although these do change from one phenomenologist to another, they all tend to hold that mental phenomena have as real and as unavoidable existence, albeit in a different way, as have physical phenomena. And in some cases an

idealist kind of primacy of mental over physical existence emerges. Instead of accepting the materialist thesis that only things that can be touched and smelled, heard, seen or tasted can be said to exist, which would make mental phenomena non-existent in that they cannot be sensed, the idealist argues that judging, naming, discriminating, etc., are primary and that physical things only exist secondarily as the correlates of these mental phenomena, that is as 'the named', 'the discriminated', etc. 9

The excesses to which idealism might go and which were repudiated by Brentano have to be borne in mind in considering the programme for sociology, but the stance, with this borne in mind and due allowance made for the possibility of becoming doctrinaire, nevertheless draws attention to the necessity to be true to all aspects of the phenomenon; in the case of the environment, to its cultural dimensions in all their complexity.

The method of phenomenology cannot be divorced from its stance. The epoché, or phenomenological reduction, consists of a standpoint and a technique - the standpoint is that belief in the 'taken-for-granted' world, the lebenswelt, must be suspended, and the technique is the "bracketing" or "thinking away" of the aspects of the lebenswelt which obtrude upon attention, it is as Lévi-Strauss would have us do, to ignore the conscious models which lie across the path to the unconscious. Schutz carried this somewhat further; he says:

Phenomenology has taught us the concept of phenomenological epoché, the suspension of our belief in the reality of the world as a device to overcome the natural attitude by radicalising the Cartesian method of philosophical doubt. The suggestion may be ventured that man within the natural attitude also uses a specific epoché, of course quite another one than the phenomenologist. He does not suspend belief in the outer world and its objects, but on the contrary, he suspends doubt in its existence. What he puts in brackets is the doubt that the world and its objects might be otherwise than it appears to him. We propose to call this epoché, the epoché of the natural attitude. 10

Of the characteristics of natural attitude Schutz stresses the intersubjective nature - this points toward an ultimate psychological reduction, the natural attitude is a thing of the individual mind and its suspension

is to throw into doubt the order of existence, the evil experience that is encountered by Roquentin, Sartre's anti-hero in Nausea, who is overcome by the world of appearances. Nevertheless intersubjectivity can only take place in the process of interaction with others, whether in their direct presence or indirectly through some medium of communication, the telephone, a book, a painting, a scrap of overheard conversation. The context of such intersubjectivity is not only interpersonal, it is caught up in the tradition of the culture in which the interacting persons share, they are thus not wholly free to create arbitrarily new meanings, they must use the available materials, materials which are given in the process of acquiring a particular culture. The psychological reduction thus would be pointless, for individual psychology is precisely that, personal, and its content incomplete. The totality of culture cannot be recovered from the psychological individual, yet paradoxically it has no existence apart from the interaction of individuals or, at any rate their prospective interaction, as might be the case when one writes a letter. This is not to deny, of course, that books and other kinds of artefacts ~~do~~ constitute culture, but that is not the total culture, for culture, whatever may be stored in individual or social memory, is always in the present moment.

The investigation calls for the use of conceptual tools of which one is the notion of "bracketing" - another is exemplified by Lévi-Strauss in his distinction between culture and nature. The dichotomy proposed by Lévi-Strauss has to do with the foundations of Lévi-Strauss's system which it is not intended here to advance any detailed criticism of, culture is defined by the arbitrary, the contingent, the normative, nature is necessity, that which is given in the animal existence of human beings. Thus incest taboos constitute the primary kinds of rules of culture, for they are arbitrary interference with the sexual drive.

To avoid the accusation that in this study the conceptual distinction used by Lévi-Strauss is misused or misunderstood it is necessary to set out the way in which the distinction which is referred to in later chapters as that between culture, quasi-nature, and nature, actually arises. Let us presume that in all societies there are some things which are thought of as being outside culture, that is they are non-culture and in some cases actually anti-culture. In traditional Maori culture there were, for example, elementals which figured in the storms, earthquakes, the forests and other natural events. These beings are "anti-culture" in the sense that they are perpetually and capriciously warring against Man, who personifies culture, but there are also things for which the Maori had no categories, they were non-culture. In spite of the fact that gold in bright nugget form could be picked up from the creeks of the Coromandel ranges and the South Island, including some that were in constant use by Maoris, there is no trace of Maori awareness of gold, no sign of it ever having been gathered, and of course no tradition of metal working.

It is clear enough that anything in the anti-culture category is of course cultural, being assigned its particular location by men, non-culture it would seem must clearly be nature, which is of course also a cultural category. What men assign to the category nature, that is, "given in the world", is different from one society to the next - the methodological presumption therefore that everything is culture, should lead to setting questions against those items for which there seems to be a different category. This is the position that has been taken in questioning the differentiation of the environment.

To the two methodological approaches given might we add that just discussed, namely the presumption of cultural wholism in order to interrogate any item of the experienced world about its cultural status. Such

a tool seems useful when it is considered for use in a culture other than that from which the investigator comes, but it is not disqualified from use in the investigation of his own culture. It raises, however, one or two problems. The first is that it incorporates implicit assumptions about language, namely whether in speaking of culture, non-culture, nature and the like one is simply imposing a conceptual framework upon phenomenal reality - to which the answer is that the form of discourse is different as will be demonstrated in the next section - and the second, whether all meaning is ultimately reducible to language, a problem also to be considered in the next section.

4. Ways of meaning.

Sociolinguistics has built an extensive theoretical apparatus around de Saussure's distinction between langue and parôle, a distinction which is developed by Merleau-Ponty, and which takes the form of such distinctions as those between deep structures and surface rules, and code and message, structure and content. What these distinctions do is to make manageable the phenomena of language behaviour for the purposes of scientific discourse. Cicourel has this to say:

Particular linguistic descriptions must show how semantic interpretations are connected to phonetic representations of a given natural language. The elegance of modern linguistics for sociologists, however, cannot rest with ideal formulations about the tacit knowledge . . . actual speakers possess about their language, nor with the idealisation assumed when ignoring distractions in speech . . . [etc.] Chomsky's work on generative grammar refers to a system of rules to enable the linguist to assign structural descriptions to sentences under the assumption that the speaker who has mastered the language has internalised the grammar regardless of his awareness or potential awareness of the rules of grammar he has used. The concern, therefore, is not with the speaker's reports and viewpoints.

and in the citation from Chomsky which follows we find the informative statement that:

To avoid what has been a continuing misunderstanding, it is perhaps worthwhile to reiterate that a generative grammar is not a model for a speaker or a hearer. It attempts to characterise in the most neutral possible terms the knowledge of the language that provides the basis for the actual use of language by the speaker-hearer.

If not a model for the speaker-hearer then for whom? Of course for the theorist of language who will subsume the actual language behaviour under more general formulations.

Using sociolinguistics as an example we may characterise the process about which Cicourel speaks as being of the following kind.

Phenomenon	Cogniser (act of cognition)	Natural Language
utterance	hears utterance	Interpretation according to internalised linguistic knowledge.

This represents the case for the unsophisticated native speaker, when we substitute in the position of cogniser the sociolinguist, then the language concerned will be that of sociolinguistics.

But is this really the case? Perhaps we should divide the category "Language" into two, Language I which is the language of everyday life (natural language) and which is common both to the speaker and the sociolinguist, and Language II which is the "language" of sociolinguistics alone. Of course it is possible for the sociolinguist to have no knowledge at all of Language I, and therefore to treat all utterances as objects, leaping thus, straight to Language II. Most linguists however, even when working with native informants seem to have some language in common with them and frequently also work in laboratory situations with a single informant.

Some examples which apply the foregoing ideas may assist. The artificiality of a linear presentation is of course acknowledged but it serves to show that the translation from brute phenomenon to language requires an act of cognition (the headings in the above diagram are here represented by initial letters):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (i) P. finger in flame; | C. sensation of burning; | L. "Ouch! That's hot!". |
| (ii) P. bell rings; | C. recognition of sound; | L. "Someone is calling on the phone". |
| (iii) P. sequence of musical notes; | C. recognition as music; | L. "God Save the Queen". |

Each example keeps the same general structure, but each has a specific cultural content, in (i) the word hot cannot have another word substituted for it, an English speaker is not free to make up a new word or to substitute another English word (not a synonym) say, "cold", or one from a foreign language, e.g. wera; in (ii) bells may mean many things, context and type of ring distinguish between door, church, and phone; in (iii) the note sequence 'ggaf#ga' is the National Anthem in Britain, in the U.S.A. it becomes "America" (My country 'tis of thee).

Example:

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| (iv) P. man and woman speaking before a man; | C. recognises as wedding; | LI. description of wedding ceremony;
LII. sociological analysis of wedding ceremonies and their significance (meaning). |
| (v) P. rocks on fire; | C. recognises lime burning; | LI. How you make lime by burning coral rock.
LII. $\text{CaCO}_3 = \text{CaO} + \text{CO}_2$. |

The two cases here follow the reading of Chomsky given above, the Language II statements are not necessarily recognisable to the users of Language I and may not be part of everyday life, indeed to the users of Language I they may appear to be merely esoteric confusions of what everyone knows, (a common response to sociological statements), the point is that they contain statements of a different order, statements about rules, structural relations, and the relations between content and structure. The last is to go further than some critics will allow¹², yet it seems so far as sociology is concerned unavoidable to include it. In example (v) there is no way of recovering "lime burning" from the chemical formula, though knowing it, a potential lime maker could, provided he could identify limestone, i.e. translate into Language I, carry out the necessary procedures. That the equation embodies phenomena as different as burning shell and the erosion of a limestone building by rain water, however, might well be beyond the credulity of a naive user of Language I. In example (iv) however, in spite of the fact that a page of diagrams might express the ideal form of a marriage rule such an empirically empty statement will not make it possible to construct the institution in another society. The sociological statements are not capable of being content free, in the ways that the statements of chemistry are, to put it another way the relationship between content and structure and between the contingent and the permanent must be acknowledged even where it is not specifically explicated - history must eventually be brought back into synchronicity.

The argument so far has concerned the relationship which language bears to phenomena. Language, of course, is a phenomenon in its own right and can be studied as such, but Cicourel substantially turns linguistic behaviour into the key to the way in which social meaning is assigned. To do this he posits the existence of "interpretive procedures" which are

"invariant properties of everyday practical reasoning necessary for assigning sense to the substantive rules sociologists usually call norms" ¹³(op. cit. 52). Just as the generative grammar of the Chomskian linguistics is not a model for the native speaker or hearer, so a generative social structure is not a model for well-socialised members of the society. It is an attempt to show how interpretive procedures and surface rules are necessary for the understanding of everyday activities (from the standpoint of a member of the society), and how "members and researchers assign structural descriptions to all forms of social organisation".

What Cicourel seems to be saying is that interpretive procedures and surface rules are part of natural language (Language I) but that how "members and researchers" assign structural description requires a different order of explanation. Properly this explanation must be in Language II which, as we have seen, is the language of relations and generalised principles. At the end of the paragraph there is a telling sentence in which Cicourel asks "What must be known about the properties of interpretive procedures and surface rules in order to programme a subject's actions (in field and experimental settings) so that such behaviour can be recognised as 'normal' or routine (or unusual or bizarre) social activity by members?". It is in this sentence that Cicourel's position emerges clearly; it is the antithesis of the position taken here. Cicourel's model is cybernetic and behaviouristic, his discoveries will be made by experiment, and, whatever the use of "meaning" may be it is to be understood as limited to the conditions set by the linguistic model.

As a means of understanding culture (as opposed to analysing behaviour) Cicourel's approach seems to be of limited value. Whereas I have argued for the non-recoverability of phenomena (articulated in Language I) from the statements in Language II - a position based upon the assumption of the "richness" of phenomena, Cicourel seems to argue for the complete

reversability of Language II statements. There is not, in principle, any reason why the process of reverse translation should be impossible, just as the schoolboy who knows only the equation for the oxidation of calcium carbonate is not, in principle, prevented from making lime - yet, given the poverty of the sociological formulation as opposed to the richness of the chemical equation (to use these terms to mean the capacity to define all the significant characteristics of the phenomenon) there seems to be little chance of success in practice. Again we might argue that there is a qualitative difference between Language I and Language II statements such that though translation in the reverse direction may be possible, it is very difficult, namely that Language II statements are about relations in one dimension only so far as the culture of the everyday world is concerned. Thus the Language II statements about marriage rules refer only to that dimension and do not take into account another set of statements about religious beliefs or aesthetic choices, yet, if culture is in fact whole, each of these may imply the other. To state the relations between them therefore might take another Language, and to combine its statements with yet other factors, another Language still. The reductio ad absurdum is obvious.

The problem that arises from the use of a linguistic model is that while it may, with a high degree of power, deal with linguistic phenomena, does it deal readily with other meaning-bearing phenomena or for that matter with certain aspects, say nuance, irony, or allusion, of language itself? These problems aside, and they are not small, Cicourel's approach provides a hypothesis and a programme, one with the potentiality moreover of producing a "true" sociological science, where the rules can be generated from the "grammar".

Such a programme depends upon the reducibility of all phenomena to language, and it seems, to make all phenomena epiphenomena of language.

Against this I assert that though perhaps all phenomena can be talked about, talk, or language may not mirror them very well, in addition this is not a reduction to language, i.e. a statement that the rules of x are also the rules of y, as would be the case in a true symbolic model, of which the "language" is ultimately mathematical ¹⁵. (cf. Willer, 1967, on symbolic models). I am persuaded to this position by the fact that there are systems within which meaning is created, maintained and communicated which have relatively little to do with language. These are not "para languages" in Cicourel's sense, and can hardly be called languages at all, if by language we mean an arbitrary system of signs to which meaning is attached. Of this sort then are facial expressions, gesture, dance, music, visual art, and perhaps, despite their manifest use of language as a medium, poetry, drama, and literature. What these have in common is that they deal in nuance and feeling, and that they communicate as wholes in relation to cultural valuations and to the normative structures to which it is possible for them to be radically opposed. The analogy of language may work very well at a certain level (as for example, in Edward T. Hall's Silent Language and The Hidden Dimension) but to say that they are like in some respects, generative grammar, is quite different from saying that they are transformations of general and embedded rules generated from deep structures.

Of course, not so much is claimed by the cognitive sociologists, yet the implication, when we consider Mythologiques, or Lévi-Strauss on art ¹⁶, is certainly present. There is another reason however, for questioning the reduction of all meaning to language. In the examples given previously a model which consisted of phenomenon, cogniser, Language I and Language II was proposed in which the cogniser, as a condition of being able to operate in his world, had to be able to translate his perceptions of the phenomenon

into the natural language and, it was implied, to reconstitute the phenomenon by the reverse process. But the cultural features of which we have been speaking, do not translate into the natural language, or if they do, then very imperfectly. It is even extraordinarily difficult to compass them within Language II as a reading of the literature of aesthetics and even more, of the sociology of art, clearly shows. Now of course, it is possible to render some part of the phenomenon in the natural language, as is shown for example in Dante's instructions on the reading of the Divine Comedy, or for that matter, Shakespeare's instructions to the players put in the mouth of Hamlet, but these instructions do not exhaust the meaning of the phenomenon - they are not a true reduction of it; you cannot recover the experience of reading the Divine Comedy from Dante's instructions, or from any description of its content. The case becomes much more acute when music is brought under consideration. One has only to think of the programme notes written to explain, say, Beethoven's Eroica, ("fate knocks on the door", "ode to a man of genius"), to recognise the incapacity of the translation. In fact in listening to or performing music, verbal explanations usually constitute an interference in the cognitive processes; composers give the very sparsest of verbal instructions to the performer, usually confining themselves to instructions as to the speed and loudness with which a passage is to be played. Instructions like molto espressivo, cantabile, con brio, can hardly be said to be a linguistic reduction of a piece of music or even of the way in which it is to be played, interpretation, both by the performer and the hearer eludes language and may not be expressed as language¹⁷.

Systems of meaning exist for which only the loosest kind of fit exists between apprehension and reduction to language, yet these are not merely matters of individual subjectivity as the applause at the end of a concert

or a play, or the cheers at a football match indicate. Nor is it the case that individuals cannot recover the meaning, in that particularly subtle sense, when they come upon some part of the meaning system as isolates. "Beauty," Wallace Stevens says, "is momentary in the mind", but the experience of "beauty" can be reconstructed by a return to its stimulus, or by long and wondering contemplation of the object, or by remembering it at a later date, and this experience may be shared by many other people.

The case for works of art may be in no need of explanation, but it can hardly be denied that art constitutes a system of meaning which does not rely on language for its apprehension, though language may play a part in it or be able to render in part, what it is about¹⁸. It is the contention of this thesis however, that much more mundane things act in the same way, and that in particular the physical environment does so.

5. Another Approach.

In the previous section the aim was to establish the status of the problem of considering the environment as a system of meaning. It has been argued that such cultural features as art and dance, and, it is claimed, the physical environment, are systems of meaning which, while they may be talked about, cannot be easily reduced to language. In other words there is extra-linguistic meaning which is embodied as a system in the artefacts, actions and experiences which have been mentioned above. It is not denied that some part of these can be given in terms of natural language, but their meaning is not exhausted by language. In order to make statements about these systems it becomes necessary to use what has been called here "Language II", "meta-language" which embodies the

relational concepts necessary for generalisation. Sociological analysis is such a "meta-language" or "second order language".

The characteristics of such languages are not the concern of this study, and the caveat must be entered in any case, that the distinction of second order languages may be only a metaphor for a variety of abstractive process in which the words of a natural language are given special meanings - nevertheless it seems, without pressing the matter too hard, that the second order language, sociology, although still very primitive and confused with first order (Language I) concepts, makes statements which are qualitatively different from natural language statements. Thus, the sociological account is an interpretation of phenomena in everyday life that may be treated as unique events, as statistically distributed events, or as good examples of some social process. Suicide thus, may be interpreted either as a particular but typifiable event, as a rate coalescing all such events irrespective of their individual features, or as a symptom of a socio-cultural characteristic, anomie or altruism - in fact Durkheim does all three.

Rules for Interpretation:

There is a double task in the study of social meaning. The first, and what is essentially the field task, is to understand the ways in which local people typify and objectify their physical environment, the second is to interpret the folk model in terms of a more general sociological model. The former task involves the discovery of the basis upon which differentiation rests (the interpretative procedures in use, in Cicourel's sense) but the epistemological problem here is the extent to which these "ways" or interpretative procedures are to be regarded as egocentric or as socio-centric. If the former view is taken then we are led toward a psychology of deep structures or unconscious models, which by their very

nature cannot be made accessible to observation. This is not in itself a problem, observational data on atomic particles was anticipated by inference for a long period; why should not deep structures be likewise inferred? If on the other hand, "ways of meaning" are thought of as socio-centric, then the preoccupation with surface rules develops to the extent that it may obscure the unconscious base of cultural facts.

In choosing between these options it is worth taking the stand that the etiology of culture in the mind is not primarily a sociological problem, but one rather for the psychologist or proponent of the "philosophical anthropology" of Martin Buber, which, we may note in passing, by asking the question "What is Man?" is focussed firmly on etiological questions¹⁸. The sociological question is about how culture manifests itself in a given present, and the answer to that question, lies not so much in the operations and characteristics of the individual psyche (unless we subscribe to a "great men" theory of history) as in a complex of historical and other contingent factors.

Our problem then, is not only to understand "the native's" "ways of meaning" (or interpretative procedures) but also to make an interpretation of that understanding, in other words, to make statements in "Language II" about the relations existing within the culture and to provide a plausible interpretation of them. The "Language II" statements are thus rules for interpreting what has been learned via the study of the phenomena and their transformations within a given culture. To be sure these "rules" will not be set out with the clarity and precision of Durkheim's rules of sociological method - they do not form, after all, an axiological system for the study of all cultures except by perhaps some later abstraction - they relate to a specific culture located in time and space. Like Chomsky's model of language they do not constitute a model for the member of the culture,

they are directions to an outsider about how to understand the culture that was manifested in a variety of phenomena (in fact as one encompassing phenomenon) at a specific historical point. There is a difference - the "rules of interpretation" do not provide us with a way of reconstructing the phenomenon in some other place, they presume that every happening is of its nature unique, but they permit a sophisticated visitor to the culture to recognise the typical phenomena of the culture when he comes across them, and to test the validity of the interpretation, having due regard for the passage of time and the possible mistakes of omission or incomprehension that take place.

In an earlier section I wrote that "bracketing" was fundamental to the phenomenological methodology, indeed in Husserl's terms it is the phenomenological epoché, in contrast to the "natural attitude". In terms of the study of cultural phenomena in their living context, "putting in brackets" means temporarily excluding the contingent in order to study persistent or characteristic aspects of them. It is not so much a method as a perspective or attitude, a way of looking at the turbulent and dynamic stream of everyday life.

An analogy exists, perhaps, with the taking of a photograph. The photograph isolates an instant of time, puts in brackets and freezes an image of people, things, and motion at that moment. The photograph is a selection, it includes only those things which fall within the angle of view of the lens, and records in detail only those parts which fall within the depth of the field; as well the distortions and aberrations of the lens will alter some aspects of the photographic image, and the colour rendition will be according to the spectral sensitivity of the film and not that of the photographer's eye. The sociological fieldworker's perception then is not unlike that of the camera.

Suppose that the photograph is of a house; we may note about it that it has a tiled roof, a letter box standing on a fused chain, the image of a sailing ship etched on the glass of the front door, a colour TV antenna, a recent model car in the driveway. These items of culture may be taken in sum to indicate a particular material standard of living, and if we compare many such photographs we will note the presence or absence of some of these features, and finally may be able to make statements about the differences of material standard of living.

What has been done here is that the contingent features, kind of car, colour of house, whether or not someone is home and so on, have been suppressed in favour of persistent features. We have not explained what the individual features mean, but instead, what the meaning may be of a particular assemblage of features. Without explicitly attempting to do so a rule for interpretation has been developed, one which runs roughly, 'the presence of features a,b,c . . . n about a house is to be read as an indicator of a particular level of the material standard of living, and therefore, of class position'. This phase of the process leaves culture out of the reckoning.

Having acquired such data however, the next step might be to discover whether any folk model exists which in any way reflects the posited stratification system. We note by gathering "texts", that is comments, records, actions, and expressions of opinion, that a categorisation occurs but that it is modified by some other features for example, whether or not the house occupants have lived in the town a long time, who they are related to, the extent to which they match up to local expectations in various ways. In this process we are bringing culture back, that is, removing the brackets which permitted the examination of some aspects of the phenomenon, and in doing so, re-writing the rule of interpretation that emerged from the bracketed phenomenon.

The reader may very well object that the account given here of bracketing as a methodology is remote from what Husserl means by it in terms of the philosophical task. This is undoubtedly so, the Husserlian epoché is the extension of doubt to the whole of the lebenswelt, its placing in brackets, to leave free the pure stream of consciousness. What is placed in brackets is not some item of the perceived world, but the whole of the world as known in everyday existence. But as Schutz points out, (I : 105) this programme is less terrifying than it seems. It means simply that nothing can be taken over into the sphere of the reduction, that is the world of pure thought, without first being critically examined. A stance is taken, namely that the world is no longer taken for granted, and that thus all things are conditional, the chair, in Schutz's explanation of Husserl, is no longer a palpable object taken-for-granted, it is a "chair as it appears to me".

By comparison the method here, in which the inspection of cultural reality is likened to a photograph, seems particularly slight, but one might reconsider it in this way, that the isolation of an item of culture for inspection demands in fact that one ceases to 'believe in it' - to take it for granted. Even an item seemingly as matter of fact as a house, can be seen in the isolation of brackets, as being other than it is in the natural attitude. The point is that the sociological task is to understand culture, of which it too is part and of which the language which it must use is also part; it is not the same as the philosophical task. In an earlier paragraph I spoke of sociology touching history and psychology on either hand; with its metaphorical head it touches philosophy, and with its feet the ground of everyday existence - as sociology is not either psychology or history, neither is it either of the other two.

What the method proposes then, is to put brackets within brackets. If the whole of the experienced world is to become the subject of radical

philosophical doubt, then what is proposed here is that within the brackets so to speak are those brackets which leave sociological thought outside. This is a special application of the phenomenological method, different in kind from the epoché and logically to be subsumed under it. The sociological thinking about the lebenswelt, as has been suggested by the notion of the second order language, is in the world, but not wholly a part of it. The cultural world is transcended by the sociological method.

What is argued here is that the pure phenomenology of Husserl is not fruitful for sociology¹⁹. Sociologists seek to explain events in the mundane world by accounting for them as facts of the social condition. It is axiomatic for sociology and social anthropology that man is not just a being among others, his being is conditional upon the being of others, yet this interdependence and its attendant intersubjectivity does not preclude man's ability to think of himself as unique and to cogitate upon his own existence and experience among other men. The border between sociology and psychology exists somewhere near here, depending on whether we move toward the pole of man's self-awareness (and of course those aspects of the self of which he is unaware) or toward the pole of his being-with-others, in which the content of his daily activities and thoughts is largely given by culture, though not wholly so. To rephrase a famous dictum of Sartre's, "man is condemned to society".

The social condition thus becomes subject to a phenomenological treatment whether we seek it or not. As was pointed out earlier, sociology is an enclave in the lebenswelt at best, its method, at least as far as this study is concerned is one in which the analysis which tries to transcend culture has to be taken back to test against culture, and might be, as the final chapters suggest, be resynthesised with the world of everyday life, in matters such as planning and policy.

Empirical Dimensions of the Investigation of the Physical Environment

The previous discussion has considered the phenomenological approach to the problem of the meaning of the physical environment. It remains now to outline briefly the practical considerations involved in investigating the problem. The following propositions were the basis for the empirical research.

1. Settlements of the largest size and those which are very small set different kinds of problems. In the first the possibility of investigating the patterns of the use of the environment is limited by the sheer size of the task, and in any case, for a city the size of Auckland, could result in only a highly generalised and statistical model. For reasons to be discussed shortly this is not productive for the investigation at hand.
2. Places of very small scale could feasibly be considered candidates for research, but with these the limitations are those of an insufficient variety of place and people, the fact that such places, small hamlets usually are only the centralisation of a few local services (store, pub, garage) and have no resident population to speak of, makes them unsuitable unless they are considered to be part of a wider local system, the district or neighbourhood, common enough in rural areas ²⁰.
3. The advantages of an inquiry based in a small town were that the presumption of a continuity of occupation and a high degree of economic and other types of interaction within a fairly limited population would show fairly clearly the way in which the environment was used and the ways in which it was conceptualised. Out of the range of small towns available it seemed useful to choose

one which was of a size capable of being compassed by a lone researcher, had a known and documented time depth, was not spectacularly in decline, and which was sufficiently far from a major centre to be relatively unaffected by it as far as day to day life went. A number of towns fitted these criteria but Harbourtown, the town discussed in later chapters, was chosen because, besides fulfilling the general requirements, some contacts had been made there during an earlier research project.

4. The problem of the meaning of environment is intimately connected with the kind of social entity which occupies it - an inquiry into environment seemed to be not only an approach to a particular problem but inescapably to be an inquiry into the nature of the community.

The substantive problem is that reviewed by Arensberg and Kimball²¹ in their discussion of the community as object and as sample. The position taken in the present study is to consider the community both as object and sample, though not quite in the same sense as Arensberg and Kimball use. These authors propose that communities "seem to be units of organisation and transmission within a society and its culture" (p. 15), and that these characteristics are in addition to the ecological and geographical characteristics. The extension of the definition of community to include populational and temporal features Arensberg and Kimball (p. 19) believe to be inescapable outcomes of their view of community and they add to this a "behaviour-inventory component" (p. 20); the community is thus to be defined, they hold, as a cultural unit in the sense that it is the minimal unit of social organisation in which the transmission of culture can take place.

The problems associated with the concept of community are more fully reviewed in Chapter II. At present the position is taken that the community in an objective sense is a suitable laboratory for the analysis of the meaning of the physical environment and it is also (given certain requirements of methodological precision such as its representativeness in such dimensions as population size and structure, economic and geographical features) a good indicator of features likely to be found in other parts of the society. This is not to assert that "Jonesville is America", however, but only that differences between the community under study and other comparable communities are unlikely to be major - if they are then of course, such differences become immediately problematic.

The problem has thus been converted not merely from an abstract one to an operational one, it has been restructured as a problem of social context. Thus the inquiry into the meaning of the physical environment becomes an inquiry into the structure of a community. The steps can now be recapitulated.

1. The problem is seen first as a datum of direct experience; it is a phenomenon which in itself needs explanation.
2. The social nature of the problem seems inescapable, the physical environment is a part of socio-cultural life, not a neutral background to it.
3. The physical environment is proposed as a system of meaning akin to, but neither identical with or reducible to language.
4. The concrete examples of environment-as-meaning set the empirical problem of where the study is best carried out.
5. The decision to make the study in a community context is strategic, but when it is adopted shows another dimension to the problem, namely that, community being problematic also, the

study must encompass both it and the physical environment. The study therefore deals not only with the cultural status of the environment (i.e. as a socio-cultural facticity) but also aspects of the structure of the community.

6. Conclusion

Via the discussion of phenomenology we have returned to the questions which began this chapter. Such questions as what the meaning might be of the environment, how these meanings are conveyed, sustained and so on are seen to be sociological questions approachable through the methods of phenomenology, and in particular, that development of phenomenological ideas advanced by Alfred Schutz. No extended account of Schutz's phenomenological sociology is given here, first because it provides an orientation rather than a set of directions about what to do, and second because it is accessible elsewhere. The concept of the epoché of the natural attitude as the datum of sociology has been phrased here as the study of culture, the irreducible social reality, all analysis of social meaning being an analysis of culture and vice versa. The import of this it is hoped will become clearer in subsequent chapters.

No space has been taken for an analysis of the theory of knowledge, even though recurrently throughout the study the idea of the stock-of-knowledge at hand recurs. The problem is complex; theories of knowledge frequently become entangled in discussions of both epistemology and etiology of knowledge, its status as fact, the theory of language and so on. Some reference has been made to these already.

Berger and Luckman in their seminal study assert that reality is socially constructed, that is that knowledge is social and constitutes

a special facticity at once created in society and creating it. To attempt a full discussion would take many pages, however we might represent Berger and Luckman's position by quoting this not a-typical passage.

Externalisation and objectivation are moments in a continuing dialectical process. The third moment in this process, which is internalisation (by which the social world is retrojected into consciousness in the course of socialisation), will occupy us in considerable detail later on. It is already possible to see the fundamental relationship of the three dialectical moments in social reality. Each of them corresponds to an essential characterisation of the social world. Society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product. It may also be already evident that an analysis of the social world that leaves out any one of these three moments will be distortive.

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Shorn of its technical language what Berger and Luckman say is that the knowledge which people have is produced within society and is accepted as legitimate and "factual" because of that fact by individuals. Man makes and is made by society, his knowledge is producer and product of that process. This typically Bergerian figure-of-eight helps us to locate the analysis of the physical environment, it is part of society, is socially produced, and produces in turn ²³.

This theory does no more than posit that society is intermediate in the man-thing relationship as the conserver and maintainer of it. But wait a moment - society, i.e. the network of social relations is only part of the story; apart from the conceptual reification involved in a formulation of this kind (society is given the status of an individual) it is, as we saw earlier, culture that is the source and reference point of meaning systems. As White points out, individuals, of course, bear culture, but culture itself is supra-individual and can easily take the weight (in my view) that this view puts upon it.

Societal structures only ration access to or create special conditions for cultural knowledge, thus in so-called primitive societies frequently

some kinds of knowledge are denied to some of the people, women, uninitiated men, children; in these cases there may be a compensatory knowledge available, women's magic versus men's, complementary ritual roles and so on. In modern structurally highly differentiated societies, such social distribution of knowledge is also a commonplace though it more commonly relates to the differentiation of economic, power, and institutional structures, than it does to such fundamental categories as age, sex, and kinship statuses. In such societies there is not usually an imperative which states that some kinds of knowledge are simply unavailable to some parts of the society, rather it is the contrary, all knowledge is supposed to be available, at least in principle, to all members of the society, the only limitation being the innate capacity to learn it. In fact, of course, it is not so, governments hug vast areas of knowledge to themselves, some knowledge is expressed as we noted earlier in meta-languages which take a long time to acquire, and the inflexibility of societal structures, those of class and ethnicity for example, may create differences of access.

The relationship between societal structure and culture thus, is subtle, and raises questions of greater scope than it is intended here to deal with, the point however, is that culture and structure are conceptually separate, with the former enveloping the latter.

The concept which is implied here is that of the social stock of knowledge (Schutz I : 7). The stock of knowledge is socially distributed or, as I have preferred to say 'socially differentiated' - it includes the physical environment, itself the object of processes of social differentiation. (It goes without saying that social differentiation means differentiation of the social structure.) The characteristics of the stock of knowledge need not be examined here ²⁴ but it is clear that culture and

the stock of knowledge are nearly identical. Neither of the cited sources is prepared to say so however, thus it is necessary to state the relationship.

In all respects the stock of knowledge acts like culture (as that term is used in current sociology); it differs however in this respect, that the stock of knowledge is almost always spoken of from the standpoint of the individual. It is social in its origin and individual in its manifestations - it is this, society in man, as Berger and Luckman have it, that is of interest to Schutz.

Is this then, the answer, that the stock of knowledge is simply culture as perceived by the individual? The answer is negative on two grounds, first that culture is larger, more comprehensive, than any stock of knowledge whether societally defined as being that of an individual, or structurally as that of a group; and second that culture is sui generis, whereas the stock of knowledge cannot be detached from the objective (or subjectively perceived) social location of its possessors. Thus "what everyone knows", "what every woman knows", "what F. X. Smith knows" and what all the people having the same social location as F. X. Smith know, is never "culture", it is a refraction of some part of it.

In reverting to the earlier formulations of Schutz (cf. I : 14-17) we are not so much departing from Berger and Luckman as seeking a more modest goal. The physical environment, it is maintained, is part of the stock of knowledge of a particular temporal spatial community, it is the way that that stock is constructed and the presumption of its differentiation which concerns us here and not the more general questions raised in The Social Construction of Reality.

In the context of this enquiry therefore, we are led to consider the physical environment as part of culture, as part of the stock of knowledge of individuals and groups in the community of Harbourtown, and as a system of meaning having multiple reference, so far as the resource materials will allow.

Notes and References

CHAPTER I

1. Levi-Strauss 1963, 18.

2. Ibid., 23.

3. Ibid., 283 et. seq.

4. Ibid., 23.

5. For example:

"In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society - the real foundation on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life."

Marx, Preface to the Critique of Political Economy, 1859, in Bottomore and Rubel, 1963.

6. Badcock 1975, 98.

7. The view of culture that is taken here has much in common with that of Leslie White. I do not mean by this statement however to convert sociology and social anthropology into White's "culturology". That culture is a system sui generis, that it must be understood in its own terms and is not reducible to others, that the conditions of invention, innovation, as well as those of regression and stagnation are set by culture, that culture is supra individual are Whitean views with which I have no serious quarrel. With White's evolutionism and more particularly his analogy of culture with a thermodynamic system I am less confident. A fairly typical citation from White exemplifies the sense that one has in reading him which is not unlike reading the Summa Contra Gentiles that having gone so far one is being cajoled by subtly illegitimate means into going further.

"Let us consider inventions and discoveries, or any significant advance in the arts, science or philosophy. To say that they are the achievements of certain individuals is merely to locate them, not to explain them." (page 168)

So far so good; he goes on to cite Newton and Leibni \ddot{z} and to ask how it was that, there being exceptional individuals in

Thibet or Bechuanaland, why it was that the calculus was not invented in one of these places. White then goes on to argue that simultaneous discovery demonstrates clearly the fatuity of an explanation which is not culturological. But from there we are led to something that looks like a law, rather than a hypothesis:

"If culture is advancing on a wide front, these syntheses will find two or more independent and approximately simultaneous expressions", page 170 (White 1949 : especially Cultural Determinants of Mind).

Lévi-Strauss's body blow against White's evolutionism is that White is using the wrong type of model - but his explanation is somewhat obscure. It seems that Lévi-Strauss wants the use of some primal stuff, comparable to genetic material, to be used in "long statistical runs". It is not clear what Lévi-Strauss means; the nature of statistical models is that they involve controlled probability statements, the "length of the run" is important only insofar as it changes the degree of probability of a given outcome. A few lines further down Lévi-Strauss is speaking of statistical models as those whose "elements are independent of their combinations" - but what these might be is not clear, though it is not difficult to guess that they would be "elementary structures" - mythemes, marriage rules and so on. (1963, 287.)

8. The step from meaning to culture is not so conceptually great as may appear - there can be no meaning without culture or vice versa. The capacity to assign meaning is no doubt given in the nature of the organisation of the human ears but this is not in itself uniquely human. Cats, dogs, and dolphins all attach meaning to signs - the human capacity is to generate meaning, to convey it to others and to give it supra individual status.
9. Roche 1973, 6.
10. Schutz 1971, 229.
11. Cicourel 1973, 43.
12. Roche 1973, 18. "Either the phenomenologist is oriented towards the essence or he is oriented towards existence. He cannot be oriented towards both (although Merleau-Ponty did claim to locate essence in existence [1962, p. vii])". Although the point is not quite the same it relates to the matters discussed immediately above if structure is essence and content (culture) existence, then the extrapolation of structure from content means that the sociologist is not only able to orient himself toward both, he has to do so. Culture is the confounding datum for theory, which of its nature, must assimilate into a common category many diverse incidents. The art is to know when a cultural datum, say an irregular form of marriage within what ought to be a regular system, constitutes an item to be ignored as aberrant, or to be cause enough to bring about an alteration in theory. Sociological theory must invariably look over its shoulder at cultural content.

13. Op. cit., 52.
14. Ibid. (*italics added*).
15. cf. Willer 1967, on symbolic models.
16. cf. Charbonnier 1969.
17. A special case arises in regard to songs. In Schubert's "Maid of the Mill" sequence there is a subtle interplay of music and lyrics (which are intended to be heard and understood) such that neither heard on its own seems to constitute meaning. Thus in the song Gut morgen Schön Müllerin, the sense of the words is given colour and feeling that is absent from a reading of them. See also Panofsky, 1955, 39, for an extended commentary on this point in relation to visual art.
18. The point is that art is symbol and communicates as such. Thus in the monologue on wahn in Act III of Die Meistersinger, Hans Sachs speaks of the fact that art is never achieved except by illusion. Robert Raphael remarks: "In the artist's mind, accordingly, imagination redeems the world because the perceptive mind of the artist is able to view experiential reality as symbolic. Hans Sachs is really saying therefore, that the artist is able directly to engage with reality only because he alone perceives, and can employ artistic illusions that are actually the symbols of experience". (Raphael 1969, p. 82)

In the terms given above art is Language II. (Wagner's rather pretentious theory is prettily exposed by Jacques Barzun (Barzun 1958). The point would hardly be worth making were it not for Levi-Strauss's self-confessed admiration for Wagner, who, he maintains, was the first to exemplify structure in myth.)

¹⁸⁰ Buber 1961, 149.
19. Schutz 1971, I, 149.
20. A system of this type is described by Nelson (Nelson 1973, unpublished MA Thesis).
21. Arensberg and Kimball 1965, "The Community as object and as sample".
22. Berger and Luckman 1967, 78.
23. Nevertheless the Bergerian figure-of-eight is itself distortive. For Berger there is no escape from society, no thought, no idea, no action that cannot be traced to society. But of course, given certain constraints, artists of all sorts continually escape from societal control and inject into the social context the very ideas which liberate perceptive individuals from their locked-in position. This is Wagner's position in Die Meistersinger noted earlier, but it is not confined to art alone. The experience of reading and the act of writing The Social Construction of Reality for example must be an escape from the reifications of society, or so we presume from Berger's other assertions about the sociology of knowledge, and indeed from Mannheim's conception of the role of the intellectual. Or are Berger and Luckman alone capable of evading wahn?
24. cf. Schutz, I, 7-18; Berger and Luckman 1967, 60-68.

CHAPTER II

The Concept of Community

In the previous chapter the problems of social meaning were stated in a preliminary way. The question of the social meaning of place was considered as part of the more general problem of the status of the material things in social life and the sort of sociological approach which might deal with the problem was considered.

Social life is always lived in particular contexts and not in society at large. Of these contexts the community, viewed as a distinct place with a name, identity and geographical dimensions is the one to which people very frequently make reference. "Community" however is a term which has not been easy to define in sociology even though it has been used in sociological discourse for a century or longer. It is the community however which most frequently occurs in ordinary speech as a distinctive real place, a place where people live and carry out their social lives, and for this reason the sociologist must try to make explicit what the meaning of community might be. More than that community and place seem to be reciprocals, the one cannot be thought of without the other.

The relationship of place and community, or rather the community conceived of as the context in which place has meaning, is explored substantively in Part II in the discussion of the small New Zealand town, called there Harbourtown. In this chapter

however the problem of community as a concept with which to work is examined as a preliminary to that part of the study.

1. Sources of the Concept

Community, as a focus of sociological interest appears to have at least three sources each of which influences to some extent, the way in which modern community sociology is written. The oldest of these sources is the anarchist communism of the 19th century which arises from Fourier, Kropotkin, Proudhon, Tolstoy and the narodniki - and in Britain from the reformism of Robert Owen. All of these theorists saw in the self-governing community corporation the alternative to the centralist state, and more than that, the conditions for the emergence of "society" not only in the sense of an association of men based upon mutuality, but of one in which the human faculties would develop to the highest degree. On the one hand this view of community created actual settlements such as Noyes's Oneida, Owen's New Harmony and the Israeli kibbutzim, on the other it remained as a pervasive assumption that community was not merely a social phenomenon, it was a moral and civilisational goal. Tonnies for example, considered that in his theory of gemeinschaft he was providing not only a sociological analysis but also a theoretical basis for socialism which was complementary to Marxism¹.

The second source lies in the observable consequences of the development of industrialism in Europe, a transition from ruralised small towns to industrial cities, and from a simple technology, to a fully techno-scientific society. The tradition deriving from this source merges with the preceding one but has its manifestations in particular in

town planning, both in the garden city movement and in the critical commentary of such writers as the Goodmans, Mumford and Reyner Banham.

The third source is that of social anthropology with its concentration upon the lone fieldworker studying a complex of institutions usually, but not inevitably, among a remote and exotic people. Since the nineteen-fifties and even earlier (in the tradition of British amateurism Arthur Morrison spent two years living in Bethnal Green in 1870, and William Foote Whyte especially noted for his debt to social anthropology in his study of East Boston in the nineteen-thirties) it has been a feature of social anthropology that the skills learned in Africa and Melanesia, and, more importantly, the viewpoint, have been transferred to the Welsh valleys and to British market towns². Fused with the interests of social history and historical sociology, community studies has become a diverse and complex sub-discipline³.

The diversity of sources and traditions in community studies is perhaps the main reason for the concern (amounting almost to paranoia) with definitions of community and with attempts to say what it is that is being studied. Broadly two themes (in British and American studies) emerge⁴. Those which stress community as a psychological state, "we-feeling" or in Colin Bell's terms, "communion" and those which stress concreteness and locality. The point will emerge later, but it is not too soon to state it, that each of these is an aspect of community, and that in any case Tönnies had anticipated the divergence by pointing out that in gesellschaft existed gemeinschaftlich associations based upon the common sentiment for place (landsmann associations)⁵.

It seems that sociologists in attempting to arrive at an ostensive definition of community have done two things, first they have attempted to select those characteristics of particular aggregates which separate communities from other kinds of aggregations. In doing this they seem

to have found a number which are necessary but none which are sufficient to the segregation of communities from other kinds of aggregates. Secondly they have confused levels of abstraction by combining some characteristics which are generalised and in fact theoretical with others that are concrete and measurable.

A case in point is the definition advanced by Broom and Selznick⁶. The authors take the standpoint of a typical individual, that is they do not consider a community as a specific isolate (as Redfield does⁷) but instead treat it as an item of experience for an individual member. They, however, having typified the individual, do not typify the experience of which he is part but instead qualify it with such phrases as "most of the activities", "most of the experiences important to him". This is common sense, in Redfield's sense but it is not theory; it has two implications: (1) that "most" can only be defined by the individual, and it will include only what is "important". But important by whose criteria? Is "unimportant" experience really separable from "important" experience in an individual's total life? Eating we may suppose is "unimportant" experience which is had entirely within the community - but if it happens that the community water supply is contaminated and the typical individual gets cholera as a result then that particular experience of eating is important to him. If we are to make a sociological model from Broom and Selznick's typification then we must substitute "all" for "most" noting that community becomes less with each activity that is not carried out in the community and each experience not had there, and we must accept as "important" only what the individual declares to be important and that will shift with each situation in the life experience of the individual. A proviso here is that "important" though individual is also social, in the sense that it is general, and "societal" in the sense

that it is defined for one socio-cultural group differently from the way it is by another.

The second characteristic which Broom and Selznick name is the "shared sense of belonging" and with this we are into a conceptual shift of a rather subtle kind. Now Broom and Selznick would hardly wish to deny that a "sense of belonging" is individual, it is a psychological fact, and even if generalised to a large number of individuals in varying degree, remains a psychological fact. To become a social fact it becomes necessary to show that the sense of belonging enters the subjectivity of individuals as a motive for action, or a sustainer of action exclusive of others, otherwise it can be seen as an unintended consequence (for individuals) of the social fact of the set of relationships in which they participate. Perhaps it is the former sense which Broom and Selznick have in mind, if it is then it is hard to see in what way the "we-feeling" is different from the same feeling held by members of say a church, a trade union, or a lodge, within which an individual may have a large proportion (most?) of the life experiences important to him.

Broom and Selznick insist on the group nature of a community, and thus upon the unique set of social relationships constituted by it. Now these social relationships are hardly constituted by community as such for they can occur in any other social environment, for example, the economic relationships of employer and employee, or of buyer and seller, is limited by neither time nor place, they are conditions of any social environment in which a typical individual lives, given that his society has such categories, the same applies to virtually all other categories of social relationship. The unique set of social relationships of a community then does not differ qualitatively from other kinds of relationship, though it may do so quantitatively, it may differ in one respect only, that is, that the interaction is with a

unique set of individuals, not with a category - with Joe Brown, not "the boss" who in another context is a member of the bowling club, a neighbour and so forth.

2. Community as process

The problem is in the way sociologists think. As Redfield remarks, the community is given by "common sense" as one of the relatively few ways in which social life presents itself. It seems then that what has happened is that sociologists have generalised "common sense" by which I suppose Redfield to mean "everyday experience" and having made a commitment to this concept have attempted to give it theoretical status. This attempt fails because of a secondary process, a confusion between the givers of everyday experience, "the community" and "community" a theoretical model. It seems that the latter is open to many objections. It might be reasonable to speak of "community if we can identify it as a distinctive process of social life. This phrase "process of social life" needs some amplification.

In general "process" implies continuity through time, the succession of a son to the status of father in his own family, the means by which an individual is initiated into political life as a rank and file member of a party, a nominee for an electorate, a candidate, and on election a member of the House, is process. This aspect of process we may call "structural process", for it describes the means by which institutions are maintained in existence by recruitment to specific roles. It may also show us the

structural "faults", the ambiguities or uncertainties in a particular structure of social relations which allow for change, that is, for the selection between means that are alternative though they may not be equivalent. One may become institutionalised through the creation of a precedent, through a revolution, or through the introduction of a new idea ⁸.

A second aspect of process is evolutionary, that is the single direction (and, clearly, non-reversible) change from one kind of social organisation to another. This is the type of change which Tönnies and Durkheim proposed. Process here, is the means by which change takes place, in Durkheim's case through the postulated movement from mechanical to organic solidarity as the result of the specialisation of labour and changes in the superstructure.

Evolutionary process must be distinguished from historical process however. Historical process describes the means by which a particular society changes. It is always contingent upon particular and unique combinations of factors which arise at particular times. To argue that historical process can be generalised from one society to another is to deny history and substitute for it sociology, for the approach to social change, that adopted by Durkheim or Marx, attempts to establish the process at work in all human societies.

How then can community be process? The reply is that community may be identified as process in two ways: (1) as a distinctive stage in the movement of human organisation from simple to complex forms; (2) as a widening of the individual sphere of activity from the primary to the secondary group. If we put the simplest kind of human aggregate at one end of the scale, the kinship structured band of wandering hunters or gatherers, and at the other the nation state with an arrow pointing beyond to other more highly evolved kinds of aggregation, then we might nominate

"community" as one of the intermediate phases of this development. Since what is being discussed is a process we may expect community to be incipiently present in the simplest aggregation and present to varying degrees in the most complex.

The second way of regarding community as process, that of recognising it as a phase in the socialisation of the individual brings up different problems. Taking the standpoint of a typical individual we may reasonably ask how it is that he becomes a member of society. Primary socialisation takes place in the family but this in most societies is a relatively short period and after infancy family socialisation gives place to institutionalised socialising agencies. In this case the geographical range of the individual at least until adolescence is highly restricted, and the socialising agencies, commonly, highly localised. The growing child plays in neighbourhood peer groups, joins local clubs, goes to a neighbourhood school, attends usually, a neighbourhood church, and gets to know or know about neighbourhood adults, shopkeepers, policemen, tradesmen and so on. We might well speak of this phase of socialisation as "community" but it is egocentric community and consists of those relationships both formal and informal and those experiences which a growing child has. The important point to consider here is that "the community" in this sense need have no concrete social existence outside of the head of the child - it is his experiential universe, unique to him but overlapping with those of other children who fall into a similar category to his own. The end of community is the movement from this sphere of experience to others which lie outside it and have no direct connection with it, community socialisation may be repeated over and over again in a sense, every time an individual changes his universe of experience, but it is unlikely ever to be as many sided as it was in his childhood, unless he enters a "total

institution" such as the army, a religious order, or as Goffman indicates, a psychiatric hospital.

Some of the child's contemporaries never leave this phase, they remain behind as the core of the "local community" - they become the local tradesmen, the town councillors, the organisers of primary school jubilees and the vestrymen of the church, but most leave, often physically, but plausibly also in a social sense, in that they centre their interactions elsewhere, or move either upward or downward in status hierarchies which are national or regional in scope.

Community in this sense is process and most fully, it is social process, for it involves the recognition of roles, statuses, norms and ideologies within a restricted universe. It should not surprise us then, though it appears to do so, that the image of community of a Maori brought up in an Auckland suburb is quite different from that of his pakeha contemporary⁹ or that differences in this kind of concept of community should make the stuff of fiction¹⁰.

Community, regarded as process, can become a fully sociological concept as opposed to a folk-concept, but to do so it is necessary to cut our way clear of the limitations which the implicit folk-concept brings with it. In particular the sociologist must free himself from the implicit overtones of moral approval attached to the term¹¹.

3. Community and Locality

Remaining to haunt the conceptual discussion is the aspect of locality. Not atypically of those sociologists who think that communities do exist and who like Redfield, think that they present themselves to common sense experience as ostensible things, Neil Smelser says, in

an introductory text that "'the community' [is] the localised population which is interdependent on a day-to-day basis, and which carries on a highly-generalised series of activities in and through a set of institutions which provides on a day-to-day basis the full range of goods and services necessary for its continuity as a social and economic entity" ¹².

This is a better attempt at an ostensive definition and brings to mind the small rural town. It does not get over the difficulties of locality as a problem however, for the stress upon an economic substructure also stresses interdependence, and interdependence, if we are to follow Smelser must create norms. It does, but only so far as economic activities are concerned (we use the same exchange values and keep to norms of fair dealing), in other areas these economically interdependent people differ radically, in matters of religion, taste, politics and leisure time activity. Even so communities of the kind Smelser is prepared to accept are variable in at least three ways:

1. They contain people who go outside the community to earn a living and contain activities which are provided only by outsiders;
2. there may be no definite boundaries between the community and its hinterland, for example in sports teams, market activities, and so on;
3. they vary in physical dimension and in the range and complexity of localised activities.

The localised social system is all so far as Smelser is concerned, but social systems are not ostensible things, only the specific relationships as they are manifested in action are. It really does not matter whether I retain a notion in my head of you, as a patient, a boss, or a

spouse, the only ostensible fact is my action in respect of you categorisable by myself and others as doctorlike, employerlike or spouseslike action.

What is ostensible then, in Smelser's terms, that makes a community? Locality? This will hardly do - locality is a characteristic of some thing or person in relationship to me. Locality can hardly be defined by an external observer, only I, as a person to whom locality is subjectively real, can define for the observer what locality is. The community escapes once more into the subjectivity of its individual member.

Some water has flowed under the bridge since Smelser's time, but most of it is muddy. Bell and Newby¹³ in their extensive review of theories of community indicate that locality has undergone some change in the thinking of sociologists concerned with community studies.

Margaret Stacey¹⁴ decides for the "local social system" which is the interrelation of localised social institutions. Stacey then is concerned with the system qua system and the "typical individual" disappears almost entirely. Is Stacey's paper, and it is one of the most important in recent years, a contribution to sociological theory? I do not think so - Stacey's is the return to empiricism which results in yet more case studies, interesting enough but individual and incomparable, unless viewed as an analysis of the relationship between local and national social organisation, to which it conceivably is a theoretical addition. One point at least which is significant in the discussion of locality is Stacey's view that the geographical isolation or otherwise of a particular local social system is less significant than the degree to which the institutional inventory

is wholly or partially complete. She proposes a model against which local social systems can be measured and is concerned with the questions arising about the establishment, maintenance, change, and destruction of such systems. Locality, in this scheme, does not need rigorous definition. "Local" is what is not national. The local social system is a unit which can be studied and is an heuristic device in the armamentarium of the sociologist.

Against Stacey stand those sociologists for whom community by any name at all does not have any locality. R. E. Pahl ¹⁵ remarks that it is the local and the national small scale and large scale which confront one another in both village and city. Finally Bell and Newby approve of recent work on social networks.

When a satisfactory way of recording social networks has been worked out, then we will be well on the way to having comparable and theoretically relevant data on communities.

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Bell and Newby, it seems, have unwittingly reversed Margaret Stacey's error and confidently mistake the trees for the wood.

4. The discussion reviewed

Implicit in some parts of the above discussion and explicit in others, there are a number of themes which perhaps may now be drawn together. To keep the levels of abstraction separate let us consider first "community". It has been suggested that the concept of community is not readily handleable in the context of real existants. A community is not a thing, though many people both lay people and sociologists are prepared to declare communities to be things, or more significantly to act as though they are things. This is little different when a borough councillor calls on young people to aid the community, or when a sociologist says he is studying the community. Neither however is studying "community" or talking about "community" explicitly, though implicitly each is doing so. If we are prepared to say that community is a moral concept in terms of which people act and think then it is entirely reasonable to ask what it is that they consider to be characteristic of community. It is no particular secret that abstract concepts - nationhood, God, friendship - are used by people to explain their reasons for acting in certain ways, and their actions are no less "real" because the ideals connoted by these terms are not fully realised. Again, once conceptualised as a motive for acts, ("I would lay down my life for my country"), it is not hard to see that that "country" becomes the consequence of a number of people's acts. There is an interaction of acts and ideas in which each reinforces the other; contradictions between acts and ideas result either in the reinstatement of the idea and the punishment of the actor,

or if the actors are numerous enough the toleration of their idea under given conditions (public nudity for example) or the substitution of their idea for the common wisdom.

Community, it seems, is such an idea, and it is of a special class in that it is thought of as a good. It is a moral idea. The sociology of community then is part of the sociology of knowledge, the problems which it generates are those relating to the way in which ideas are socially effected and effective.

The concept "community" thus is part of the social "stock of knowledge" which an individual has. It is this which the sociologist can investigate and since in doing so, he must also investigate the way in which the concept is tied into social action (the action which an individual takes taking into account another) ¹⁷, this means the development of a theory of community which is essentially a theory of moral knowledge.

But this theory of community must be held distinct from the model we build of the community and which is used for the analysis of particular cases. It will be helpful if we set out the prerequisites for this model.

To begin with it seems that with the typical individual in mind we must admit that the community exists primarily in people's heads. In other words in investigating the community we shall primarily be concerned with a system of meaning. It might be objected that this is too mentalistic a view, yet it is the exclusion of mind from the social sciences (particularly the Skinnerian behaviourism and anthropological functionalism) that has made them singularly arid. The community, it seems, can be said to be the way an individual typifies a pervasive social and

environmental situation. That he attaches moral value to this typification and modifies his behaviour accordingly constitutes the problem for the sociology of knowledge. That he lives an actual life in an actual and ostensible environment constitutes the problem for the student of communities.

5. A model of community : first approximations

Begging the question for the moment of the correct terminology for such a collectivity of things and people, let us turn to the elements of the model. Since it has been already established that locality is too vague a concept let us begin with the physical entity which is the nucleus of a community, houses, shops, streets, churches, schools, and so forth. Without doubt a community is a place with a name, subjective boundaries, and sometimes objectively verifiable ones.

But a community is not only a place. It is apprehension of these features of the physical world by individuals. In other words it is mentally typified. No one mistakes a church for a house; there is a specific way to build a house and a place to build it; a public park is not a horse paddock; a road is different from a footpath. "Places" thus, become so because of the ideas which people have of them, and these ideas, in virtue of which action is taken, are further defined by action, as are the places to which the action is seen to be appropriate. It may be useful to encapsulate these rather complex processes under the general term usage.

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Apart from usage but closely allied to it is time and here we must make a distinction between history, which is the cumulation of significant social events, both community events and national events, and social time which is the local temporal ordering of day to day events, festivals, and the like.

Some of the associations which individuals create are formal, constituted in written rules, and have explicit goals, others are informal and diffuse both in organisation and goals. Either may be highly persistent and survive many changes of membership, but this gives them no life of their own. The formal and informal associations of individuals are theatres for social action and are themselves related to specific places and times. In the flow of community events situations arise or are built in which institutional activity is appropriate, but because the interactions of communities are with specific individuals rather than with categories, there is frequent blurring of the lines of institutional and non-institutional activity. Two men meet in the pub, one buys the other a drink, they discuss the weather, their families, arrange to come round next week to Cousin Joe's place to help him to lay a concrete drive, because they happen to be members of the same school committee they agree to move a campaign to improve the swimming pool at the next meeting, they discuss business and arrange a business deal to be confirmed later on, finally one of them agrees to contact his brother the Mayor concerning the Rotary Club project for improving a local sportsfield. In the process of their conversation they have acted as friends, members of various institutions, kinsmen, political and economic people. Such happenings are not rare in communities

and they demonstrate that descriptions which compartmentalise social life on institutional lines, dismember the reality beyond recognition.

The community then is the typification of theatres of social action for individuals; these "theatres" are "places" which exist in a temporal continuum, that is actual and existing places, and they may also be social "places" in that they are made up of various kinds of associational ties which further locate the individual in relation to others. "Places" also exist in time in that they are positions along the individual's biographical continuum, ten years ago I was a young man, now I am a middle-aged man, I define myself as such and am so defined by other people; but as well I may be aware that the physical places in which I have my social being have "biographies"; that house now occupied by Jones was formerly occupied by Brown who lived there for his whole life and his parents before him, this stone marks the place where the first settlers landed, Brown's ancestors (but not Jones') and mine also. I am further aware that the whole community in which I live is caught up in the history of the nation; that hill, where the Anglican church now stands was the place where they built the blockhouse over a hundred years ago when there was fear that the town might be attacked by Maoris. That was when the Waikato wars were being fought - later all the young men of the district joined the county mounted regiment and fought in the First World War; times were hard during the depression, my parents had to get off their farm and my father opened a shop in the town.

In studying communities then place is uniquely the focal point of all that happens - to sum this up we might say that social

action always takes place somewhere, and that "where" is given social meaning such that I, the individual, may locate myself in time, in space and in relation to other people, both now and in the present.

This concern with place argues for an ecological model of the community, but a model of a different kind from that adopted by sociologists such as Park, Hauser and Schnore, or for New Zealand, Duncan Timms. We are not here concerned with objective maps of social characteristics, but with the subjective maps which people carry in their heads and which are through the overlapping of subjectivities, made part of the "stock of knowledge at hand"¹⁸. In fact, then, the ecological model is one which can be verified only through the observation of social action and the analysis of inter-subjective statements about it. A methodological problem arises which must be treated before going into the discussion of the model itself.

The problem in brief is, if the only access the observer has is the subjective map given by an individual, how will he know that it is not highly idiosyncratic. One answer to this question is to say let us take a sample by random probability methods, compare these "social maps" and discover what they have in common. Such a method is certainly to be regarded favourably since it should eliminate the subjectivity of the interviewer and give a high degree of precision to the result. There are, however, one or two objections - the first of these is that it absorbs an enormous amount of time; for what we must extract is the complex account of many situations in which an individual spends his life, moreover, for strict comparability a standard set of questions must be used, but of course, since the subject

knows his community and the interviewer does not, these questions structure the responses of the subject into categories which the interviewer conceives to be relevant, but which may ignore important information which the subject has.

This method will not handle such subtleties as the subjective analysis of situations by individuals. A further objection is that the mere quantification of responses means a loss of information through the statistical process, the research problem being not, "what most people think", but "how do people use their knowledge in living their lives?". Surely, the starting point must be with the actual places that people use, with the "theatres of social action" - the method is simply that of careful direct observation. This method has the added advantage that it adds nothing new to the situation and permits anyone else to repeat the observations. Of course not everything is revealed by direct observation but it is readily supplemented by asking people to explain what is happening or what has happened. In addition there are those publicly available statements, for example the statements, advertisements, and pictures in local newspapers which report the common knowledge which people have. Commonplace though these may appear to be they represent the means by which the community action of individuals is made manifest and are an accessible means of seeing how the stock of knowledge is used.

6. Barker and the Ecological Model : a critique

To return now to the ecological model. The theoretical position examined in this section is that of Roger G. Barker, whose Midwest and its Children ¹⁹ uses an approach derived from Kurt Lewin for the development of what Barker terms "ecological psychology". Barker's aim was to examine human behaviour in its naturally occurring environment and thus he makes "behaviour" his key term and the environment in which behaviour occurs he calls "behaviour settings". Barker's behavioural analysis rests upon analogy with biology ²⁰ - it is thus highly positivistic and Barker's tendency is to look at environment as an external modifier of behaviour to which human beings respond, as they respond to others in the same environment.

A behaviour setting in Barker's terms has distinctive characteristics:

1. There is a standing pattern of behaviour (s.p.b.) - a "bounded pattern of behaviour of men en masse" ²¹.
2. The setting consists of "s.p.b. and milieu". (It is not completely clear whether Barker means "and" as "together with but independent of each other" or "in addition to", i.e. summed with the s.p.b.). "The behaviour patterns of a behaviour setting are attached to particular constellations of non-behavioural phenomena. Both man-made parts of a town . . . and natural features can comprise the milieu . . ." ²².
3. "The milieu is circumjacent to (surrounds) the behaviour" ²³, i.e. it both physically and temporally surrounds the behaviour.

4. The milieu is synomorphic to the behaviour, that is, "it is like in structure". By this Barker means that the boundary of the behaviour and the physical boundary of the milieu closely correspond, as for example in a football game, where the boundaries of the field correspond to the boundaries of football-kicking, scrums, lineouts, and goal scoring, etc.
5. These behaviour-milieu units Barker calls synomorphs.
6. The synomorphs have a specified degree of interdependence. Here Barker, quoting Lewin, shows that interdependence may be entirely arbitrarily determined in a connected system. The level at which the index of interdependence is set determines the inclusion of settings one with another. Thus at the lowest point the index may separate out say, the individual sitting on a chair at a public meeting, (sitting plus chair), at a slightly higher point it may include all the individuals in the hall other than the speaker, at a higher point again, the whole meeting, and at a yet higher point the meeting plus all the activities of which it is part, for example, the year's programme of the club concerned. Interdependence is signified by Kx.
7. "The synomorphs have a greater degree of interdependence among themselves than with parts of other behaviour settings" ²⁴. Thus though the classes in a school are interdependent, they act so independently as to be structurally separate synomorphs.

Barker then goes on to discuss the tests for evaluating any part of a town. The tests are:

1. Structural Test: Is the part a behaviour-milieu synomorph? By this Barker excludes "such discriminable community features as mores and customs, social classes, organisations, ethnic groups, geographical areas, roles, legal codes, educational systems" ²⁵.
2. Internal Dynamic Test: Does the part have the specified degree of interdependence (K) among synomorphs that are "structurally interjacent" (i.e. internal and adjacent)? In this case Barker means to separate those synomorphs which pass the structural test, but which are independent of one another. In his Midwest example this excludes the churches, schools and courthouse, which he labels "multiple-setting synomorphs".
3. External Dynamic Test: Does the part have the specified degree of independence from synomorphs that are structurally external to it? By this test those synomorphs whose K is equal to or greater than the specified amount is part of a more inclusive setting. For example the Presbyterian Church service on a particular date is not sufficiently independent to be considered a discrete behaviour setting when compared with other Presbyterian services.

This brief outline of Barker's behavioural setting model will suffice for the moment and it is now time for some extended commentary. In general it is clear that Barker straddles both psychological and sociological frames of reference, indeed he is somewhat hard put to it to keep his psychological intentions clear, for, although behaviour is individual there is no doubt that there is also a group aspect to behaviour that is beyond the

individual and relatively mindless activity which a strictly behaviouristic account requires. It seems difficult for Barker to argue, as he might, that there is behaviour and only behaviour as the basic datum for his observer, and unless he is prepared to argue that ideas are simply epiphenomena of behaviour that is repeated and reinforced until it is habitualised post hoc rationalisations, it seems clear enough that behaviour settings are enmeshed in a more or less systematic set of ideas which, while they may be held in individual consciousness, are never entirely so.

In many respects Barkerian behaviour setting looks very like a Durkheimian "social fact". It is certainly empirically given in that it is known and named by individual people, it is a datum of common sense and virtually all that is necessary for the observer is to pick up these data of common sense and give them precise dimensions within a systematic theory. Like Durkheim's "social facts" behaviour settings are external to the individual and coercive upon his behaviour, to enter a behaviour setting is to begin to act in ways that are observant of norms which are common to the other participants; one goes to a religious service for example wearing particular clothes, observes a particular sequence of acts, speaks prescribed words, and enters upon specific roles. How is this known to the individual? His behaviour is surely not an automatic response, it is the result of conscious judgements. To attend a religious service in a strange church is not the same as attending one in the one in which the actor is a regular participant; behaviour is watched more carefully, norms more closely adhered to and role behaviour more scrupulously undertaken. Indeed the individual attending a

service in the church of a different sect may be virtually lost even though he is in no doubt about the purpose of the actions being undertaken, a Christian visitor to a Jewish synagogue feels himself quite out of place and, though he is able to see that there is a certain familiarity in the actions being carried out, he is aware that he is at a religious service, he may misinterpret many of the items of behaviour by making them analogous to those of his own faith. Nevertheless he is aware that the building he is in is dedicated to similar purposes, and he will act accordingly.

Behaviour settings do not, as Barker insists in his discussion of his "structural test", "exclude such discriminable community features as mores and customs, social class" etcetera; these very "discriminable features" have their facticity within behaviour settings only, the generalisations which people utter about them are no more than the scheme of reference that they use in a variety of situations. A social class is not a behaviour setting, certainly, in fact it has no concrete existence as such, but the scheme of social classes, commonly but imperfectly held by individuals, is a point of reference within certain social situations. For example the membership of a certain sports club may be constitutionally open to anyone and its members will insist that anyone may join and indeed, that the membership consists of all kinds of people. However in the hypothetical behaviour setting "x club committee meeting", when new applications for membership are considered, it becomes apparent that not all the applicants are being given equal consideration and that some applicants are refused because it is tacitly understood that they "will not fit in". Social class concepts are certainly at work here but

they are given expression only in this situation, and the same people may vehemently deny that in any area of their lives they practice any form of class discrimination. The latent outcome of their deliberations is, however, that the club membership consists predominantly of members of a particular social class, a fact initiated in barely articulated ideas of discriminable strata which are reinforced by the social behaviour of the members.. An outsider of the "wrong" social class easily perceives this in the various club behaviour settings and may as a result modify his own behaviour carefully concealing those characteristics which might give away his "not fitting in" or may quit the club with his notions that the members are "nothing but a pack of snobs" fully confirmed. Either way the ideas of social class have been reinforced.

What cues does the individual actor have to the kind of behavioural norms to be observed in a particular setting? Some come from his socialisation, they are part of the "stock of knowledge at hand". Thus for example he knows that general classes of settings have different behavioural expectations attached to them, a swimming pool, a church service, a business meeting, a wedding, or a council meeting, are all "knowns" as it were, though the details of any particular setting may remain known in outline only until the individual enters it as a potential actor. Once he does so he must be prepared to learn quickly how to behave and may consult other people of more experience or knowledge, or even written sources, to make sure that he commits no serious faux pas. Since he is in the setting for a purpose which he has adjudged to be valuable to him he recognises that mistakes may frustrate that purpose.

But there is a more pervasive level of cue giving and this resides in the milieux themselves. For example churches have their standing patterns of behaviour, the overarching theme of which is worship. Even when the church is not in use a casual visitor proceeds to behave in a churchly manner, he drops his voice, restrains his comments, perhaps pauses when crossing before the altar, moves quietly and on leaving perhaps leaves a donation in the poor box.

Churches are particularly constraining milieux, but there are others in which there is a conscious analysis of the milieu: a visitor discriminates between a soccer ground and a cricket pitch, walking across the latter he may avoid walking across the wicket; on entering an hotel bar he looks about to see whether the drinkers are sitting in regular cliques or are scattered about the room; in a strange town he readily locates the Town Hall and the cinema, and he reads the dedications on local monuments.

In other words milieux have a sign function which helps the individual to locate himself in the array of social actions available to him at any time. The signing function is not only related to spatial milieux but also to temporal milieux, he knows for example that "lunch time" is a particular temporal milieu which is bad for making contacts with business people, that the 25th of December has specific expectations attached to it, and if he is arranging some special event he may take care to enquire that other locally significant time milieux are not violated.

Milieux are signs. They point the way and send the messages which are necessary for living social life in a community and it is the knowledge of these signs that constitutes part of the stock

of knowledge at hand and is learned by the growing child as well as the newcomer. It is the standardisation of such signs and their ubiquity which makes it possible for an individual to establish his social behaviour patterns quickly in any given situation and which lets him anticipate correctly, or relatively so, what others expect of him. Place is not everything of course, but it is a large part of everything - human beings are creatures of the concrete and ostensible universe no less than they are creatures of ideas. This is the fundamental sociological lesson of Barker's work. Does the sign exhaust the sociological importance of milieu? It seems unlikely for though a church building denotes religious activity, or a shop commerce, there is usually more than this, and the meanings of milieu as we saw in the discussion of class can be considerably more subtle. Milieux may have connotations of a wider importance. In other words milieux may be, though they are not necessarily, symbols. For example, the burial ground is a clearly bounded milieu which cannot easily be mistaken, its plots are arranged systematically, headstones give details of the names and dates of individual lives. In effect the burial ground says quite simply "this is the place where the dead are buried; act accordingly". However there are considerably more meanings than this, they are known to the community members and can be explained with greater or less sophistication by the people who live in the community. Let us anticipate somewhat and consider briefly Harbourn Cemetery. The visitor immediately notes that the cemetery is old and that parts of it are no longer in use. The monuments vary greatly. In the oldest part of the cemetery they are relatively simple - just a collection of mounds, some of which have wooden headboards still intact.

Among these however is a group of rather ornate tombs standing together; beyond these a quite large area of burials dating from the 1900's - here the headstones are comparatively smaller and less elaborate, a third area of graves dating from the Second World War consists of uniformly low headstones set in rows, finally there is an area set aside for the burials of returned servicemen ²⁶.

The Harbourtown Cemetery thus is historically symbolic, setting apart two groups, the early settlers and the returned servicemen, in honorific positions, it is religiously symbolic in that the cemetery is not divided on sectarian lines, and one might argue for an economic symbolism also in that the tendency has been to reduce the elaborateness of funeral monuments as, perhaps, economic display at least in death, has become unfashionable. A Harbourtowneer reads other messages as well - family plots in the older sections are still used and reflect kinship connections in the community and there is a strong feeling that identity with the community is expressed by being buried in Harbourtown Cemetery rather than by cremation.

The symbolic nature of milieu then is another dimension of its capacity to carry meaning and capacity to read these symbols is a mark of full integration into the community. Indeed as time passes we might expect that symbolic richness increases also. In Harbourtown for example, houses which were regarded as ordinary or "secular" so to speak have developed in recent years historical and kinship symbolism of such a kind that they are pointed out as being of importance. It is what is symbolised by milieux which is informative for understanding yet

another aspect of milieux and consequently of the intersubjective world of the community; this aspect is the value system or as I prefer to call it, following Gunnar Myrdal, "valuations"²⁷.

The process of evaluation is that of placing milieu on a scale of importance. Evaluation appears to be consensual, yet it arises from no particular process of conscious discussion. Milieux are however consciously valued, and the process of evaluation involves differing dimensions. Economic evaluation is obvious and is related directly to the market, nevertheless there is a large area of valuations which lies in the realm of what may be loosely called "sentiment". But what is involved in sentiment? One aspect is simple cathexis, the desire of an individual for the particular thing or goal. Communities cannot cathect things, but individuals can, and the cathexes of particular individuals can become part of community social behaviour as can be seen in such matters as campaigns for the building of halls, swimming pools and other amenities. What is cathected is what is valued and vice-versa.

On the other hand cathexes for some things may run counter to any perceivable immediate gratifications to be gained. The will to preserve an old building or an open piece of ground may frustrate the desire for a new car park, or improved traffic flow. Clearly some other aspect of sentiment is being given a higher valuation in a case such as this - roughly we may exemplify such valuations as economic, political, religious, historical or aesthetic - there are probably more, and several may be combined.

Milieux then reflect the valuations of individuals, and within the community they probably, particularly as the milieu ceases to be utilitarian and becomes more heavily symbolic reflect more closely the valuations of individuals with power, prestige, or influence. The valuations of milieu therefore may be direct reflections of social relationships. Finally, although the valuations of milieu are individually held, milieu themselves are foci for these valuations. In the complex relationship between milieu and valuations which are shared by groups of individuals or by the whole community (and it would be difficult to find a milieu commanding this much consensus) the individual stands as the mediating consciousness. It will depend then, to a fair extent, on what his socialisation has been as to the strength with which he holds the valuation, the order in which he ranks it relative to other things he values, and the degree to which this commitment will emerge in action.

An example may help to clarify this. In Harbourtown the War Memorial, which was erected initially to commemorate the dead of the Great War stands on a small reserve at a crossroad on the southern side of the town. This milieu is the focus of one "behaviour setting", the annual Anzac Day wreath laying ceremony and commemorative service held by the R.S.A. Throughout the rest of the year the Memorial is treated with respect, for example children would not park bikes against it, and its surrounding area is kept neat and trim. The complex of valuations symbolised by the Memorial however is not universally shared. It is held most strongly by ex-servicemen who would react strongly if the Memorial were desecrated in any way, and

to a lesser extent by the older Harbourtowners. Some younger people affect to be critical of the Anzac Day ceremony, maintaining that it is jingoistic and out-dated but all Harbourtowners of any standing know where the War Memorial is and why it exists, and even the modishly disaffected young have been themselves socialised through school ceremonies and the national observance of Anzac Day into a knowledge of the values associated with it. The War Memorial is in fact Anzac Day in latent form on all the other days of the year, it is the concrete symbol for a complex of values, and through the enactment of ceremonies has that complex reinforced. Some Harbourtowners don't go to Anzac Day ceremonies, and even oppose the idea of commemoration, but they probably do not hold these ideas sufficiently strongly to carry out any action to change or abolish the ceremony and can only "act negatively", that is to say, refuse to participate.

To return now to Barker's model, we have noted that behaviour settings are identifiable units of milieu plus behaviour and have, in the subsequent commentary, noted that milieux are from the sociologist's point of view, capable of holding social meaning at several different levels. It remains now to consider more precisely the ecology of milieux. It is clear that every human settlement (which I shall continue to call, for the sake of convenience, a community) has a distinctive pattern of milieux. The association of milieux of different kinds, schools, churches, streets, parks, and so on, is so well established in our own consciousness as the product of community socialisation, that we ask no questions of it. Main Street, we know, whether it is in the smallest town or the largest New Zealand city,

will contain the Post Office, the major shops, the local government offices and so on, the residential areas are likely to be separated from the industrial areas, we will know where to look for the hotel, the public lavatories, and the garage. Such typical and typified associations of milieux are culturally specific and vary slightly even within the relatively homogeneous New Zealand society. Communities in the Bay of Plenty for example frequently include a Maori marae, something which is not to be seen in other parts of the country; small towns in areas where animal husbandry is the main farming type usually have a stockyard close to the railway and as a rule a special behaviour setting, Sale Day, when the farmers combine buying and selling stock with their shopping and meeting with friends.

Such distinct patterns are recognisable almost by a glance at an aerial photograph. There is all the difference in the world between the Nuer homesteads shown by Evans Pritchard with the cattle enclosure, mens' huts and wives' compounds, and say those of the agricultural peoples, where the fields dominate the village arrangement. But these gross patterns which may at first sight be responses to a variety of external factors, the land form, the economic base, defence against enemies and so on, are only one aspect of the social ecology of milieux. As has been remarked earlier the social meaning of a milieu is individually perceived, but it is through collective action that it becomes social. In a similar manner the relationship between milieux is well understood and the subject of meaning. Thus what might seem to be and indeed be in actuality, a functional connection between two or more milieux, may be, and generally is, an ideological connection also. If we take the case of the private house in a New

Zealand town, we discover that it is seldom used as the workplace except in the case of the smallest kind of trades. A plumber may use part of his house lot (section) for a workshop and storage space, but usually he has a yard in another part of the town for use as a workplace. Similarly apart from small shops, factories except of the smallest kind are never found in residential areas, pubs are always located in commercial areas, hospitals are remotely sited, and cemeteries are often outside town limits. In a New Zealand suburb everything apart from the petrol pump and the dairy-grocery, is always somewhere else. Such ecological diffuseness is fiercely defended. Although it might be convenient to have one's workplace within a few minutes walk, the attempt to provide one is resisted on the grounds that it will detract from neighbourhood amenities - most New Zealanders prefer to travel several miles to work to preserve the distinction between work and home. Valuations of milieux thus establish the ecological pattern, but what is reasonably clear however, is that a certain array of milieux is minimal for the continuation of a distinct community no matter how loosely the term may be applied.

Are the ecological relationships the same for all community members? Barker's survey of Midwest shows that they are not, children have a different array of behaviour settings from adults, there are differences by age, sex, occupational status and ethnicity. Just as every individual's community is different slightly from every others, so "the community" differs through a number of social categories. Thus though Barker's "k" is a measure of interdependence between settings per se, it is clear that the "social map" is not represented by this measure alone, but must

be reinterpreted, strictly, for every individual, and certainly for every significant category. The ecological pattern of *milieux* then is not independent of social relations but depends very much upon them.

So far the discussion has ranged across the area of Barker's model and has made some criticisms of it. Bearing in mind that his is a psychological model we can now perhaps turn to the sociological task of understanding the community. I have been at pains to show that *milieux* are primary symbolic elements in social life and that we may conceive of a community as an assemblage of such *milieux*, much as an archaeologist uses that term. Any individual's social map consists of those *milieux* to which he attaches a valuation whether positive or negative. It is not perhaps too circular to say that no *milieux* are present that do not have social significance, though a few may be virtually entirely individual - children sometimes have such *milieux*, the secret places which they alone inhabit, like Huck Finn's empty hogshead down by the slaughter-house. Most *milieux* are shared with somebody, and it is this overlapping of social maps and the consequence that arises from people's interaction within them, Barker's standing pattern of behaviour, that constitutes the basic unit entities of the community, its theatres of social action. We are not in sociological analysis concerned with all behaviour or even the personal motives for behaviour, but rather with the meanings that people attach to behaviour, we are concerned with behaviour therefore which has consequences, goals and more or less standard interpretations, and with the consequences, more especially the unintended consequences of that behaviour, in other words with social action. It seems then that

if we narrow the focus from this admittedly central problem of sociology to enquire into what milieux mean in any given community we may go some distance to answering the question of what that community is.

Milieux are problematic for sociology for a variety of reasons; some of the problems are, it seems, as follows:

1. What are the milieux of any given community?
2. What is their "function" as "theatres of social action"?
3. How are the milieux related to one another?
4. What do they symbolise?

In mentioning these four problems we have already encountered a fundamental distinction. The first is purely descriptive, what is this community as an object, what are its basic units, how is it structured? This is a problem no less concrete than say making a plan of a building. The second aspect is that of meaning, that is, of the community as an object of thought, of sentiment, of intersubjective existence.

Each problem complements the other.

Notes and References

CHAPTER II

1. cf Cahnman and Heberle 1971; Cahnman 1973, 36-7
2. e.g. Frankenberg 1957.
3. Havighurst and Jansen 1968, list six categories containing in total 27 sub categories.
4. e.g. Hillery's much cited examination of 94 definitions. Hillery 1955.
5. Tonnies 1963, 43; 134.
6. Broom and Selznick 1963, 31-2. "A community is an inclusive group with two chief characteristics (1) within it the individual may have most of the experiences and conduct most of the activities important to him (2) it is bound together by a shared sense of belonging and by the feeling among its members that the group defines for them their distinctive identity..."

This definition is omitted from later editions.
7. Redfield 1955, 1. "Humanity presents itself to the view of common sense in just a few kinds of integral entities..."
8. Examples come readily to mind, the succession through females to the English throne; establishment of a republican constitution in the USSR; the female franchise in New Zealand.
9. cf Archer and Archer 1970.
10. e.g. Henry Roth's Call it Sleep.
11. This is evidently difficult to achieve, as Philip Abrams notes in his review of Jacqueline Scherer's Contemporary Community: Sociological Illusion or Reality? New Society Vol 22, No. 523 (12 October 1972) 101-2.
Ruth Glass's now well known sneer "the poor sociologist's substitute for the novel" (in Conflict in Society p 148, London, Churchill, 1966) while raising hackles doesn't get to the heart of the "nostalgia for community" bias.

12. Smelser 1967, 95. "...I shall regard 'the community' as the localised population which is interdependent on a daily basis, and which carries on a highly generalised series of activities in and through a set of institutions which provides on a day to day basis the full range of goods and services necessary for its continuity as a social and economic entity.
13. Bell and Newby 1971.
14. Stacey 1969.
15. Pahl 1968, "The Rural-Urban Continuum".
16. Bell and Newby 1971, 53.
17. It is debatable, in my view, as to whether there can be voluntary action which is individual in the sense that it does not take into account an "other". The "other" is present to me though perhaps not explicitly so, in every act. Indeed, I could not learn to act in a way that had meaning for me unless there were some other to imitate or compare myself with. In George Herbert Mead's psychology the other is generalised and internalised by the actor yet rather than acting my role to an audience who is myself critically appraising me, I abstract and store in consciousness the meanings of acts. It is in this way that sociality is given to the quality of these acts. I could not act without meaning unless I were to cease to regard myself as a rational being. There is no other place I could extract my meanings from but the actions and reactions of others who in turn act in respect of their meanings.
Although I believe myself to have (and do have) meanings which are idiosyncratic (I may believe the sun to be my father and privately speak to it as "you" and refer to it as "him") yet these very categories of my thought are expressions of my social knowledge. There may be private acts then, but these acts are implicitly social acts. It is only in dreams that my subjectivity is entirely my own and that my acts may be generated within myself - but dreaming is itself insubstantial to the dreamer, who frequently experiences himself as a distinct actor in the dream.

I am concerned then, with the common ground of subjectivity between myself and any other and I am only puzzled when his subjective meanings in a given situation are inexplicable by reference to my own, as in the case when I encounter a different culture, or a person in a delusory state. This may help to explain the cult use of hallucinogens. The drug dissolves the barrier between my world of private meanings and the necessity to structure my meanings socially; new experiential events present themselves to which I attribute meanings that are entirely my own. I dream, but I am no longer aware that I am dreaming and I attribute to these "dreams" meanings as though they were parts of the objective world.

18. Schutz 1971, 7. " An interpretation of the world is based on a stock of previous experiences of it, our own or those handed down by parents and teachers; these experiences in the form of knowledge at hand function as a scheme of reference. To this stock of knowledge at hand belongs our knowledge that the world we live in is a world of more or less well circumscribed objects with more or less definite qualities, objects among which we move, which resist us and upon which we may act. Yet none of these objects is perceived as insulated. From the outset it is an object with a horizon of familiarity and pre-acquaintanceship which is, as such, just taken for granted until further notice, as the unquestioned, though at any time questionable stock of knowledge at hand. The unquestioned pre-experiences are, however, also from the outset, at hand as typical, that is, as carrying open horizons of anticipated similar experiences. "
19. Barker and Wright 1955.
20. Barker 1968, 1. The Midwest Psychological Field Station was established to facilitate the study of human behaviour and its environment in situ by bringing to psychological science the kind of opportunity long available to biologists; easy access to the phenomena of the science unaltered by the selection and preparation that occur in laboratories.
21. *ibid.*, 18.
22. *ibid.*, 19.
23. *ibid.*, 19.
24. *ibid.*, 22.
25. *ibid.*, 23.
26. One is immediately impressed by the resemblance to domestic architecture. Tombstones replicate the styles from simple settler cottages through the Victorian baroque, to the art nouveau and art deco to the uniform suburbs of the present.
27. Myrdal 1958, 78.

CHAPTER III

The Social Construction of the Community

1 Preliminary Considerations

"Consider social facts as things" is Durkheim's first rule of sociological method. In this essay the dictum is reversed, we consider "things" as social facts. The phrase anticipates the discussion to follow however, for what is the problem here, is whether we can rightly consider "place" as a social fact, and if so, under what conditions.

Artefacts of any kind always have a social context. There is little need to pursue the discussion at length for it is immediately clear that a tool, a weapon, or an ornament has its primary social context in work, war, or decoration. It is possible for a tool to be used in a symbolic way as a Freemason's trowel is, but it remains what it is, a tool made symbolic by a change in social context, it stands for the name of the organisation, for the authority of the master mason, and for whatever other ideas that Freemasons hold in common and say are symbolised by the trowel. Made of silver, decorated and generally rendered useless for its particular function, nevertheless tools and weapons remain what they are despite their change in social context.

The conditions which Durkheim set for a social fact were those of externality, coerciveness and constraint. It is with these three that the forthcoming discussion will be concerned but, in the meantime, we may consider the question of the effect of these on a definition of what is to be considered social. By making externality fundamental, Durkheim seeks to remove social facticity from the realm of psychological facts, thus the social facts are social by reason of their being external to the individual and detectable by him through, firstly, their capacity to force him to act in certain ways and to restrain him from acting in certain other ways. In other words social facts are presented to the individual through the medium of his own consciousness - his response to them is subjective - and they are thus, though manifestations of collective action, interaction and communication, psychological. Every sociology, thus, implies a social psychology and vice versa.

If it can be established that "things" are external to the individual, coerce him to certain actions and constrain him from others, then their social nature can be predicated and investigated. In some sense this is already the case in archaeology where artefacts are assumed to be clues to social structure, that is they are seen as social products. A type artefact, say a particular form of adze or kind of pottery, is taken as social evidence because the presumption is that it is typical because of a consensus existing for a particular time in a particular society. The consensus, to be sure, was about adze or pottery technology, but the artefact considered on its own also tells much

about social organisation; what kinds of timber working were in evidence, the degree of specialisation of labour, perhaps also the extent to which trade was going on.

The archaeological case is clear enough but to make the case for other aspects of the material universe is more difficult. It is a recurring theme in sociology however, that man's physical environment affects his social life. At its simplest this view holds for example that there is a connection between living in decrepit housing and a high incidence of crime and delinquency.¹ The influence of environmental determinism led Robert Park in the 1921 edition of his text on sociology to suggest that latitude affected the development of high civilisations and, more recently, ethologists such as Desmond Morris have drawn attention to the significance of territory in animal, and perhaps also in human behaviour.

"Place" is certainly a "thing" but it remains to be shown that it is social in the sense of being part of the social universe, that is, created by and through the process of social interaction.

All human beings inhabit physical space as they inhabit social space, that is to say, 'live in a web of social interaction'. The physical space within which they live is to some extent broken up into units within which some life activities are carried on to the exclusion of others, huts and houses are the centre of family life, gardens are used for food production or leisure activities,

open country for various economic pursuits and so on. Some elements of the physical space, matters of climate, topography, plants and animals, create opportunities for human exploitation and set limits to its variety - this kind of physical space I propose to call 'environment'; it is distinguished by the fact that it pre-exists the human population and is modified through human activity either directly or as an indirect consequence of human actions. It is environmental modification in gross or destructive ways which currently attracts the attention of scientists in a number of fields. On the other hand there is another kind of physical space conceptually different from environment which for the purposes of this discussion I shall call habitat. The human habitat is created entirely by human activity by building, farming, travelling, and so on, and is entirely the product of social activity, that is, of behaviour which is carried out in virtue of the social organisation and cultural values which a particular human population has.

The conceptual difference between environment and habitat is that humans are seen to be intrusive into the former, whereas the latter is to be seen as a set of spatial conditions natural to a particular society at a given time. Thus the habitat of Maoris in the 18th century differed greatly from their habitats today, and the habitat of twentieth century Aucklanders differs strongly from that of Saigonese or New Yorkers. The environments however, though changed by the consequences of human action in the past, are not grossly changed - not anyway if we compare the changes brought about by natural forces as is the case

in the comparison between Europe in the Würm glacial and interglacial phases. There is a further twist in the tail of the discussion however. It has so far been implied that men make their habitats in ways that are characteristic of their culture and society at a given time, but how, if habitats make the men who inherit them? To explain this point let us assume that a habitat is created and maintained by one generation, which is succeeded by another. The new generation has been raised within that habitat and has acquired knowledge of it and developed sentiments towards it, in other words, passively, humans are socialised by their habitats and these habitats remain as from generation to generation; changing in part both in form and function; but seldom changing entirely.

In due course these points will be reconsidered, but in the meantime, they bring us closer to a sociological definition of "place" - the precise ways in which 'place' acts and is in turn affected by society have yet to be spelled out, yet it is clear so far that place in the sociological sense has to ^{be} considered a datum and may be characterised as 'that part of the physical space inhabited by a human group which is created through interaction and exerts a constraint upon the future course of interaction'. "Habitat" and "Environment" are thus not as it were, different aspects of the same phenomenon, they are conceptually different from one another both in the viewpoint taken and in the phenomena considered.

2 The Sociological tradition

The definition advanced in the previous section deals with a set of phenomena which are proposed to be sociological. Since originality can scarcely be claimed for this essay, it is fitting to look back at the sociological tradition from which our ideas develop. The first enquiry however reveals the poverty of such discussions as exist. For the most part, sociologists have been prepared to take physical space for granted and to make virtually no analysis of it. Social life has no locus, social structures hang in a dimensionless void. Even in master works such as Evans-Pritchard's The Nuer, the discussion of Nuerland is a geographer's, not a sociologist's.

The problem here is not that sociologists ignore the spatial context of social life, indeed they do not, but that they fail to recognise it as problematic. The reasons for this may lie in the direction given to sociological enquiry by its founding fathers, that is in the interest in normative behaviour, or it may be due to the almost obsessional interest in verbal accounts whether these be the accounts given by informants or by the sociologist himself interpreting his data. Social anthropologists were less inclined to blindness, but even Malinowski describes how after spending fruitless months in Kiriwina, he began collecting genealogies in order to get some sort of social information.² The results of this are that most ethnographers give a map showing village boundaries, gardens, tracks and so on, but none, or virtually none, explain what this map means in social terms. By contrast, a

map drawn by a native informant, the chief Tuki Taahua, in 1805 shows no such details but instead describes chiefs, paas, distinct boundaries and (perhaps) a religious system³. We are not concerned with social maps and conceptual plans however, what we are concerned with is the way in which space enters into the social sphere.

Two predominant themes appear in the sociological literature. The first, and the more vigorous, is that which makes social relationships the central problem area for sociology, the other is the ecological tradition which seeks for patterns in the geographical distributions of (mainly urban) social characteristics; from the first theme come the typical polarities of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* and from the second the concentric zone model of the city and studies, notably of low life such as Zorbaugh's Gold Coast and the Slum and Thrasher's The Gang. The two themes combine in various ways as they do in Arensberg and Kimball's functionalist Family and Community in Ireland, and more recently in Young and Wilmott's studies of Bethnal Green and Greenleigh⁴.

It is clear enough that however much the social relations ghost haunts the ecological study and however much ecological chains may rattle in the cellars of the functionalist, quasi-functional, neo-functional, and anti-functional social studies, the two themes remain conceptually, methodologically and empirically different. The differences can perhaps, without being unduly laboured, be stated as firstly conceptual; the "social

relations" approach regards 'society' as a network of social relationships characterised by normative regulation and organised in clusters of various kinds, institutions, groups, kindreds, and so forth. The ecological view sees 'society' in formalistic terms, as consisting of responses to social forces such as Park and Burgess' competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation.

Though both these traditions use the organic analogy extensively, the ecological approach directs itself to a 'natural history'. It goes unnoted by Martindale, though an example appears in the quotation which he includes, that Park and Burgess pepper their work with biological references - in this quotation Park and Burgess while ostensibly talking of history, use such terms as 'organisation' and 'mutation' in what seems to be a biological way.⁵

This leads then to the distinction of a methodological difference - Tönnies and Durkheim, while being organist^{ci} functionalists, look toward ideas which are collective and consensual as underlying all social action - true Durkheim denies social facticity to the ideas of individuals, maintaining that collective sentiments or collective conscience is social by that fact and is only "refracted", as it might be, in individual consciousnesses. The collective consciousness contains completely that which is held in individual consciousness only in part. Marx no less, holds individual consciousness to be qualitatively different from class consciousness and though individual consciousness is derived from 'class',⁶ that is, 'social' consciousness.

The methodological temper then of those who weight the "social relations" theme more heavily is toward idealism, toward the consideration of process and the use of ideal types which are characterised by certain forms of consciousness. By contrast the ecological theme is methodologically positivistic and builds its theories upon the description of patterns which result from social forces. It is not surprising to find the crackpot Chamberlainian environmentalism as the extreme of this type of thinking, and it is not less apparent in George Lundberg's use of the physical science model.⁷

Finally the empirical difference (and by this I mean not empiricism as a methodology but merely the distinction of data) is that the "social relations" tradition concentrates upon groups and their structure and thus upon collecting such data as the details of affiliation through kinship and marriage, religious identity and economic activity; the ecologically minded sociologists are more concerned with the nature of the pattern of social characteristics. The 'concentric zone' theory, for example, which emerged in the Park and Burgess studies of Chicago is the product of a view that makes distributional characteristics problematic, but is only secondarily concerned with the actual and existing relations of the people written about.

The foregoing discussion has been aimed at making the distinction between traditions in sociology - the differences are less sharp in sociological writing - nevertheless the ways in which the sociological models have been built exemplify the

contention advanced earlier; that place has been regarded as generally unproblematic. "Tönnies is a case in point.

3 Tönnies and the problem of place

Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft has, after long eclipse, tended to be reinstated as a work of sociological theory. Colin Bell and Howard Newby, in their introductory text Community Studies,⁸ treat Tönnies as a fundamental and crucial analyst of the community and build their theoretical analysis upon his work. The Tönniesian sociology, however, with its whims and mysticism, indeed its implicit and explicit association of "Blut und Boden", the doctrine which became central to the ideologists of National Socialism^m⁹, is still mainly concerned with social relations. Tönnies' fondness for analogies and his attempt to build a grand theory linking up biological, economic and life sustaining activities, and social system, makes his work obscure to the point of confusion. A central idea however, one to which Bell and Newby pay scant attention, is that of "land", not simply as a resource or focus of social activity, but as a symbol carrying social meaning.

"The Gemeinschaft by blood, denoting unity of being is developed and differentiated in Gemeinschaft of locality, which is based on a common habitat. A further differentiation leads to the Gemeinschaft of mind, which implies only cooperation and coordinated action for a common goal. Gemeinschaft of locality may be conceived as a community of physical life, just as Gemeinschaft of mind expresses the community of mental life. In conjunction with the others, this last type of Gemeinschaft represents

the truly human and supreme form of community. Kinship Gemeinschaft signifies a common relation to, and share in human beings themselves, while in Gemeinschaft of locality, such a common relationship is established through the ownership of land; and in Gemeinschaft of mind, the common bond is represented by sacred places and worshipped deities. All three types are integrated in space as well as in time . . . "

10

This passage is quoted at length because it includes the main themes, the leitmotifs, of Tonnies' thought. Two features are worthy of particular note:

- (1) common ownership of land requires a common social relationship;
- (2) places symbolise a common bond.

In the ideal type all three types of Gemeinschaft have a spatial location. To put this another way, place is both a material and symbolic correlate of a social system of the type Tonnies calls a Gemeinschaft, and indeed, of any social system. Tonnies reiterates these ideas in many ways, generally however it is the land that is not only the source of economic satisfactions but acquires the valuation of sentiment and history with which a group symbolises its own identity. Land thus is a material, economic, psychological and social fact.

Tönnies however is concerned mainly with the production of an evolutionary scheme and with the consideration of the relationship of economy and society. His analysis of land thus is related to both his psychological theory and his economic theory of value. The direction in which the sociological analysis might go is no

more than faintly indicated and the analysis is allowed to lapse once the relationship of the land to social system in the Gemeinschaft is established. Nevertheless it is to Tönnies that we owe the recognition in sociological terms of the significance of place in the social structure of meaning.

From this point forward the search for any systematic account of "place" in sociology reveals extraordinarily little. The crucial change of direction takes place in Durkheim's Division of Labour in Society.¹¹ This work undoubtedly has an unacknowledged debt to Tönnies as Loomis suggests in his notes to his translation of Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft, but it differs substantially in the stress that it lays upon the normative basis of social organisation (solidarity) that characterises his polar types.

All reference to the local nature of the community, and to the bases in land ownership, kinship and so on, disappear in Durkheim's analysis. His model consists of two elements, a kind of normative structure which co-varies with a kind of social organisation. The more there is specialisation and variety of religious groups, classes, work, racial groups, the more is the movement toward a normative system, the goal of which is the restoration and stabilisation of social relationships. The greater the diversity the more the need for rationality, and conversely, the greater the diversity the less is the power of collective moral sentiments, the conscience collective, with its armoury of retributive laws and savage punishments.

What Durkheim had done was to free sociology from the grip of psychology by removing the basis of sentiment that Tönnies made the cornerstone of his analysis. For Durkheim whether mechanically solidary communities existed or not was insignificant, it was the principle stated, the social law, which mattered. By contrast Tönnies creates an elaborate architecture of ideas in which biological, psychological and social features are associated to make a coherent whole. Underlying this however is the powerful feeling that Tönnies' notion of Gemeinschaft was based firmly on the German rural village, that though he consciously builds an ideal-type there is nevertheless an empirical referent for it. ^{Does} This accounts for the absence of "place" in Durkheim's work and its presence in Tönnies?

The Durkheimian stress in sociology is represented by the tradition of emphasis on social relations, on functional explanation, and in both the social structural ideas of Radcliffe-Brown and the idealist structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss and his followers.¹² Within this tradition there is room for a sociological analysis of place, but it is one which has never emerged or has never been felt to be interesting. In part this is due to the fact that "place" has been appropriated by the ecologically minded urbanologists, and the water further muddied by pervasive popular environmental determinism which derived from the movements of social reform having their beginnings (at least in the English speaking world) in the early nineteenth century, and the faith in progress which informed that sanguine era¹³.

The problem of a purely ecological approach to the problem of place is, that though it can describe the facts of spatial distribution and can make predictions about future states of the area under consideration, usually a major city, it cannot, except by appeal to rather crude and broad forces, explain how and why the ecosystem comes about and how and why it is maintained in its particular form. An ecological analysis which relies solely on distributional indices is informative when large scale patterns are the focus of interest but it is largely ineffective at the small scale level.

Central to the theories of the human ecologists is the notion of the "natural area", the Gold Coast, Greenwich Village, in terms of Auckland, the Bays and the North Shore. As Timms points out, however, (Timms 1971:7 et seq)¹⁴ the question of what was in nature "natural" about "natural areas" was a matter of contention among the Chicago School sociologists. Although it was a matter of first principle that ^{the} physical dimension was the one that mattered, there was, from the first, a tendency to smuggle in social and cultural characteristics as definitional factors. The debate should not delay us here since it is not the aim of this essay to reproduce in detail or attempt to discredit other approaches to social phenomena, but it hinges around the problem of whether or not a "natural area" is a mere statistical aggregate within a given territorial boundary, or whether the people so delineated constitute an interacting group. On the whole the weight of opinion, if we consider the work of the British Institute of Community Studies, is towards interaction, but

insofar as it is so, it is less ecological in nature and is forced toward questions about meaning rather than being able to rely on the unequivocal data which go into statistical tables. Does this sound a preliminary note of warning that a discussion of the subjective nature of place will ensue? It does, but the time is not yet.

4 Themes in contemporary sociology

Some other themes in sociological thinking which are relevant to the consideration of place remain to be discussed. The work of social geographers has been extensive since the 1950's and has come under the influence of ideas arising in sociology and anthropology, as well as within the geographical discipline. Peter Gould and Rodney White remark :

"We are slowly realising that people's perceptions of places is one of the things we must consider as we try to understand the pattern of man's work on the face of the earth. The geographer's concern for the way men perceive their environment is nothing new, but his approach to the problem is changing rapidly as geography continues its remarkable renaissance that started in the nineteen fifties and continues to gain momentum at the present time."

15

These authors describe a methodology at the basis of which lies the subjective model born by individuals and which reflects their social aspirations and attitudes as much as it does the

physical and topographical features which they encounter. Since the aim is geographical, Gould and White may be forgiven a degree of philosophical naivete bordering upon the simplistic and they can demonstrate in any case that their models work which is perhaps less true for sociologists who see the world as more complex than they. The discovery however, of a subjective geography and the development of means of characterising it quantitatively is of considerable importance to the questions of the sociology of place, if it may now be so called, since it breaks through the problem of scale which is a difficulty for ecologists without importing any particularly unusual or novel methodology or technique.

The social geography however is still concerned with only the broad scale of social meaning and its assumptions are that subjective accounts, summed, constitute the social element for which it seeks. This viewpoint will not do, though it has plagued sociology itself for long enough to have become part of the "underthinking" characteristic of much social science. The theoretical problem, as has been understood from the earliest days of sociology, lies in the collective nature of social facts which transcends individual ideas and cannot be arrived at by counting heads. It is the pervasiveness, independence, coerciveness and constraining nature of social facts that makes them social, not a statistical frequency. This is the point of Durkheim's discussion. Such a criticism does not mean that the social geographers' quantifications are meaningless, it does mean however that they are the roughest of rough approximations, appropriate enough for geographical purposes, but, to put it simply, not sociological.

A different type of pragmatism and empiricism is to be seen in the efforts of town planners to come to grips with the problem of place. From Ebenezer Howard forward and much earlier if we take into account such 18th century examples as Robert Owen's New Lanark^c founded by Dale in 1784 and subjected to the full blast of Owen's zeal for humanitarian improvement from 1799 until 1824, there was a conviction that social conditions were a product of physical environment.¹⁶ As the Bells remark :

"The physical environment reflected Owen's purpose: his intention was not just to give better homes, a better town to the workers, but to provide an environment which moulded their character. Had he felt that windows harmed the character, he would certainly have tried to get the windows stopped".

17

Owen indeed, to follow this digression a sentence or two further, was an example of that British penchant for peculiarity, an eccentric, whose efforts at improvement of the lot of the working classes were sufficient to ensure their ultimate failure. New Harmony, a model of utopian enterprise, failed but it and Owen's other projects were a welcome fist shaken in the face of the sickly piety of the age. Owen's ancestors were the Diggers and the Levellers and his descendants latter day Puritans of all kinds, Maoists in the English speaking world not least among them.

The sociological point to which we must give attention however is that the schemes of Owen, and later of the builders of Bournville and Port Sunlight, of Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City, of the New Towns and indeed of the New Zealand State housing built during the 1930's and 40's¹⁸, originated in a social theory;

they were conscious attempts to organise place according to social principles and they recognised implicitly the social influence upon place. In the case of Howard the model was conscious and abstract, a model in the sociological sense, on the basis of which plans for real towns could be drawn up. It was the combination of capitalism with utopianism that gave Welwyn Garden City its odd combination of pleasant cottages in red Hertfordshire brick with a scheme of grand boulevards derived directly from its architect's French origins. The step from model to realisation is what produces the petty bourgeois sterility (less noticeable in Welwyn) of Hatfield, Hemel Hempstead, Harlow and Hampstead Garden Suburb. The town planners had theories, sometimes taste, but little understanding of the sociological realities they dealt with.

This problem remains even in the highly sophisticated conceptualisations of modern town planners. Essentially town planning is social action, it bodies forth functional and aesthetic values which have their roots partly in the society from which the planner derives his education and personal experience, partly from technological needs and possibilities, and partly from ideological convictions. Support for this assertion may be derived from the particularly clear statement of it embodied in Chermayeff and Tzonis' The Shape of Community.

"Exploration of any kind by man", they say, "is guided by human commitment to human ends of one kind or another, thanks to a mutation of the human brain in the evolutionary process remote

in time which has enabled man since then to invent appropriate technologies to meet new contingencies as they arise Given the state of affairs of today's urban environment, a reassessment of priorities seems in order before specific proposals can be instituted. Consequently the authors' commitment will be discussed as a foundation for action . . . here in the prologue. The commitment, the issues and priorities, are presented briefly in a random assemblage form¹⁹.

With similar sybilline portentousness (and syntax) Chermayeff and Tzonis proceed to explore the commitments of the town planners, noted in their subtitle, and the relationship of these to current issues and the priorities which they see as essential. In fact what they have done is to speak with the weight of the tradition of "improvement" behind them taken into a wider context, that of an uncertain future. Chermayeff and Tzonis are in tune with the spirit that moved Owen and re-emerged in Marx and Kropotkin - they want a new heaven and a new earth, which oddly enough, they seem to expect to find in elaborations of Piccadilly Circus underground station.

Though it is tempting to satirise the attempts of town planners to find a way out of the anomic chaos of modern cities (a chaos which may be neither as chaotic nor as anomic as it is fashionable to assert that it is), the value of this consideration of Chermayeff and Tzonis is that it draws attention to the fact that a sociology of place does not exist outside the social science universe of discourse. Chermayeff and Tzonis explicitly admit

valuations into their approach to town planning asking only that these commitments be made explicit. Because of their concern to "realise human potential" (a phrase which includes "human" in its currently accepted sense of "desirable") they are virtually inaccessible to verstehen analysis - theirs is a prescription for action. Yet it is upon verstehen that a sociology of place must be based, it becomes necessary therefore to ask how this is to be achieved.

One such approach is that advanced by Gerald D. Suttles in his The Social Construction of Communities. The issue of "place" is raised by Suttles in his discussion of the influence of ethology on sociology.

"Sociologists have persistently attempted to explain territorial groups as something else: as the result of ethnic clannishness, or associational networks, or of attempts to segregate income groups and the like. What ethologists have done is to take territorial distinctions themselves as a basis for associational selection and to demonstrate in study after study the utility of this forthright approach".

20

While acknowledging the ethological origins of his approach, Suttles does not accept the ethologists' appeal to an instinctual basis for "territoriality". The plethora of territorial districts and boundaries he suggests has its basis in the needs of government and administration, and far from being "natural" are social constructs imposed "in an intentional way by organisations which are quite remote from the local community".

Suttles' model of the urban community has two main elements, the physical structure of the city and the cognitive maps which the citizens have of the city. The cognitive map has two features, it is subjective, that is, it is based upon the individual's perceptions and conceptions of a number of categories which he believes to be relevant (closeness to shops and schools, safety, respectability, and so on), and secondly, it is normative, it describes what the city ought to be like. These elements are involved in decisions about how and where to live and to go. They are linked to the physical structure by boundary markers of one kind or another, but there is no causal relationship between physical structure and cognitive map.

By using territory in this way, as a product of physical structure and individual perception, Suttles is able to dislodge the economic fundamentalism which underlay Park and Burgess' theory. Though decisions by individuals are heavily influenced by economic factors, they are affected by other social valuations. How else can the persistence of ethnic neighbourhoods and others of special character be accounted for - for the economic factors which may have first decided their existence no longer apply or indeed have been reversed. A case in point is the change in Auckland of the old and decaying central city neighbourhoods which, from having been shunned by Pakeha middle income residents came to be predominantly light industry, ethnically and working class concentrated. A new respect for the "character" of the rubbishy Victorian architecture of these neighbourhoods has made them preferable to the "characterless" suburbs with the result that property values have

rapidly increased and the older population is being displaced by a number of middle income younger people. The vagaries of fashion in urban residence then (to which Suttles does not, in particular, refer) may be seen as special applications of his general principle that cognitive maps are "part of the social control apparatus of urban areas and are of special importance in regulating spatial movement to avoid conflict between antagonistic groups".

Suttles' approach comes closest to being a sociology of place, yet in stressing territory he is still only concerned with the ways in which communities become differentiated and not with the 'texture' of the community pattern. Here the problems are those of boundary formation and defence, boundaries which are physical and social, and where in fact physical boundaries 'mean' social boundaries. This type of discussion is eminently useful when considering the relationship of urban communities and community parts to one another but it attacks the problem of meaning at a very restricted level; it does not allow the analysis of place to proceed beyond the point at which place is considered as locality, though it clearly shows the ways in which "place" can carry meaning within the urban structure. Suttles' analysis does not become a sociological theory at any but the most particular level and even here it suffers by failing to distinguish adequately between psychological and social facts, a problem notoriously commonplace in sociology.

From the foregoing discussion it can be seen that sociology has, for the most part, treated place as non-problematic. The assumption has been that place, in so far as it is sociologically interesting at all, has become so only as a rather general entity. The sociological reality is social organisation. Where an archaeologist would look upon the ruins of an ancient city or the soil traces of fortifications and gardens as an assemblage of clues pointing toward the social and economic life of people who left no other record, the sociologist has been (because of their availability) dependent on what are fundamentally verbal clues to social structure. It is not that places are a superior form of social data, it is that they are part of social life. At best a reading of sociological monographs provides a couple of photographs but no indication of what Middletown, or Crestwood Heights, or Bethnal Green is actually like.

This absence of visual sensitivity is bad enough; far worse is the conceptual insensitivity it points to. Society, whatever its other conceptual dimensions may be, is concretely dimensional. It is quite strange that sociology should have been prepared to treat this fact as crudely as it has done in the past.

5 Place : the psychological dimension

If place has been neglected in the sociological literature, it has been still more so in the literature of the other social sciences. During the 1950's however Roger G. Barker²¹ and his associates began research which was stimulated by the field theory of Kurt Lewin. Barker's analysis of the small Kansas town he calls Midwest, reveals that behaviour is intimately related to place, indeed that place exerts powerful pressures upon members of the community to modify their behaviour and to give it particular content, and that different categories of people act in different ways in the same places, and do so consistently.

Two preliminary points must be noted, first Barker's work depends on field observation rather than clinical experiment, the second is that although his focus is individuals, specifically children, his analysis tends to escape into accounts of how categories of people behave, that is, it becomes implicitly sociological.

Barker's analysis begins with the quite unspectacular observation that behaviour is a highly variable stream which takes place in relation to objects and places in intimate interaction. This behaviour in regard to objects and places however does not define the nature of ecological environment. The ecological environment, as opposed to individual behaviour, is the intersection between the naturally occurring environment and the individual behaviour stream.

"Thus for example three children were each observed for an entire day and were found to interact with 571, 671 and 749 different objects and each of these interactions had a number of attributes But these objects did not constitute the ecological environments of the children, for the behaviour of the children provided the sole criterion for identifying and describing the objects the ecological environment cannot be discovered by using the person's behaviour as the sole reference point. This is true, not because it is impossible to see all the behaviour that occurs, but because the ecological environment comprises a different class of phenomena and can only be identified and understood independently of the behaviour with which it is linked."

22

Barker insists that to understand the individual behaviour incidents, it is necessary to understand the context within which they are embedded. We cannot however construct the latter as the sum of all such incidents. Fortunately however, discriminable behaviour and environment units exist; these are recognised in everyday life and may be defined with precision by the research scientist. Such units Barker and his associates call "behaviour settings".

A behaviour setting has both structural and dynamic attributes, that is, it has relatively fixed elements of behaviour and spatial location, and it is related with greater or lesser degrees of independence and interdependence to other settings.

The techniques of measurement and the means of analysing behaviour settings are not at the moment important; the important feature is that Barker's units, however they are arrived at, include spatial and temporal locus as part of behaviour and draw attention toward the interrelation of these community parts. For the first

time we have the possibility of a sociology of place, that the way in which place and social structure may be viewed as complementary and inescapable. Barker's analysis treats these facts as facts of psychology, he is concerned with cognitive, conative and affective responses to these elements of the psychological environment, for they are as "real" as are the learning tasks which are set up in the laboratory. If however, there is to be a sociology of place then the data must be treated as social, rather than psychological. The cognitive, conative and affective aspects must be viewed in terms of social relations and of the collective views of the members of a society or its subgroups. This issue concerns us elsewhere, for the moment we must note that two aspects are socially important, the objective and dimensionable characteristics of place, and the subjective and collective meanings which are embodied in "place".

6 Conclusions

In the preceding discussion some of the problems of a sociology of place have been considered and some of the sociological literature has been reviewed. It is clear enough, and further exemplification and citation would only confirm the fact, that place has been regarded as unproblematic for sociology. It has received some attention in other social sciences, notably in the ecological psychology of Roger G. Barker, from social geographers, and of course as a prime datum by archaeologists.

The concern over place however has implicitly if not explicitly stressed its functions as a means of social control, in this respect Suttles has pointed to the means by which neighbourhoods in cities gain and maintain their particular character. Barker has gone further by showing the intimate relationship between milieu and behaviour patterns, again showing milieu as constraining behaviour, that is acting as mechanisms of social control.

The opening paragraphs asked whether we might rightly consider place as a social fact, the preliminaries to this enquiry suggest that it is so - that place is external, coercive, and constraining, that though it presents itself to consciousness through the medium of individual cognition, what is cognised pre-exists the individual and is something 'more than itself'. The last phrase seems mysterious. What can "more than itself" mean when we talk about such commonplace things as streets, paddocks, and tombstones?

The answer is dual. In the first place the object, thing, or place, or combination of them, is recognised within the social universe; it has a name, an identity and perhaps other characteristics as well. In addition it is the object of processes of the attribution of meaning. Now, attaching meanings could be entirely individual or quite idiosyncratic as it seems to be in a Chagall painting for example²³, but it is also quite clear that meanings are socially given. The Chagall painting brings about puzzlement and interest because common objects and places are put

into juxtapositions that are unfamiliar to us or completely contradictory to socially bestowed meanings that are part of or analogous to our own experience of the social universe. Chagall's fiddler balances on the gable of the shoemaker's house with its boot sign, the dead man lies in the street surrounded by candles, the widow wails, a man vanishes down an alley scattering flower pots, and a sweeper crosses the road with his broom - these rearrangements of the commonplace taken-for-granted reality, even though they occur in Vitebsk, create powerfully a sense of disorientation. Why? Why not? Perhaps in Vitebsk all these matters were usual, this is a literal representation, but our experience of the everyday world tells us that it is not so, that this is an idiosyncratic and purposeful bestowal of meaning which contrasts with what we know almost without knowing that we know .

It seems that the problem has now changed shape. Barker sought to resolve it by an appeal to the empirical data of observation in a single small community. In doing so he produced an analysis which, while dealing adequately with the data as given, treats them as a reality sui generis. This is where the needs of a sociological approach differ from a psychological approach at least insofar as it is represented by Barker's researches. The sociological question must deal with the social basis for the emergence of these meanings, for the socially factual nature of place is now well suspected, if not fully established. Berger and Luckman state the problem in this way:

"We can best describe the path along which we set out by reference to two of the most famous and most influential 'marching orders' for sociology.

One was given by Durkheim in The Rules of Sociological Method, the other by Weber in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Durkheim tells us: 'The first and most fundamental rule is: consider social facts as things'. And Weber observes 'Both for sociology in the present sense, and for history, the object of cognition is the subjective meaning-complex of action'. These two statements are not contradictory. Society does indeed possess objective facticity. And society is indeed built up by activity that expresses subjective meaning. And, incidentally, Durkheim knew the latter, just as Weber knew the former. It is precisely the dual character of society in terms of objective facticity and subjective meaning that makes it 'reality sui generis', to use another key term of Durkheim's. The central question for sociological theory can then be put as follows: How is it possible that human activity (Handeln) should produce a world of things (choses)? In other words, an adequate understanding of the 'reality sui generis' of society requires an enquiry into the manner in which this reality is constructed. This inquiry we maintain, is the task of the sociology of knowledge." 24

If we were to replace 'society' with 'place' in the appropriate contexts in this passage we should have a fair indication of the nature of the problem. What the Barkerian formulation lacks (because it does not need it) is a social theory about the way in which behaviour settings come to have their structural permanence and more particularly how and why the part of the synomorph that Barker calls 'milieu' exerts its coercive and constraining characteristics on people engaged in social action. It is to this problem that we now turn.

Notes and References

CHAPTER III

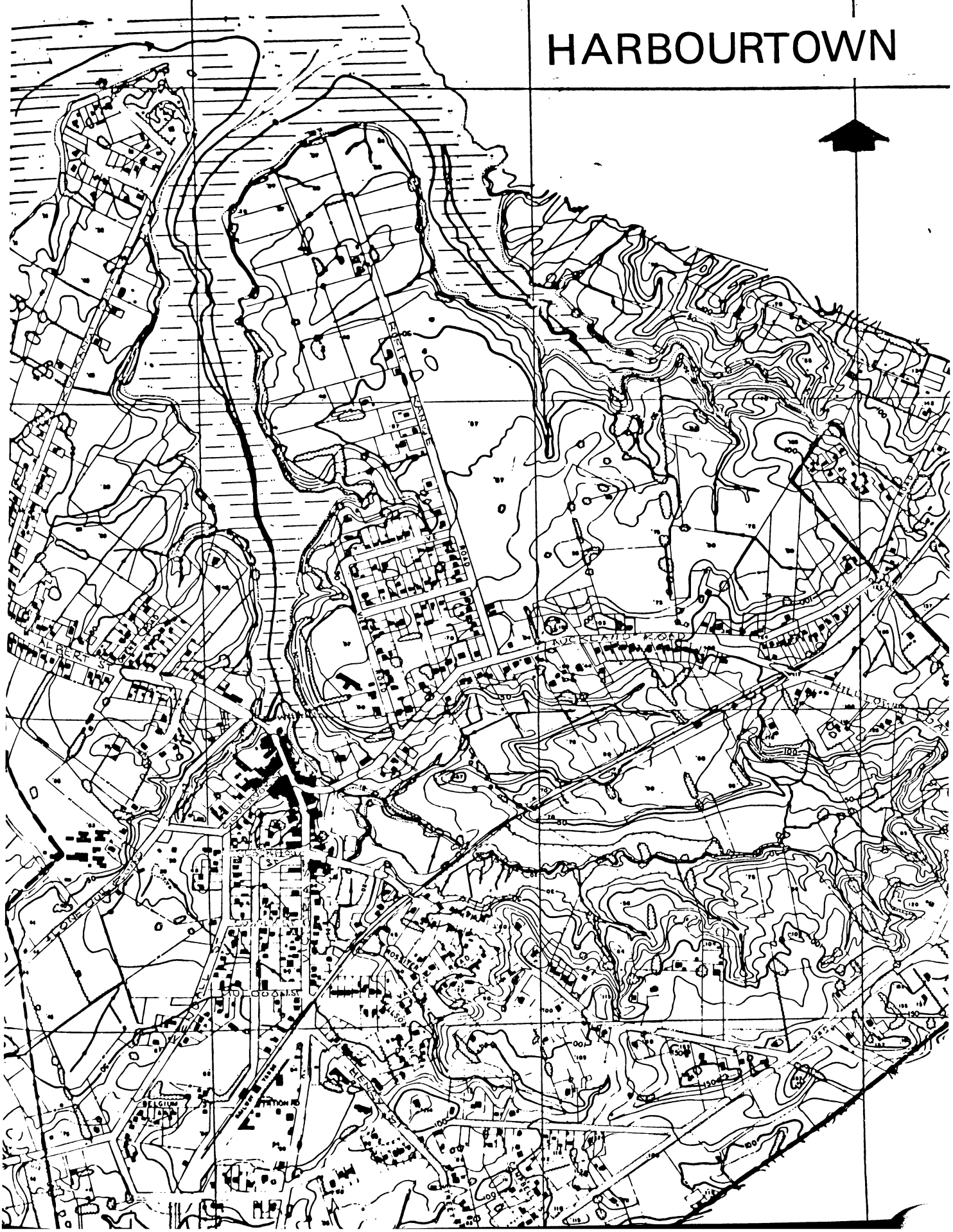
1. The theory that the zone of transition was also an area with high crime and delinquency rates is, of course, misinterpreted if the relationship is thought to be causal.
2. Malinowski 1932.
3. Oppenheim 1973, 94.
4. Zorbaugh 1929; Thrasher 1927; Arensberg and Kimball 1940; Wilmott and Young 1957.
5. Martindale 1960, 253-255.
6. Bottomore and Rubel 1963, 67.
7. Lundberg 1939.
8. Bell and Newby 1971.
9. It must be noted that Hitler's social theory is a perversion of Tonniesian ideas. Tonnies published his opposition to the National Socialists by advocating (in 1932) in an open letter to the Schleswig-Holsteinisch Volkzeitung, a vote for the S.D.P. and later in the same year, by a defence of Professor Cohn who had been suspended at the University of Breslau. Cahnman 1973, 286-290.
10. Tonnies 1963, 45.
11. Durkheim 1964.
12. This is not, of course, to include the references to spatial organisation in Levi-Strauss's main work, particularly The Raw and the Cooked, or indeed recurrently in the literature of social anthropology, but this does not emerge as a sociology in itself.
13. Bell and Bell 1969; Briggs 1959.
14. Timms 1971, 7 et seq.
15. Gould and White 1974, 45.
16. of Owen 1969.
17. Bell and Bell 1969, 182-183

18. "We felt we were creating a new life for people - not just new houses." Housing Department Official (ret'd)., personal communication.
19. Chermayeff and Tzonis 1971, xxv.
20. Suttles 1972, 18.
21. Barker 1968. and cf 1955
22. ibid., 7.
23. Chagall, Marc. The Dead Man. cf Cassou, 1965.
24. Berger and Luckman 1969, 18.

P A R T I I

Place as a Social Fact

HARBOURTOWN



CHAPTER IV

Place as a Social Fact I : Concepts

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter it was argued that "place" fulfilled the requirements of a Durkheimian social fact, it was external, exerted a constraint. This was incorporated in the definition of "place" as:

that part of the physical space . . . which is created through social interaction and which exerts a constraint upon future interaction.

A distinction has been drawn between habitat and environment, the former being the material conditions which humans create for themselves, and the latter being the geographical conditions given in nature. "Habitat" is was argued was created by man's conscious working upon the environment whether with instrumental or expressive aims; preserving native forest in a national park, or planting exotic forest for timber milling, is thus equally the conversion of environment into habitat.

The purpose of the present chapter is to explore further the conceptual problems arising from the enquiry into "place". In particular the aim is to consider the conceptual requirements for an empirical investigation. In order to do this the concepts must be shown to be distinct and their sociological implications made clear.

The distinction between environment and habitat has already been discussed, but in the present section the interest becomes primarily focussed upon habitat, and upon the concept of "place. Place differs from habitat in an important way; whereas habitat and environment are

concepts borrowed from common usages in the natural sciences and are approximately analogous, "place" being directly concerned with social interaction is wholly sociological. Rather than having distinctly physical attributes which may be related directly to the survival and adaptation of organisms, "place" is an item of culture and has its existence within a cultural frame of reference.

"Place" however, is still to be distinguished from the concrete referents of culture, "places". It is an abstract concept though one at a rather low level of abstraction. In terms of the discussion in Chapter I "place" is a Language II concept, it does not denote "a place" though it is highly isomorphic with the concepts of place that people use in everyday life.

The empirical reality with which the sociologists enquiry must deal is places, and places as they are defined, used, thought about and otherwise dealt with in the everyday life of a particular human group. About these enquiry should be organised by three broad problem areas:

- (i) the characteristics of places as independent entities, i.e. an analysis of the socio-cultural aspects of places isolatable as things;
- (ii) the relationships ^{among} between places, i.e. the ecological features of an assemblage of places.
- (iii) the significatory aspects of places, i.e. their symbolic functions as items bearing meaning for the community which uses them.

In this chapter some of the problems of analysis of these aspects will be discussed and in the following some examples taken from Harbourtown will be considered.

In the previous chapter "place" was given special meaning as that part of the physical space inhabited by a human group, which is created through social interaction and which exerts a constraint upon the future course of interaction. A further distinction was made - between "habitat" and "environment" - the former being the consciously created material conditions which human beings produce for themselves, and the latter being given by the geographical conditions in which they find themselves.

Our concern lies with habitat, a concept which is of more general order than "place". Habitat is the term which has been used to designate that part of the physical environment which has been created by human beings for both instrumental and expressive purposes. Human habitats are the product of all human working upon the naturally given environment, whether in the building of cities, the driving of railway tunnels or the planting of foreign trees and plants.

But "place" differs from habitat conceptually. Place is produced by interaction and cannot be separated from it. It is a low level of abstraction being removed only one step from the concrete reality "a place", that is, a milieu in which social interaction happens and which is recognised as being appropriate for that kind of interaction rather than others.

2. Places as independent entities

Roger G. Barker, it will be remembered, distinguished between milieu and standing pattern of behaviour, and referred to such milieu and behaviour combinations as seemed to be closely bound together as "synomorphs". This scheme concentrated upon behaviour; it was, one

might with justification say, the outcome of a particular approach to research, the method of direct observation which Barker opposes to the clinical, analytical and "destructive" methods which are available techniques for the scientist: ". . . it is important for psychology to discover tender-minded non-destructive techniques for preserving intact naturally occurring behaviour and its ecological environment"¹, he says. Such a programme established early that behaviour and milieu were inseparable, both in the taken-for-granted world of the people of Midwest and eventually, in the scientific account of Midwesterners' behaviour. Still, Barker's "milieu" like "behaviour" is timeless and individually focussed; there is no concern with meaning, not because it does not exist but presumably, as in the phonological analysis of speech by the linguist, because it is not a relevant datum.

All of this tends to make Barker's analysis deceptively clear, and indeed, revolutionary. At a blow all that has puzzled us about towns, cities and settlements becomes comprehensible. It is only apparently so however, for the problems which Barker continuously skirts are problems of collective action and consciousness, and are not as easily pinned down as are the problems of behaviour in situ.

Barker's analysis provides an invaluable starting point for the development of a sociology of place but it is necessary to re-conceptualise in social terms what Barker has discovered using a psychological framework. This task cannot be set out step by step but rather must proceed by a series of venturings out in one direction after another until the lines of enquiry intersect. At this point in the enquiry however, it is appropriate to reconsider the definition of place given earlier.

The phrase "created by social interaction" carries the danger of reification and perhaps also of oversimplification - social interaction can be of many kinds from the nod of recognition which acquaintances give as they pass on opposite sides of the street to highly complex exchanges of verbal information. Telephone calls, gestures, looking at works of art, sitting in a church or in a theatre, avoiding an approaching person on a footpath, are all interactions of more or less intensity, frequency, duration and formality. In addition any individual interacts with other people, with things, with ideas, with memories and with emotions, both his own and those of others, and he does so in virtue of categories which are socially assigned.

Interaction has been so widely discussed in the social sciences that it has developed a literature of bewildering prolixity. To be short on the matter, interaction here means all the regular recurrent and reciprocal contacts between humans that take place in virtue of holding one or other social statuses. Interaction has a spatial locus - even people speaking on the telephone are located somewhere and take that location into account. It is this fact which makes it possible to speak of place as created by social interaction.

There are other reasons, however. The social world is a world of meanings. Such meanings are bestowed by humans through their common agreements thus, the meaning bestowed on a word like "now" or "table" cannot arise any other way than through the interaction of people who act as though they have agreed to respond to conventional signs in particular ways. The case of language is also the case of place. At one level "a place" is a conventional sign about which there is consensual action. "A place", thus, is not any

spatial location, it is one which bears meaning. The meaning of a place is, again at the most directly manifested level, a particular kind of social action.

The conceptual hierarchy considered so far can be ordered now as follows, environment (the most general concept), habitat, place, "a place". With the last named we move from the abstract to the concrete - "places" are the concrete and observable "things" which people deal with in everyday life.

In Barker's scheme "synomorphs" were combinations of behaviour and milieu, and it will be recalled that milieu included times and days (such as Christmas and July 4th) and not merely spatial locations. Synomorphs are very nearly the equivalents of places but differ in the respect that they are behavioural, that is to say psychological units. If a behaviour is the psychological definer of a synomorph, then interaction is the appropriate sociological definer of a place. To avoid the inevitable confusion that will arise let us designate "a place" in this sense a milieu, using this term in just the sense that Barker does, with the exception that it will mean a specifiable geographic location only.

Milieux have the following characteristics:

1. they are cues for specific kinds of action;
2. they often pre-exist and outlast the lifetimes of the individuals and often the societies which create them. (Examples are the paa of New Zealand and the megalith monuments of Europe.)
3. they are often interrelated and may be interdependent - a town may be considered a milieu or a collection of milieux.

These characteristics are considered at more length in due course, for the present it is necessary to consider the other half of the "a place = milieu + interaction" equation - namely interaction itself.

Previously it was argued that all interaction had a spatial location, a truism which need not be further belaboured, but it is also the case that much interaction is transient, ephemeral or non-significant and requires no special locus but may take place anywhere where it is not forbidden. It is necessary therefore to distinguish patterned types of interaction which are thought to have significance for the community by its members from private or ephemeral kinds of interaction. With a few exceptions what goes on in a family home for example is not thought of as having community significance, but the meetings, ceremonies, transactions, exchanges and so on which take place in public places, or what might be called "community milieux" are usually thought of in this way by local people and may be so considered in sociological explanation. The latter kind of interaction is here called social action. What happens inside the family home may have community significance as is the case when some families act in socially disapproved ways, noisy parties, neglected gardens, and frequent domestic disputes are examples of such things. From the sociologist's point of view what happens in the family home almost certainly has significance for the whole community, but it is commonly inaccessible as Ronald Frankenberg notes in his discussion of field work in Pentredu-waith. Harbourn town is no exception but Harbourn towners nevertheless seemed to distinguish clearly between private life and public even though in fact the two were often continuous. Local people maintained that the shopkeepers and exchange operators knew more than

anyone else about what was happening in the town.

Immediately another conceptual problem arises - who thinks so? . . . and how does the sociologist know? In the first case the recourse is to the community members themselves, there is generally fair agreement as to what the broad categories of social action are, and the members of various community segments can also define the categories important to them. Though there are areas of uncertainty (is the funeral of a noted citizen a public or a private event?) the local person is usually capable of saying with fair certainty which kinds of social interaction fall within each category for the culture under consideration. Milieux, thus, may be regarded as theatres of social action, and, though one would not wish to pursue the dramatic analogy too vigorously, it is not an inappropriate one, nor one too unfamiliar to be used in connection with this discussion.²

The difference between Barker's use of milieu and the one adopted here, a sociological usage, should now become apparent. When Barker speaks of milieux he means concretely dimensionable places (he also uses times, such as the Fourth of July, but always in relation to place) which has patterned behaviour correlated with it. Milieux are essential to his analysis but only in the sense that behaviour is affected by them, his psychological ecology is an ecology of synomorphs, or rather of higher order clusterings which he calls "behaviour settings", not of milieux as such. This discussion has stressed other elements. Milieux here, as for Barker, are concrete dimensionable places, but they are also places which have meanings³ for community members, and they are "theatres of social action". Barker's conceptualisation allows for a positivistic analysis of behaviour settings; its end results are quantifiable and provide, potentially, a predictive model for individual behaviour. The present model, though able to give empirical content, stresses interpretation and understanding of a conceptual universe, the community.

i Ecological Relationships

Earlier it was noted above that a whole country or city could be considered a milieu, though one of a very complex kind; how then are milieux to be discriminated from each other? Barker, in dealing with behaviour settings points out that where in fact, all the phenomena of a particular field or system are related to one another, a conventional measure of interdependence can be made to find few or many units depending on what level of interdependence is chosen as the cut off point. He arrives at a measure, K , which tests the degree to which synomorphs are related according to seven different criteria. A score of 21 (out of a possible 49) means that the compared synomorphs are not part of the same setting.

Barker remarks that . . . "The critical value of K for identifying separate behaviour settings was originally set at 21 on an empirical basis; this value appeared to identify community parts with phenomenal reality and with dynamic significance for behaviour" ⁴. What Barker means, presumably, is that his K_{21} settings corresponded with the "community parts" that local people referred to as part of their everyday lives.

Though it is important to be able to establish objective measures for the sake of exactitude in an empirical study, it does not necessarily carry our understanding of place much further. It is the behavioural aspect which Barker's K measures, and no more than that. However, the quotation in the previous paragraph

indicates that there is another way, and on which is sociologically more important, of arriving at a list of independent milieux and that is to accept the analysis which local people offer either through their words or through their actions. It seems clear enough that measurement follows mainly to clear up ambiguities; even though using the painstaking Barker technique makes it technically feasible to compare every community part with every other.

The presumption which underlies this discussion is that "community parts" - milieux - are not randomly distributed, they are arranged in ways that are culturally characteristic. It seems appropriate, in the meantime, to regard such an arrangement of milieux as an ecosystem, that is, a set of parts so related as to be functionally consistent with the needs of the people who use them and controlled by their common valuations and norms in its maintenance growth and change.

The use of thinking in ecosystem terms is that it allows for two different but related types of enquiry. The first of these is the analysis of parts of the ecosystem, their relationships and characteristic patterns; the second is the consideration of the functional (and dysfunctional) consequences of certain types of relationship and patterning both internally and externally. Under the first of these, the analysis of structure and process, we may put the problems of the classification, "natural history" and modification of assemblages of milieux showing characteristic features e.g. the service town, the synthetic community etcetera; under the second it becomes possible to analyse the extent to which functional features relate to other

elements of social life; The control of racial structure through the manipulation of community settings by elite or other groups, for example. Further examples of such control may be seen in the extent to which working class neighbourhoods frequently become the homes of coloured immigrants when such neighbourhoods are beginning to fall into decay, and in the construction of defensive communities, as were the Jewish ghettos in mediaeval European cities. The major point is that human ecosystems, unlike the plant and animal assemblages on which the analogy is based, are infinitely more complex in their variability and capacity for modification, indeed also, for their tolerance of dysfunctional elements. A trace of chlorine will kill all the animal life in a pond, but even after a major war human ecosystems rebuild themselves much in the manner that existed beforehand.

ii The Boundary Problem

A further set of problems which is raised by any consideration of "system" is that connected with boundaries. The question, put crudely, is, what are the boundaries of the unit entities involved, and, what are the boundaries of the system of entities? The problem can be given some simple answers here, though they will require some qualification later.

In brief there are two sources of boundary distinction, the first is the observation of objective criteria, the second is the subjective analysis applied by ordinary people. Most milieux, fortunately, have distinctive boundaries, walls, doors, fences, changes of physical structure and so on, but there are

also less tangible boundaries which are known to common users of these milieux. Thus though the church is bounded by its walls and is entered through the door, the subjective boundary of the church is farther away - interaction is modified and individual behaviour changed at an intangible borderland. This border is part of the social matrix, it is not measurable in any objective sense and constitutes part of the meaning system which community dwellers know about. That there are various kinds of signs which influence this kind of boundary analysis and boundary crossing is immediately obvious, but raises yet further problems.

The boundaries of the ecosystem must, if the word is to have any meaning at all, be definable. Here the matter is not merely a question of accepting the local social definition since it is the very fact of external but unperceived connections which may affect the local community. Vidich and Bensmann⁵ showed clearly that it was not possible to think of independent local communities but rather that all are woven into a complex network of dependencies, economic, political, social and cultural. That every ecosystem is part of a wider system limited only (at present) by the planet, is not particularly a novel observation. Radcliffe-Brown in discussing this from the point of view of the ethnographer noted that there was no way which was satisfactory for the observer to define boundaries other than by arbitrary decision⁶. The concept of ecosystem, however, does have some advantages in this respect in that it permits us to consider the ways in which social life presents itself as being of some fairly obvious types, which for the purposes of the study, can be seen as bounded. Thus closeness of settlement sets apart town from farm

land in a particularly obvious way, and the degree of coherence of a township as an independent unit is easily decided as soon as something is known of the number and kinds of local milieux, the extent of institutional structure and the degree of autonomy in local affairs.

That boundary which is most clear cut in differentiated settlements, however, is closeness. This should not be confused with density (number of persons per unit) but simply with the distribution of type milieux, in this case dwelling places. Close settlement stands out in any aerial photograph or in any journey taken on the ground, but "closeness" can only be defined in relation to other kinds of settlement. Thus, for example, the kind of closeness exhibited by a small New Zealand town is vastly different from that of an English village of the same size of population - the latter might occupy half the site area or less. Similarly the kind of settlement described by Fei ⁷ for South China, by Arensberg and Kimball ⁸ for County Clare in Ireland, and in a host of other studies, shows that there is a complex relationship between culture, economic activity, social organisation and collective sentiment, affecting closeness. Nevertheless closeness, as an immediately observable physical feature, stands out.

The criterion of closeness for the establishment of settlement boundaries is, in principle at least, objectively determinable (by counting dwelling places in unit areas at specified distances along a predetermined line, closeness will be demonstrated by particular types of graph curve) but such considerations are scarcely a major concern for the sociological field worker since the fact of closeness demonstrates itself to

him. What is more difficult to decide upon is the extent to which a particular assemblage of milieux constitutes an independent item of the ecosystem isolable for study with fair confidence that it is not simply a dependent part. Harbourtown, for example, has about two miles distant another village which is settled in relation to a factory; this "village" and other hamlets nearby could be considered to be part of the Harbourtown ecosystem. Insofar as closeness makes each separable they could be regarded as distinct entities, yet clearly there are extensive links of many kinds between them. The principle distinguishing point, however, is that Harbourtowners and the outliers do not regard themselves as making up a single system. In the end the answer has to be that boundedness while being objectively discernible, is a shifting concept in day-to-day life. There is an "inside-outside" problem which is solved contextually by people using the system. In fact the problem seems to be resolved largely on the basis which Evans-Pritchard described for the segmentary opposition of Nuer tribes, though in that case feuds and conflict kept the boundaries distinct, it is certainly useful to ask whether local people's concepts of boundaries are not defined according to the order of the groups to which they see **their own** opposed. Thus there is a sense in which all the inhabitants are "inside" in relation to people in another area of the same order who are "outside", but that all become "inside" in relation to an area of higher order.

The discussion so far has set out the distinctions between town and country as being basic to the study of milieu assemblages. However, the consideration of "closeness" only points to one kind of milieu assemblage - nodes of close settlement

distinguished by a relatively high level of milieu differentiation - but of course, other types exist and we may as easily travel in the opposite direction, from close settlement to open, using again the relations of culture, social organisation and economic base as the problematic areas. Nelson⁹ in his study of a farming district which possessed only the most limited array of public milieux, a hall, a church, cemetery and a few other such units, showed that nevertheless the residents of the district recognised the boundaries of their district as being both geographically and socially concrete, and thought of the district as supplying the base for social action vis a vis other districts. Nelson's study provides an important reconceptualisation of territorial and social convergence but it presents students who seek for simple definers with a dilemma. It is obvious that Nelson's district is at best a subsection of a more extensive system, it lacks institutional autonomy in any sense, indeed it lacks most of the institutions to be found in the nearby town, its milieu assemblage is limited to a few, but evidently essential, milieu for recreational and cultural uses, the economic base is the farm, but farms could not exist for long without urban services. Nevertheless local people see the district as constituting a geographical, social, and insofar as they give it their loyalty and hold feelings of affection for it, a psychological reality. The "local definition" of boundaries then, is different from the boundary decisions which, it seems, must be made by an objective social scientist, but the question which remains is, "which should take precedence?". The answer is perhaps not so remarkable, it is, simply, "Neither".

Earlier it was suggested that social ecosystems have no limits that are logically assignable - there are, however, degrees of localisation and it was suggested that closeness of settlement was one way of separating town and farmlands from one another. The weakness of this criterion employed alone, is now apparent and the fact of the definition of boundaries by local people has thrust itself forward with some insistence. In addition the matter of unperceived links which have local consequences has been raised. The problem has been further examined as a question of segmentary opposition analogous to that of tribes with segmentary lineage systems. An ecological analysis should ignore the latter features as extraneous, but a sociological analysis has, clearly, to take cognisance of them, thus the preliminary analysis is simply sufficient to show on an objective basis that isolable entities exist; the sociology of place is not concerned with whether physical boundaries exist but with social boundaries and the means by which they are created as well as the conditions under which they are transcended or are simply irrelevant. Here it is a question of local people's definition of the situation that is important, but it must needs be considered against the discoverable but unperceived or unintended links that exist across boundaries. Here also must be contrasted local ideology or statements of normative prescription (there is no race discrimination here, it is simply a matter of chance that Maoris live in those hovels across the railway lines ¹⁰⁾ with actual patterns of social action.

The question of boundary creation, maintenance and change is a sociological one and it is inescapably connected with socially bestowed meaning. Though objective measures may aid in

the definition of local ecosystems they do not adequately define them for sociological purposes. At best it must be said that boundaries, as part of the social facticity, are conventional, contextual and situational. In a larger enterprise, the question of socio-cultural systems, the questions of the number and coerciveness of social boundaries will be useful as a way of distinguishing relatively closed from relatively open systems - but that is another matter.

3. Significatory aspects of place

i Sign and symbol

It has been argued so far that place is not a neutral physical context for human action, but that it encodes complex meanings. It follows that every individual acquires as part of his culture a body of ways of interpreting or decoding these meanings. On the one hand place is the objectivation of a cultural tradition - a social construct - on the other it is a code to be read by the members of a community. This "reading" is, furthermore, largely taken-for-granted by properly socialised members of the community. For them it is uncontroversial and unproblematic.

The problem to be examined is that of the ways in which meaning is embodied in places. If place is a reality that is socially constructed then just what are the social dimensions of that reality? One approach to this problem has been that of the "conceptual geographers". Gould and White in their study Mental Maps give an account of the differences between the concepts which people hold of their geographical environment and the objective reality. Gould and White's approach however is disappointing for while it is useful enough in obtaining descriptions on a quantitative basis, it is a-theoretical and the authors simply assume the factual nature of the

phenomena they are dealing with. Mental maps are given in the nature of human experience, there is no enquiry into how or why they come into existence.¹¹

A sociological approach must start with scepticism about mental maps in the first place. It may be, after all, that they are mere artifacts of questionnairing - constructs in the mind of the geographer. We might argue that "mental maps" are mere mistakes. They do not represent geographical reality and people never, or seldom, think that they do.

Geographical location and social valuation in fact belong to different provinces of meaning; it is an elementary but fundamental mistake to confuse them, or to take the concepts of one to the situation of the other. For example the school child walking home avoids the street where the fierce dog lives, the parents with young children avoid a suburb with a poor population because of its inadequate schools, and unaccompanied women keep away from the central urban area at the time when hotel bars close. These avoidances are examples of a rational estimate of risks, they are by no means to be identified with the actual topography or even with any individual's concept of this topography (which indeed may be mistaken, in the sense that he thinks that some feature has a different relative location from that which it actually has) but are part of the set of expectancies based upon a person's knowledge and goals, primary among which is his own physical safety and social advantage and that of his family.

We are thus concerned with a number of different "levels" or categories of knowledge about place. These may be designated as:

1. topographical knowledge, that is, knowledge of the location of physical features in relation to one another;

2. socially based knowledge, that is, the ascertainable reputation of certain places on which a rational estimate of risks and advantages may be based;
3. socially sanctioned knowledge, normative (ideological) concepts of place including putative reputation, gossip, advice on suitability;
4. idiosyncratic assumptions about place such as a preference for a westerly face or a dislike of new suburbs.

The last two categories move clearly from the area of "place" as consisting of specifiable locations, to valuational schemes in which place is not simply itself, but is something more. Reality has, so to speak, shifted ground from specifiable houses, streets, cities, or countries, to generalised concepts "in the head" of the individual. In order to understand these we must now return to the more general problem of social meaning.

Place and the Stock of knowledge

Social reality, Alfred Schutz tells us, is fundamentally "intersubjective":

By the term 'social reality' I wish to be understood the sum total of objects and occurrences within the social cultural world as experienced by the common sense thinking of men living their daily lives among their fellow men, connected with them in manifold relations of interaction. It is the world of

cultural objects and social institutions within which we have to find our bearings and with which we have to come to terms. From the outset we, the actors on the social scene, experience the world we live in as a world both of nature and of culture, not as a private but as an intersubjective one, that is, a world common to all of us, either actually given or potentially accessible to everyone; and this involves intercommunication and language.

12

It is fundamental to the argument here that places are items bearing meaning in a way somewhat analogous to, but not identical with words. It might be possible for example, to speak of a grammar and syntax of place, certainly of a morphology, as it is possible to do with language. We may note also that language, like place, is an abstract category of different order from "languages" and "places". Nevertheless, the apparent resemblance is not strong enough for a model to be constructed on a linguistic analogy not, at least, without departing from the analogy very early. It seems then, that place must be treated as a separate and finite area of reality which is experienced directly, but which may be explained, discussed or named in words ¹³.

That place is part of the social world as Schutz defines it is clear enough, for place is experienced in common with other human beings, though not perhaps with all others. That is, varying elements of social structure may permit or restrict the use of particular places to some groups or categories of people. If such controls are to continue, however, they must be based on a social consensus, that is, on intersubjective understandings in the light of which an individual alters or modifies his behaviour.

If we accept Schutz's position as it has been quoted above we must accept that the social world presents itself to us directly and in obvious ways. Yet it is obvious that since

sociality is not a condition for some kinds of life actions but for any kind of human life at all, the foregoing definition is somewhat too broad for our purposes. It is true that social states differ from psychological states which are experienced totally idiosyncratically, and from physiological states such as the proliferation of cells in carcinomae, or the response to oxygen deprivation, which arise outside the consciousness of the individual. The content of the psychological state of say, a dream or fantasy, however is derived from the experiences of the individual, distorted or recombined perhaps, but not spontaneously generated¹⁴. Similarly, the physiological states have social responses, the most extreme of them, death, eliciting reactions of grief, fear, horror, compassion, and various practical measures to alleviate these feelings as well as to restore the structural relations of the bereaved. The social world must embody human existence entirely, it seems, and may only be arbitrarily broken up, for it is clear that all experience, whether of interior or exterior events, from eating steak to considering the propositions of Boolean algebra, is social experience.

Schutz does not approach this problem directly, nor does he distinguish, it seems, between psychological and social reality in a way that makes sociology a distinct discipline. Such an approach is, at first glance, a retreat from Durkheim's hard-edged distinction in Rules, but the criticism loses its force somewhat when we consider that Durkheim did not argue so much for the separate nature of social and psychological facts, as for their separability. It is the collective nature of social facts that is important and constitutes them as data for sociology, it is not

that they are not experienced in individual consciousness, but that they are not experienced fully in this way.

Taking as his standpoint the typical individual, Schutz sets off the "world of daily life" as a reality distinct from others. It seems indeed that the "world of daily life" and the "social world" are, for Schutz, virtually identical.

'World of daily life' shall mean the intersubjective world which existed long before our birth, experienced and interpreted by Others, our predecessors, as an organised world. Now it is given to our experience and interpretation. All interpretation of this world is based upon a stock of previous experiences of it, our own and those handed down to us by our parents and teachers, which in the form of 'knowledge at hand' function as a scheme of reference.

15

The sociality of knowledge-at-hand is inescapable and while it may be that it is by the individual refractions of the total stock of knowledge that any individual lives his life, and to which he may add, there seems to be no way of avoiding the reality of this stock as a product of interaction ¹⁶. In other words what constitutes individual knowledge of the everyday world is a personal variant (a "refraction") of the total stock available. In highly diversified societies the total stock is enormous whereas in societies which have a relatively small amount of economic specialisation or cultural diversity the stock is smaller. Even though the total stock may be very small indeed, as it might be in some small scale kin-based societies, it is still too large to be totally known by any one individual. This is not merely because of the scale of the society and the diversity of specialties but because the stock of knowledge is an artefact of interaction, and it is only in the very smallest groups that the interaction of each person with every other occurs.

Even here, differences in age, sex, and consanguinity ration some kinds of knowledge.

Given that these claims are empirically verifiable, it seems not implausible to classify the stock of knowledge at hand as a social fact in Durkheim's sense.

As an item of the stock of knowledge at hand in the world of everyday life, place is clearly important. Place is mundane and taken-for-granted, it exists before, during and after social action takes place and it serves as a setting for that action. Almost as important then, in social life, as what sort of action may take place, is where it can take place. Place, thus, is always implied in social action.

Place also has a dimension in time. Most places have a chronological history sometimes with an arbitrary starting date. A particular place, say a building, a hospital or library has, in our custom, a foundation stone which bears the data on which the building became officially part of the assemblage of milieux which makes up the town; among savage tribes new buildings often require some ritual to declare them open to common use (among the Maori in former times rites to remove tapu were practised - modern and attenuated forms still persist) and in many cases the lifetime of the building or place is considered an important feature of it. W. Lloyd Warner ¹⁷ in connection with this last aspect mentions in his book The Living and the Dead the way in which houses in Yankee City had genealogies, and describes in detail the disruption of tradition when one such house passes into the hands of a self-promoting local politician of lower-class origins.

Though this subject cannot be considered at length in this section two further observations are in order:

1. historical time in the local community usually marks with precise dates the significance of places. It is thus social time that is measured since "old" or "new" are relative categories and relate to things, ideas, groups, or events which are valued in the past.
2. Places may have short time scales. They have only brief lives as is the case, for example, of the meeting place of some clique or group which is identified by the members as belonging to them, but which is returned to the common assemblage when the clique ceases to exist.

There are manifold and complex time-place relations of which only two have been dealt with here, but we should note the essential feature of place, or rather of milieux, the concrete reality of place, is its durability. Buildings, houses, streets, rocks and hills endure beyond the doings of their inhabitants, they concretise time and give social action temporal continuity and repeatability. The present moment is the point of intersection between place and the stream of time.

ii Place and Symbol

The foregoing sections have suggested that place is significant in the social world in many different ways. As part of the concrete reality of every day experience, as part of the naturally

occurring features of the landscape, as a node or point of intersection with time, as a cue to social action, place is embedded in the world of ordinary experience. It is the subject of normative control, it is valued, moral sentiments attach to it, it is the subject of aesthetic, religious, and other cultural emphases; it participates simultaneously in different finite universes of meaning and sometimes pins them together. Validation for these assertions is advanced in later sections, but in the present it is necessary to sort out two concepts which will be applied to place in due course.

These two, sign and symbol, have caused more trouble than enough to philosophers; sociologists have used them with less inhibition more or less interchangeably with one another. Perhaps the present writer's conviction that use is meaning should be enough to settle the question. However, it seems that there is no way of escaping the distinction of these terms even if it is to be understood to be solely for the purposes of this essay.

Discussion of symbolism usually begins with a recital of names in which those of Whitehead, Cassirer and Langer figure prominently and the discussion invariably turns towards a consideration of the linguistic aspects of meaning. We are not, however, concerned here with full anatomy of meaning but only with the way that socially important meaning is conveyed by the concrete objects which we call milieux. The other issues, apart from the phenomena to be indicated by the words "sign" and "symbol", those of the relation of the observer to sign and signatum, and the relation of each to the other need not delay us unduly since they become questions respectively of psychology and philosophy, and thus are outside the scope of this discussion.

Signs: The usual distinction, that between natural and conventional signs, is of some interest. Natural signs are those such as the halo round the moon, rising smoke or the footprint of an animal, which leads us to infer the thing or event with which they are always correlated, coming rain, a fire, that the animal is nearby. Conventional signs are those that are not linked with the thing signified in any other than a conventional way, but they always stand for one thing and always for the same thing. The letter 's' always stands for a pair of phonemes (allophones) in English which can be described in terms of the physiology of speech; a red light means "stop", never "go", and a buzzer means that someone is at the door. Signs, heterogeneous though they may be, have this in common, that in the context in which they properly belong they are unambiguous. The last point is important; a "red light district" is not an area restricted to traffic.

Two points, not in themselves surprising, need to be made - the first is that signs are contextual, and the second that they are social. To treat these in order:

1. The contextual nature of signs: A sign has its meaning only within the context to which it rightly belongs. Thus, a sign such as a wrong letter in a word may seem incongruous as, for example, when we substitute the other vowels for the 'o' in "fox" in the sentence "John Peel chased the fox.", or ludicrous, as when in the musical Hair a chorus sings "I'm crazy for the red white and blue . . . and yellow". A good deal of humour consists of displacing signs to inappropriate contexts.

The contexts of signs may be very limited, extending to only

a few people as in children's (and adults') secret societies, or very wide extending to the whole human race.

2. The social nature of signs: This point is closely connected with the preceding one. As Suzanne Langer¹⁸ shows in Philosophy in a New Key, the sign-object relationship requires a subject. A sign means nothing until it is interpreted by someone.

Now it might well be said that there are a number of signs which are learned by all humans completely independently - that pain means danger to the body, for example - but if there are such signs they are few and are immediately swamped by sociality. Every sign demands a consensus about its meaning and indeed, the knowledge of signs common to a group is a prerequisite for membership. The person who does not understand signs or attaches an individually attributed meaning to them is an idiot in the literal sense of the term.

Though signs, and more particularly conventional signs, are seldom in themselves immutably tied to what they signify insofar as they inherently mean that thing or state, they are always culturally defined, always contextually bound, and their interpreters always constitute a social category. To live in society is to be a sign reader, to attribute meaning to a new sign is a social act demanding agreement to the convention by at least one other person. Signs constitute the most basic indicator of social consensus.

Symbols: Suzanne Langer distinguishes sign and symbol by the differences in function which each exhibits ¹⁹. If we take the simplest ways in which meaning is conveyed, she says, then the relation is "subject-sign-object". Symbols are more complex, however, a symbol does not give rise to the action appropriate to the presence of its object, instead it gives rise to the conception of the object. Signs lead us to act, symbols lead us to think about things - at the sound of the dinner gong in the boarding house I start to walk to the dining room; the word "dinner" makes me think about that meal. The symbol pattern is "subject-symbol-conception-object", that is, denotation. Symbols have a further function, connotation. By this Langer means the relation of a symbol to its related conception. The connotation remains with the symbol "when the object is neither present nor looked for" ²⁰ and because of this we are able to think about the object without reacting to it overtly at all.

The logical scheme advanced by Langer is not without ambiguity, however. My response to the dinner gong was to walk to the dining room. Was the sound of its ringing a sign or a symbol? Certainly I reacted overtly to the ringing of the gong but I need not have done so, I might have as easily remained where I was having decided to forego dinner. The gong meant, "dinner is served", it called forth in my mind that conception, however, it might merely have conjured up the word "dinner" which then produced the denotative result, a mental picture of people sitting at tables and waiters standing at the ready.

What conclusion may be drawn from this? It is that signs and symbols are by no means clearly distinguishable from one

another in everyday life whatever may be the case in philosophical discourse. We must, it seems, accept that signs that function as signs and nothing else are rather rare and that symbols are very many - moreover both functions may be combined simultaneously in the same signifier. A sign-object, sign-conception and sign-conception-object relationship can be embodied by the same thing, say, a fifty cent piece, and the subject may apply, separately or together, each pattern according to the circumstances. The fifty cent piece means fifty one-cent coins, or the purchasing power such that it can buy any article of fifty or fewer cents value; it also means in addition the sovereignty of the English monarchy, the right of the New Zealand government to issue currency, and, for good measure, the fact that New Zealand has historical links with an 18th century English explorer. The circumstances decide which of these levels of meaning shall be predominant at any one time.

An object seems, then, to be capable of functioning both as sign and symbol - the processes of signification and symbolisation are different in their logical structure and we can thus distinguish between them, but we cannot say unequivocally of any but a few things that they are one or the other.

Langer takes us some distance further. A meaning pattern, she tells us, may be thought about from the point of view of any term in it. If the symbol is taken as the key in the subject-symbol-object pattern then the description of its function will be logical, if the subject is taken as the point of reference then the description will be psychological, but if the object is the basis of reference then "the resulting description begins with the 'knowledge content' postulated in some epistemologies" ²¹.

Perhaps we might argue that beginning with the "knowledge content" is in essence a sociological approach. It is not the individual approach of interpreters that counts, but the collective nature of interpretation. It is not the rigour of the logic that counts, but that the premisses and methods are the cultural property of a particular collectivity of people.

The sociologist starts with the knowledge item "x is a sacred place" differentiated by this quality from other places and therefore forbidden to people who do not hold the appropriate status, and he is able to state this as the "meaning of x", in addition he can trace the implications of that meaning for social action. The description works back from object to subject, and in principle at least, is not debarred from working from the collective to the individual. Though the levels of discourse are different and operationally separate, each implies the other.

The preoccupation with the psychology of symbolism, that is, its examination in terms of the ways in which symbols are apprehended and interpreted by the subject, is continued in Schutz's writings. Here again, though the intention is sociological it seems difficult to escape from what are fundamentally psychological problems. Schutz's analytical scheme starts from the premise that all social life is intersubjective, that is, between subjects sharing a common consciousness of the everyday world ²².

Meaning thus is a subjective interpretation of experiences which are encountered in the world of everyday life and can be reflected upon. Such experiences as acting upon the world or thinking about the world constitute experiences of this kind, and

may be distinguished from reflexive actions, such as blinking and forming letters while writing, and so on. The general category Schutz calls "conduct", but conduct which is directed by a preconceived project, he calls action. "Working" is overt action ²³.

So far Schutz remains in a subjective world of which Durkheim's external and coercive social facts seem to be the direct antithesis. Schutz maintains that meaning is always subjectively apprehended (apperceived) and certainly we must agree with him that symbols do not have an objective life of their own outside human consciousness. Yet they do, in a certain manner, exist and they are not included equally in all minds. Symbols and their meanings have to get into human heads from without; they can be learned for the mere price of asking a knowledgeable person what they mean.

There is, thus, a collective quality about symbols which can be demonstrated by their pervasiveness, persistence and generality. Though they do not exist in all minds, they always exist in some minds either directly, or through storage in books and records. Symbols have socially bestowed meanings which persist and are added to as time passes - they remain in currency and they are also general to some group however small, that is, they are recognised and interpreted in a social context. It is for these reasons that today we can read cuneiform but can only guess at the meanings of Minoan Linear A inscriptions - it is because of the social retention of symbolism that Jewish ritual and law is recognisably today what it was at the time of the Roman occupation and that boys of thirteen can read texts which have not changed in three thousand years.

iii Symbols and the Community

The analysis of symbols is a direct expression of a theory of meaning. The theory, as Schutz handles it, (and implicitly as Langer does also) is that the meanings which symbols represent are intersubjective, that is, part of the common stock of knowledge of people socialised within the same culture. If they were interobjective there would be no problem in fact -- such is the case of traffic signs which are promulgated individually by an approved authority and the rule or rules for their interpretation published.

The problem is to move the theory of meaning from the psychological ground which Langer and Schutz provide for it, to cultural ground. The problem for sociology is not just "how things convey meaning" but also what kinds of meanings they convey and to whom. The concern with the content of symbols, with what they mean tends however, to obscure the fact that a theory of meaning is implied.

There is a tendency for theories of meaning to seem to hang in the air, in a place remote from the doings of ordinary men pursuing ordinary lives. Since this "ordinary life" is what the meaning is meant to construe we must not turn away from it but rather return to it as a test of theory. This is no mere moralising, the studies of meaning in the social context raise a different question from the studies of meaning per se. It is to the former that we must next turn.

. . .

Most sociologists of the community employ more or less covertly or unconsciously (this term almost always means "unsystematically") a theory of symbolic representation. Few attempt to elucidate it.

Raymond Firth,²⁴ in a famous example shows how in making notes about the manufacture of dye in Tikopia, he was puzzled to see a fresh mark on the rafters of a house. He dismissed the matter from his mind and only later recognised that the mark was a sign to the spirits and ancestors that the dye-making was finished. At one remove from this observation it might be remarked that the sign to the gods, had multiple reference for the humans; it showed that the technical process, the religious system and the kinship system were parts of a systematic whole. Explication of the sign by the Tikopians must necessarily have had recourse to these facts and could hardly proceed without reference to them.

William Foote Whyte²⁵ in his comments on the methods he employed in Street Corner Society describes how on one occasion he used some Italian obscenities in conversation. He was immediately chided for using these words, not because the corner boys were particular, but because he was a man with a college education. Obscenities were thus a class marker, they were a sign of a particular social status. Any analysis of the meaning of the obscenities would have had to take in this aspect as well as the offensive nature of the terms themselves.

Neither Whyte nor Firth finds it necessary to venture into a theory of symbolism to explicate the discoveries that were made on these occasions, nor in fact have the great majority of social anthropologists or sociologists conducting field studies. Two reasons may be advanced for this.

The first is that the sociologist is interested in the status of the knowledge items (objects) which he encounters - are they true, that is, actual existants; are they conveyers of specific meaning to the group members, an elite, some members rather than others; do the people under investigation believe in the efficacy of their knowledge items, when in fact that efficacy does not exist as is the case with spells and magical objects. These are the merest sample of the questions which are generated in such studies, but at their base lies the attempt to penetrate the social system and understand it as, not merely a system of action, but a system of symbols.


The second reason is that symbols, symbolisation and symbol reading are such common human activities that they seem to require no theoretical apparatus in order to understand them. The social anthropologist confronted with the seemingly inexplicable actions of the tribe he is studying assumes that he is dealing with symbols whose denotations and connotations he is unaware of. He does not, however, think in these terms for long, he sets about mastering these symbols by finding out the names of things used and actions carried out, seeking explanations of them from his informants - he does what he would do in his own society were he confronted by some unusual conduct.

The analysis of symbols thus, is a natural human activity in which the sociological field worker has specific training, but this training does not involve an analysis of symbolisation itself even, it might be suggested, in areas as likely to produce this as sociolinguistics. The "knowledge items" are the data of the investigation and the inferences drawn from them lead to statements about social relations.

Warner's Theory of Symbols: The attempt to formulate a sociological theory of symbolisation in a community context has an interesting forerunner in the work of W. Lloyd Warner ²⁶. Warner begins with a theory of meaning, turns to the anatomy of signs and symbols, and concludes by showing the functions of the symbolisation process. Meaning, Warner states, depends on the existence of a community of interpreters; the world of objects becomes a world of meanings by the fact that objects are awarded meanings and thus become signs. A sign plus its meaning is a symbol ²⁷.

In order to limit the meaning of "sign" Warner creates a scale which distinguishes between "pure signs", those which are not significant in themselves but point to something else (as, for example, do the letters of the alphabet or the conventional signs used for street marking) and "pure objects", that is objects which have no meaning beyond themselves. Between pure signs and pure objects lie intermediate signs and objects, each category being distinguished by whether sign or object predominates. Thus, a Type II intermediate sign is one in which there is a predominance of signification over the "in-itself" meaning of the sign as might be the case when a house stands for an historical connection while of course being also a "house-in-itself" ²⁸.

The attribution of meaning in Warner's scheme is based in a complex transaction in which the culturally defined context determines which part of the available stock of signs, words, gestures and so on is used, and in which both "sender" and "receiver" take part in separate acts of meaning attribution. The success of this transaction will depend finally upon the correspondence existing between the interpretations of both sender and receiver.



Such transactions are not necessarily confined to the immediate present, signs created in the past such as paintings or inscriptions continue to be interpreted in the present, though of course, these acts of interpretation flow in one direction only²⁹. Warner distinguishes two further aspects of meaning, the rational and the non-rational. The former is concerned with attributions of which the references are verifiable, and the latter to those which are evocative and not susceptible to empirical investigation. Symbols are organised in coordinated clusters (symbol systems) as in the case of a religious rite or other system in which the order and kinds of symbols are prescribed. These symbols serve to evoke sentiments which reinforce group solidarity and establish and reinforce norms. Non-rational needs are related to species behaviour and the symbol systems reinforce the behaviour necessary to sustain societal structures, such as the family, which satisfy these needs.

This highly condensed account of Warner's theory does less than justice to the extent of his attempt to give systematic structure to a sociological theory of symbolism. As might be expected in a volume published in 1959, Warner is heavily influenced by the current ideas of symbolic interactionism, but he tends to avoid the psychological concerns of the symbolic interactionists in favour of sociological ones. With this much said, Warner's theories do not in fact deeply satisfy us. His insistence on the relationship of systems of symbols to species life, of the basis of non-rational thought in the exigencies of species continuity, and the satisfaction of needs seem too much the importation of Freud via the bargain basement, and they take away at the same time, the power of the Freudian analysis. Warner's attempt to

create a sociology of non-rational behaviour is only partially successful; it provides an account of mundane life without actually accounting for the dynamics which drive it. When that question is to be answered the answer, tritely, is that society is only the family writ large, and it is a hesitant answer at that.

The meanings of the moral and sacred orders in all cultures more often than not lie deeply bound beneath rational existence in the solid core of species life. It is no accident that most religious beliefs are fundamentally based on simple realities and on the relations of family deities. These figures coming out of the unity of the family express as no other human symbols can, the desire of all men to be one, yet separate for as the sons of God in his family they can be all or could be, brothers. The most diverse peoples can understand the ambivalent feelings of hate and love, conflict and cooperation, for they are all basically molded in the moral and species structure of family life.

30

These criticisms aside, Warner's studies show that Yankee City embodies within its buildings, streets, and monuments, a complex variety of representations of social and cultural concepts, values and traditions as well as representations of particular aspects of the social structure of Newburyport. If the Harry Pulhams of Yankee City seldom really emerge, and if Yankee City sometimes seems more like homely Grovers' Corners than the milieu of tortuous aristocratic snobberies and anguished neuroticism that the New England writers such as Marquand, Lowell, and Stevens would suggest, nevertheless Warner has managed to show the richness of the expressive life and its concrete embodiment, in a way that few other community sociologists have done. The point of greatest significance perhaps, is that Warner develops a plausible analysis of the means by which the symbolic representations of the past are transmitted and transmuted. In particular his

brief explanation of the processes of transformation and condensation ³¹ create a basis for thinking about the ways in which those symbols which begin as referential have become part of the expressive life of Yankee City.

As with other community studies however, Warner's still sees the physical environment as non-problematic, although in fact, his theory prompts attention to its symbolic and therefore problematic aspects. Warner's fascination with the dynamics of symbolisation deflects attention from one of the most powerful assemblages of symbols that Yankee City possesses, namely its physical structure. Thus, Biggy Muldoon's house on Hill Street, and the exhuming and reburying of bodies in the cemeteries, while they are properly taken to be important responses to the conditions of change and mobility in Yankee City social relations, do not fully confront the fact that houses, cemeteries and many other locations were, as it were, the primary data of the culture of Yankee City, and that the incidents associated with them demonstrate their power and persuasiveness as symbolic representations.

To conclude this section then, it is necessary to take note of Warner's theory as an important attempt to create a general theory of social symbolism. This theory covers the main features of the symbolisation process but it is not yet fully adequate for the analysis of place as part of the stock of knowledge. With Warner we must accept that the stock of knowledge is comprised of signs and symbols though these are of different kinds, gestures, language, ritual documents, places and so forth. Following Warner we accept that symbols of a public nature are social property, so to speak, but unlike Warner we are not so much concerned with symbolic interaction, as with those concrete and symbolic features

of place, and unlike Warner we are not concerned to pursue either the etiology of symbols - that is to consider or conjecture what is ultimately the basis of symbolism - nor particularly to trace out function, in the sense of ultimate social consequence. Symbols are a key to the understanding of society, but we should not be misled into thinking that they are explained by a simple teleology.

4 Conclusion

The three broad conceptual problems considered in this chapter are closely related to one another. The characteristics of a milieu as an entity, its ecological relationships and its meanings are simultaneously displayed to the members of a community but they are taken for granted and are not made explicit except under particular circumstances. The sociologist has to take apart this world by the method of radical doubt.

Those dimensions of milieux which give the community habitat its concrete aspect, the alignment of roads, allocation of building types and so on are socially produced, but these concrete products serve to signpost social action and to ensure that it will be continued in a persistent form. Of course it is not the milieux themselves that do this, but the meanings that people allocate to them. Milieux stand ready, as it were, for the dramas of social action to be played out in them, and their users ensure that it will be so. In this sense, because it symbolises the community's, or some group's view of the norms of social action, a milieu coerces and constrains the actions of those who inhabit it. The social meaning of a milieu is thus part of it, it serves by denotation and connotation to elicit a cultural response which its users regard as normal in both senses of the word.

These properties of individual milieux are also properties of the total milieu assemblage, but it is less a matter of the ecological relationships of the milieux as the result of a valuational scheme that creates the ecosystem. Explanation of milieu assemblages has, thus, more to do with meaning and its

signification than it has to do with the functions with which milieux are identified. The signifiatory aspect of milieux and their assemblages, their meanings and the way they are conveyed, is what constitutes the social fact that is subsumed under the term "place".

Notes and References

CHAPTER IV

1. Barker 1968, 45.
2. Goffman (1959) uses the dramatic analogy to suggest that social behaviour is contrived for audiences and it is difficult to avoid the implication of bad faith (in Sartre's sense) which he imputes. The present discussion is not concerned with the morality, either overt or otherwise, of social drama, but some interesting parallels might be developed with Goffman's approach.
3. Levels and kinds of meaning are dealt with in Chapter VIII.
4. Barker 1968, 45 passim.
5. Vidich and Bensman 1960, e.g. 106 - 7.
6. Radcliffe-Brown 1957, 61. e.g. "...for certain other kinds of problems the United States is far too big and therefore what we have to do is to take as a unit a smaller community. ...There are no rules on how we should do this. I am insisting again that the process contains an arbitrary element and the only question is whether you are acting expediently or inexpediently..."
7. Fei 1947.
8. Arensberg and Kimball 1940.
9. Nelson 1973.
10. Not a Harbourn town example. The use of a physical sign to distinguish a social boundary is different from the allocation of boundaries which are strictly physical. Poor people may in fact live on the "wrong side of the tracks" but they may live in other places too. The tracks are a sign rather than a physical boundary.
11. Gould and White 1974.
12. Schutz 1971, I, 53.
13. A more important consideration, however, lies in the distinction between language and other forms of symbolism. The peculiar properties of language are that it is empirically empty (no-one ever mistakes a word for the thing it names or the relationship it expresses); it is conventional, i.e., it is dependent upon agreement among its users who continually

adapt it; it is linear, words are strung together in sequences which have little to do with the order in which events occurred, "I saw him" is the same as "He was seen by me" in fact, "his" presence and "my" seeing are more closely bound up with each other than the sequence would allow, seeing recognition and statement may be sequential, but they may also be simultaneous.

Language is, thus, abstract but is it more or less abstract than (or differently so), from say, the perception of a church or a picture? The answer must be that the eye does not take in "a church" or "the colour red", the sense organs make an abstraction, or rather the brain - or should we rather say 'mind'? - from the sense data made available to it. "Church" is represented by the presence of a few features, a steeple, cruciform shape, a cross, which lead to its recognition. "Is it a church?" means that, compared with a number of church-like buildings held as remembered patterns this one seems to lack some important feature. Hence, doubt.

It is yet to be established that places are symbols. They are not, prima facie, incapable of being so and thus, of conveying meaning. They do so, however, in a way which is different from the way in which words do.

14. The case for experiences after taking psychotropic drugs may be an exception, the experiences of LSD users suggest that some of the phenomena are spontaneous and idiosyncratic, and for this reason largely incommunicable.
15. Schutz 1971, I, 208.
16. The accusation of reification might well be levelled here. If, however, we allow that reality is what is experienced by a particular Ego, and that the stock of social knowledge is within Ego's grasp, then on that count alone, its reality must be acknowledged. It might be argued further, that the stock is real insofar as it coerces and limits group action.
17. Warner 1959.
18. Langer 1948.
19. *ibid.*, 44-5
20. *ibid.*, 52.
21. *ibid.*, 45 n 3.
22. Schutz 1971, I, 208.
23. *ibid.* 211.

24. Firth 1951,25.
25. Whyte, in Vidich, Bensman and Stein, 1964.
26. Warner 1959.
27. ibid., 455.
28. ibid., 459.
29. ibid., 468.
30. ibid., 506.
31. Warner's contribution to symbol theory is tentative. In an example of the retaliation of the research subject against his investigator, John P. Marquand satirised the ponderousness of the sociological analysis (and of the sociologist) of his home town in Point of No Return (Marquand 1949).

CHAPTER V

Place as a Social Fact II

Signification and Symbolisation; some Harbourtown Examples

1 Sign and Symbol Functions

In the previous chapter it was maintained that place exerted constraints upon social action and that this was based upon the signifiatory features of particular places (milieux). In the present chapter the aim is to explore some of these rather tentative conceptualisations of the experienced world in the context of data from Harbourtown.

It was suggested in Chapter IV (3) that Warner's distinction between sign and symbol, that is, between things that mean "in-themselves" and those that mean "beyond themselves" is difficult to apply to place. A ploughed field for example, may be thought to be a thing in itself by a naive outsider but to another farmer the field represents not only its use for the production of a crop but the amount of labour time being invested by its owner, his intentions in farm management for the following season, his skill at ploughing, and perhaps other things as well.

The preferable distinction seems to be between sign and symbol function where milieux are concerned. Our interest is in what predominates in a milieu - its primary meaning, house, shop, school and so on, i.e. its sign function, and/or its attached meanings, - those which relate it to other systems of meaning - its function as a symbol.

All milieux signify social action, but some milieux refer to

other features in addition to the social action which currently or prospectively takes place in them. Harbourtown's Methodist Church for example, signifies to its congregants the various actions which are involved in the church services, but it also signifies the congregation of believers, their links with the other Protestant sects sharing in proposals for church union, and historical links with the town. The Methodist Church stands on a little hill, but knowledgable Harbourtowners will tell you that the hill was the site of the blockhouse where the residents camped when the town was threatened during the Waikato War, and those more knowledgable still can explain that it was once the site of a Maori pa. In fact the Methodist Church both through the historical connections of its site and the connections with families which pioneered the district and whose descendants still live in the town, is a complex symbol standing for several different levels and systems of meaning, the social action frame of reference, the religious, the historical and the social structural can be recounted by many people, though by most these frames are condensed into the general statement that the church is historical and valuable.

That milieux may simultaneously mean a number of different things does not mean that all of these significations are of equal weight or are simultaneously present. It has been suggested previously that context tends to define that meaning system which is uppermost and the context which is most prominent is firstly that of social action. In many cases, however, there are explicit and direct references to other meaning systems, in particular memorial brasses, dedications, flags and other artefacts serve to present constant reminders of the other systems which are represented by the place, and to these are added the extent of group and

personal memories. Thus the symbolic function moves, as Warner suggests, though not quite in the way he says, from reference to sentiment. Social action, memory and sentiment are all associated and generalised in the group of participants and there is, in addition, a normative expectation that, not only do people respond to the symbols with which they are presented but that they ought to respond in particular ways, and not in others. Children who shuffle and fidget in church are shushed into silence and conformity, but at the same time they are being taught the appropriate way of responding to the symbol. What starts out as the response to convention may, and often does, become loyalty and affection for the church and its congregation, to be remembered later when weddings are planned or christenings held, and it may also lead to personal intensifications of sentiment and meaning to be expressed as reverence, awe, and sometimes conversion or religious ecstasy. The subtle link of sign, symbol, social action and personal and group sentiment can only be mentioned in passing, but they constitute the reality which symbols symbolise and give power to symbolic milieux.

. . .

The significance of social action is probably the most important feature in everyday life so far as immediate apprehension is concerned in virtually all milieux. It is this that is contained as the first level of reference in the stock of knowledge and within which the greater part of ordinary discourse takes place. The kinds of social action relate to the standing

pattern of behaviour which in itself so far as the public milieux are concerned in Harbourtown, can be placed in broad categories. In most milieux the general category sets the type of social action. Thus, in shops, though there were many individual actions which took place and were appropriate to the milieu, actions such as looking at merchandise, selecting and waiting for attention, the fundamental interactions were those of asking for goods, paying for them and having them wrapped or otherwise delivered. Although much interaction was incidental to this - in most Harbourtown shops it was common to find the sole other customer and the shopkeeper gossiping together lengthily, and virtually no transaction could take place without some exchange of small talk - there seemed to be no overt use of shops as meeting places, and no provision for customers to interact with each other. By comparison with the country stores of thirty or so years earlier, which were incomplete without a bench outside and often had a chair or two or a couple of conveniently placed kerosene boxes inside in bad weather (such stores still exist in the Harbourtown hinterland), Harbourtown stores are "town" stores and the interaction is confined by a milieu primarily aimed at buying and selling. Harbourtown storekeepers however are still expected to do more than collect the money, and they provide talk, direct help with purchases and carriage of orders as part of the requirements of their businesses.

Places in Harbourtown then, have primary reference as signifiers of specific kinds of social action, this reference to immediate function lending itself rather handily to categorisation and only a few public milieux were ambiguous or difficult to categorise¹. The following table summarises the number and kinds of milieux.

TABLE V.1

Milieux by Category and Number

Category	No.		%
01 Government and Administration:			
National	5		2.5
02 Government and Administration:			
Local	3		1.5
03 Religious and Ceremonial	21		10.6
04 Economic:			
1. Distribution and Exchange	39	19.7)	
2. Production	10	5.0)	26.0
3. Financial	4	2.0)	
05 Educational	9		4.5
06 Recreational	31		15.6
07 Health and Welfare	11		5.5
08 Professional Services	18		9.0
09 Communication and Transport	4		2.0
10 Trade and personal Services	28		14.1
11 Non-specific interaction	7		3.5
12 Ethnic	0		0 ⁺
13 Miscellaneous	8		4.0
	198		98.8

⁺ There were two marae in the district but outside the town. Local Maori people went to these marae for meetings, funerals, weddings and Kings poukai. The marae were not regarded as part of the milieu assemblage of Harbourtown.

The predominance of economic, trade and service milieux (nearly half) is immediately obvious, and if to these are added Government and related service milieux it will be seen that 75% of the town's public milieux were given over to such services.

Clearly then, Harbourtown exists mainly to provide economic and other services to its district and not especially to provide for an urban life style in a rural area. So much was to be expected, but it should not deflect attention from the existence of the nearly 800 private houses which do not form part of this study. Though the data are impressionistic it is important to note that inter-house visiting constitutes a large part of leisure time interaction outside the family circle; private homes also form the venue for meetings of the many small social clubs from time to time, garden circles, old folk's clubs and the like often hold meetings at the homes of townspeople.

More extended discussion of milieux will occur at a later point. For the meantime, however, we may turn to a consideration of those places which are primarily symbolic, that is, rather than exhausting their meaning by the signification of social action, they contain residues of social meaning which relate to other systems of meaning. These places may only occasionally be the foci of social action, if the term is not taken too literally they may be called "inert". Examples of such places are the War Memorials, the cemetery, and the historical markers which stand around the town. These last named are of particular interest since they have no associated pattern of social action apart from the ceremonies of placing them and the fact that visitors occasionally stop and read them. Small obelisks of concrete about four feet

high with a bronze plaque attached giving the details of the events which took place - the pioneer landing place, site of the blockhouse, a place where a skirmish took place with Maoris - they look remarkably like tombstones and indeed, fulfil rather similar functions, they give notice to the living of the continuity of the present with the past, in Lloyd Warner's phrase, they make the past present and perfect. Harbourtown, the markers proclaim, was the product of the energies, courage and persistence of the white Protestant settlers. The Maori presence is not acknowledged though, of course, Harbourtown was an important Maori centre for much the same reasons that it became a pioneer settlement, its control of the waterways, and the Catholic presence is not acknowledged either despite the presence of a sizable Catholic minority. Harbourtown's settlers were Scots and Presbyterian or English and Wesleyan, or at least this is what the symbol system recounts.

The symbolic dimension thus, is in the relations of diverse systems of ideas to specific places. Such relationships are not necessarily particularly well articulated, nor are they easily specified. As we noted earlier, the condensation of symbols means that the specific items can be merged by a process of "sedimentation" until they can be covered by a single statement, "this is an historical place" for example, not "this place is connected with the x family who were founding ancestors, who subsequently became local merchants and had big farms in the district". In the case above we may note:

1. The x family had a large number of children in the first generation;
2. The x family built up extended alliances through

- marriage with other families;
3. x family were successful and prosperous farmers who retained family land into the present;
 4. x family members became merchants;
 5. x family were influential and loyal Wesleyans;
 6. x family contributed many young men to the militia and world war contingents.

These six statements relate to meaning systems connected respectively to i. pioneer history; ii. kinship and descent; iii. the importance of the farming economy; iv. the town; v. religious affiliation; vi. national service. Here we have only a rough selection but it will serve to illustrate the condensation process. The Wesleyan Church is intimately connected with the x family and unifies in the general conception "history" the not obvious connections between say, economic success and religious loyalty. It would be altogether untrue to say that Wesleyan Christianity places a high value on worldly success to the exclusion of other Christian values, but the correlation is unmistakable. If the Weberian account of the Protestant ethic did not exist then a study of the pioneer society would have made its invention necessary.

That a place may signify particular social action, particular systems of meaning, and set off resonations among other systems of meaning is surely a matter of no little importance, for what it means is that a small community is perpetually having its systems of meaning brought into correspondence with each other.

Students of sociology take years to learn that correlation is not causation, it is not surprising therefore that in everyday life the boundaries should become blurred and that the high degree

of coincidence between meaning systems, when they are symbolised by the concrete and dimensionable places within which people live their lives, should be seen as a causal relationship.

There is perhaps one further conclusion to be drawn. When systems of meaning are drawn together by symbols as it has been shown here that they can be, then a new order of meaning may be produced. The separate meanings which are condensed and affect with greater or less force depending on their social location, the members of the town, together mean something else. That meaning is "community", the gemeinschaft, an entity with a status above that of its individual and component parts. To this theme we will return in the conclusion.

. . .

The sign and symbol functions of place are not mutually exclusive, nor, as we have seen, are they all of the same order and generality. At their least general places signify social action which is specific, norm-bound and only transferrable to places of the same kind, a basketball game or formal religious service is a case in point; at their least general they signify that social action may be of any kind that falls within the limits of propriety considered to be culturally standard, an example is the behaviour at the West End Reserve, a camping ground and tidal beach safe for small children, at the outskirts of Harbortown. Here there is a wide degree of tolerance, children play their own games or climb on swings and slides, adults cook up

barbecue meals and go swimming. The general limits of propriety are those of other beach side places, there can be no violence or hooliganism, proper swimsuits are worn, couples must not exhibit too overtly their sexual feelings and there is a general sense of lawfulness in behaviour. At Lone Gull beach, one of the dangerous West Coast beaches, by contrast there are wider limits, in part because supervision is restricted. Young boys race motorcycles on the sand, couples can disappear into the lupin and tussock covered sandhills, some of the more emancipated swim or sunbathe nude in places which are at a distance from the parking lot and patrolled areas where most people stay.

While the distinction of generality or non-generality (or one might substitute perhaps the term "specificity") applies to the social action which a place signifies through its place in a cultural category, it is more difficult to apply such a distinction to the connotative aspects which it may have. If a distinction can be made it probably relates to the distinction between the levels of systems of meaning which may be found to exist, and to the number of them. I am not yet ready to discuss these and I am dubious of the possibility of arranging them in an hierarchical order. A brief excursion into this difficult area is all that can be offered at this point.

It seems reasonable, supposing that all systems of meaning refer to social relations ultimately, to classify them somewhat as follows:

Social referents

Systems of meaning

Mankind

Metaphysical, philosophical and religious, systems of a universal kind, e.g. Buddhism, Communism.

Society, State, Nation

Laws and norms; political, economic and scientific systems; religious sects.

Community

Mores, folkways, customs, neighbourhood social obligations.

Family

Kinship, friendship, generational authority, marriage and incest regulations.

Such a list is of the most limited kind, but assuming that systems of meaning at the familial level are those of the most primitive kind, those relating to all mankind are of the most abstract and civilised. The house for example in the case of the simple bungalow has two connotative levels, family and community, and it may also "condense" or "sediment" systems of meaning at those two levels. "The house", if it happens to be Buckingham Palace or the Governor General's mansion reaches the level of the nation and is symbolic of all these, whereas the village chapel may reach across all four levels by incorporating (in the case of Catholic churches at least) the real presence of the god in the consecrated host in the tabernacle, the "house of God", then reaches to a more abstract level of social reference than either of the other two. It is perhaps possible, though debatably so, to discuss symbolic reference of this kind in seclusion from the social action aspect of place and link place to a more comprehensive scheme of analysis than the small community.

We may presume that the systems of meaning are multiple in level as well as being of different kinds at the same level and that symbols certainly vary in the levels and kinds of meaning which they symbolise and unite, in addition symbolic objects set off "resonations", sympathetic responses in the mind which are too slight or vague to be called connotations but which may have, nevertheless, social acknowledgement. An obvious case is the national flag which besides symbolising national sovereignty and requiring a protocol in its use has historic reference for some members of the society, to conditions which no longer exist, the loyalty and patriotism to King and Empire that were once so strongly part of the New Zealand ideology continue to respond feintly even though the Empire no longer exists and the monarchy has become a pale shadow of its former pomp. Similarly, the resonations of feeling for past or existing systems of meaning may be produced by symbols, places which are of not much daily significance, as for example is the case when elderly people reminisce about things as they were in their youth but are so no longer.

The discussion of "resonation" skirts the metaphysical and should, one supposes, be resolved by a psychology of symbolism rather than sociology. ^{In} ~~The~~ psychological terms it sounds like the old-fashioned "association theory" but without the expression of the common point of resemblance by which things are supposed to become associated. So far as sociology is concerned the concept has still other difficulties since it presumes a "mind" for society or the group, a consciousness within which resonation may take place. Perhaps the difficulty may be resolved if we recognise that each act of interpretation in regard to any symbol is individual, what makes it common or social is that interpretation

is based upon the stock of knowledge which has been previously discussed. Yet the need for ideas such as "resonation" arises from the fact that the cultural life of mankind is not reducible to a few simple categories and that the interpretive act however common its various manifestations is very subtle.

In considering such subtlety it is worth considering the role of the arts not as a diversion from the subject at hand, but as a means of seeing how it is that interpretation depends on the richness of attribution in order to give it full scale. Suppose that one were to read Othello for example in the clear meaning of the words would we find then perfect agreement about the play. The answer is clearly negative if the history of presentations of that play are considered even briefly. The relationship between Othello, Iago and Desdemona is represented as the most complex of dramatic expressions, Othello's jealousy, Iago's duplicity, the pervasive themes of sexuality and power, the elasticity of time, all these make Othello a continuously reinter^rpretable symbol, but even beyond the attempts to create a new Othello in every generation is the fact that interpretation of the play rests upon the subtle associations which are almost on the edge of legitimacy. We could hardly respond to Othello without the sense of the Renaissance, without Macchiavelli, without, for a modern audience, Freud, and without the changes brought about in the English stage since the 19th century.

The question is scarcely resolved by the above example yet it seems likely that the most profitable direction for enquiry into the sociological dimensions of symbolism, especially the symbolism of material things lies in the consideration of art generally. If, as intuition suggests, the power of works of

art lies in their ability to touch off "sympathetic vibrations", to bring into apprehension ranges of meaning which are apprehended but not explored much as, say, the double bass passages in a symphony are not accorded separate attention but are only marginally perceived (but would be noticeable if they were absent) then the sociality of marginal meaning attributions must be recognised also, since the meaning systems that are made to respond are social, shared with others. To see social symbolism in any case as reaching beyond the neat and specifiable is to make the sociological picture richer, to introduce a spectral element - colour versus monochrome. Culture is not a stark two dimensional geometry, it is like the inside of a cathedral full of shadows, whispers and half-heard echoes.

The discussion so far has focussed upon place as constituting a meaning bearing dimension of social collectivity. Place and social action it has been maintained are intimately fused, and through symbolic reference, place further knits together the meaning systems of the community. In day-to-day life the foreground is taken up by the social action in which the individual takes part, but place constitutes, not a background, but a necessary condition of social action. A football game can be played on any patch of open ground, a public meeting can take place in any suitably sized building or, for that matter, in the open air. Neither of these activities has its full status, its

full right to authenticity unless it takes place in its appropriate setting. Without goals and touch lines the football game is a mere pastime not to be treated seriously, without the accoutrements of its proper place the council meeting loses its dignity and authority.

The reader will immediately notice, of course, that one of the examples given is greatly different from the other, place and social action are inherently inseparable in the case of the rugby match, in the case of the council meeting the legal status of the council and its members is more important than the place in which the meeting is held. In spite of this Harbourtown's small council chambers include a council room furnished with desks for the members, a table of more imposing size for the Mayor and a small roped off section for the public. The council meeting is no less bound by rules than the rugby game and its place is as clearly marked by the provision of zones of interaction as is the rugby field.

The churches, shops, and offices, the beaches, streets, and parks of Harbourtown are theatres of social action in which the town plays out its daily life. Like theatres they have their physical structure more or less clearly defining the zones of interaction, but unlike theatres what is played is no mere acting. The Councillors who carry out the business of the town are in earnest, they do not cease to be Councillors when they leave the meeting to go home, and their actions have consequences in the real world. It is not, as Erving Goffman would have us believe, a confidence trick, but a sober reality into which enters, nevertheless, a trifle of play or elaboration for the sake of variety. This does not invalidate, however, the claim to be in

good faith which is implicitly made by the people who take part in Harbourtown's many patterns of social action, it is rather that bad faith or the suspicion of it, is enough to set off intense conflict and self-examination, that demonstrates the pervasive nature of good faith in the day to day transactions of social life.

2 Place and Society

The Local Social System: Place, as it has been defined earlier, is a social product, but only in the very broadest sense can it be regarded as a societal thing. Place, at the societal level, corresponds to a national territory and perhaps some major national features such as National Park or Auckland City may be considered societal places. There is not, in principle, any reason why there should not be a macro-sociology of place, one that dealt with societal constructs and looked at them on an international scale, but this would require a new conceptual level to be employed. Place is a small scale notion, it is local and related to local social systems insofar as it is involved in everyday life. Nevertheless, socially constructed ideas of a national territory, and of social relations between national places suggest interesting further problems to be explored.

The problem of how place is related to society at the action and meaning levels requires that we bring in the concept of a local social system. Thus place gains its unitary quality by being the locus of the functionally related action patterns

which go to make up the local social system. It is not altogether significant that the local social system is not total or that it is dependent on external features such as the national government economic and other socio-cultural systems, what is important is that local people view it as a relatively closed local system and attribute to it not only the functional, but the historical and affective characteristics which are embodied in the term "community". This once again reinforces the sociological decision to treat place phenomenologically since the attempt to treat it in purely objective terms leads to a geographical reductionism which is no less misleading than a psychological reductionism.

The concept of a local social system raises problems of boundaries. In fact the local social system concept does not handle the boundary problem particularly well since it treats the local social system as simply an intensification in a particular place of systems that are nationwide, therefore leaving the problem of boundaries unclear, as indeed it is in actual experience. The more generalised notion of "community", however, tends to define boundaries from the point of view of local people. In this case the geographical boundaries tend to be related to social boundaries. Whereas Harbourn has fairly distinct geographic boundaries distinguishable in the change from close settlement to farmland so that, "in town" and "out of town" have significance for town dwellers, it has administrative boundaries which are the boundaries of borough, and social boundaries which are defined not only in terms of social relationships actually existing between people who live in the village and people who work farms, but also in the interests and activities of

each. Though farm people use the community places of Harbourtown they recognise them as constituting a different total place from "the district" which is where they live and carry out their main social activities. A farmer goes "in" to Harbourtown in order to attend a meeting, go to a stock sale or do some shopping, a Harbourtownner goes "out" to visit or perform economic services for people in other districts ² .

The relationship between place and local social system is expressed in socially constructed boundaries which, while they always have a geographical dimension, also have social dimensions. There is not, it seems, a necessity for boundary maintaining systems or mechanisms since it seems improbable that there are real conflicts of country and town. In fact in the case of Harbourtown the range of interdependencies particularly economic ones is so great that they may be seen to be ecologically interrelated. ³ .

The interrelation of boundary and community is part of the stock of knowledge and requires no very specific definition on the part of local people. Place provides the focus and expression of the community but the extent of its boundaries is in part circumstantial. For some purposes the whole of the western part of the county constitutes a community in relation to the eastern section, at other times the component districts are seen as separate. Community-wide social action such as the centenary celebrations of 1967 drew upon segments which are normally external to the community, such as the rural Maori families and the old farming families, whereas such service club activities as park improvements drew only upon community people. Part of the stock of knowledge then, consists of the categorisation of circum-

stances which make community boundaries expand or lose their day-to-day significance. What constitutes "place" thus contains a circumstantial element, but the general paradigm of which circumstances are significant for redefinition is already established in the stock of knowledge.

Social Allocation: Turning from the "whole community" aspects of place to the internal structuring of place we come to the question of the ways in which place is socially allocated. Such allocations rest upon a number of differing features; such factors as cultural categorisation by such matters as age, sex and ethnicity, structural relationships which exist between discrete groups within the society, and functional relationships which have to do with social action aimed at achieving specific goals.

Cultural categorisation is that part of the stock of knowledge which allocates people to categories which cut across structural features. For example sex (gender) always provides the basis for some categorisations though the apparently easy physiological categorisation often has complexities built into it. In the culture of Anglo-Saxon New Zealanders gender categorisation and differences of treatment begin at birth, the baby is a little boy or little girl and will be subjected to high pressure propaganda to ensure that it takes on culturally approved gender characteristics in behaviour, tastes, deportment and so on. In Maori culture the distinction is not quite so clearly insisted upon, babies do not have gender stressed intensely though traditional minded Maori mothers make some concessions by gently massaging the baby boy's penis as well as arms, legs and nose (as

was the case for both sexes) in order to make them straight and strong. Gender characteristics grow in importance as the child grows older but they do not get the same insistent attention until children are old enough to assume some part in helping adults. Among Maoris a child, often the youngest, is called Baby, Bubby or Bub and may go on being called Baby into fully adult life. There is no Maori word which is equivalent and in traditional terminology, the terms tamaiti, tama taane for "boy" and kootiro or waahi-kootiro, "girl", seem to have been used mainly for children past infancy⁴.

Similarly the terms for the old and very old vary, in English old man, grandfather, and similar terms all distinguish by gender and role. Though Maori also has gender specific terms, old people tend to be merged together as a group which is structurally important and is given a generalised kinship status, kaumaatua, which states the generational relationship rather than the age status. Kaumaatua are possessed by a group of cognate kin though they are specifically given grandparent status by some relations.

The examples given serve to show that age and sex categorisation in New Zealand is ethnically somewhat variable and it is not improbable that there are some regional and class variations as well. The relationship of sex and age categorisations to the use of places is also variable, there are statutory age limitations which are applied to hotel bars and pool halls, and customary sex limitations which exclude women from the Public Bars of hotels, though such limitations are somewhat fragile. Within particular places some parts are age and sex limited, women do not occupy or enter the chancel areas of Catholic churches during

ceremonies and women may not handle the sacra; at a more mundane level men, while not being excluded from the hall during the meetings of the various women's associations in Harbourtown, would be regarded as an oddity if they attended in any other office than that of guest speaker. Children are more strictly regulated as to the places they may use and while they are permitted in many places it is as the responsibility of a sponsoring adult. In some places, schools, kindergartens, children's playgrounds, paddling pools, the age specifications are quite strict and children of older age groups are segregated from younger children.

In Harbourtown, such category distinctions form a clear pattern of normative regulation in regard to place, though this is seldom an inherent quality of place itself, rather it is related to place-plus-action (Barker and Wright's behaviour settings); for example though women cannot enter the sacred area of the church during services, they do so in order to remove the vases for polishing, to clean and dust and put new flowers on the altar. During these activities there seems to be no special attempt to modify overt behaviour, to whisper or walk noiselessly, unless there happen to be strangers in the church.

Ethnicity also tends to affect the use of place. Ethnic group activity and its venue tend to exclude people who are not members of the group though there may be no specific reason why they do not attend. It is particularly the case in Harbourtown that non-Maoris seldom visit the maraes except when private entertainments are held in them. Maoris are not prominent in many of the town's recreational settings and no Maori owns a

shop in the town. There is no public place, however, which excludes Maoris and probably little covert discrimination; class and cultural factors provide more convincing reasons for Maori absence and presence in particular places, though, of course, Harbourtowners like other New Zealanders are no strangers to racial stereotyping, prejudice and snobbery.

Finally group membership and the structural relationships of groups affect the social allocation of place. At the simplest level inclusion and exclusion rules are related primarily to interest; tennis and bowling clubs do not exclude non-members, but the specific places in which the games are played exclude non-players. In a similar way such generally available places as halls and schools, exclude, when they are in use for particular patterns of social action, as do churches when services are being held and sect members gathered, and clubs which have strict inclusion rules.

Group memberships may include the whole community in theory, but in practice restrict membership to those who have various class and interest characteristics. Such a situation exists for some social clubs which apply class characteristics (not so stated) as a reason for inviting new members. Harbourtown's most interesting example of such a process was in the creation of the Metropolitan Club, a chartered club which provides bar facilities and recreational amenities for its members. Local accounts maintain that the impetus was given to the formation of the club by the fact that the construction labourers employed in a nearby large project began to use the town's only hotel as drinking place. There were one or two ugly incidents as the result of the disturbance of long standing habits and

patterns, with the result that the Metropolitan Club, which confined its membership to local people and selected levels of the industrial workforce, provided a sanctuary against the intrusion of the construction workers.

Structural distinction is evidenced in place by no very direct methods, but rather by the reputation that a place has. Some houses and streets for example, have a high status reputation and others low, or middling status. While housing types can indicate standards of wealth or consumption these may be secondary where the greatest prestige is attached to descent. Some of Harbourtown's oldest families own houses which were built in the 19th century and which represent a level of grace which was gained well after the pioneer cottages were left behind. Such houses serve as a reminder of the continuity of lines that reach back to the earliest pioneer families between whom marriage was commonplace, and whose network of kinship connections reaches far across the county and to other parts of New Zealand. Entry into this connected set of families is gained by birth, a feature which gives it the semblance of an estate, in fact however it is the historical validation of such families that they have continued in the district as land owners and in some cases have occupied the same houses for three or four generations. Place in this case is a solid physical identity which is recognised and remembered within such families even after their original homesteads, and sometimes the ancestral names have disappeared. In the event the cemetery provides the place which, more than any other, recapitulates the structural and historical affiliations of such families.

In Barker and Wright's study of Midwest it was found that behaviour settings were available only to certain classes of people and that Midwest's Negro residents entered into significantly fewer behaviour settings than the white population. Similarly Barker and Wright found that by dividing behaviour settings into a series of zones that penetration to the central zones in which decisions were made and major ritual carried out was limited to a relatively few people and that Negroes only penetrated to the outer zones of most behaviour settings. It seems likely that similar data could be obtained for Harbourtown but they raise a rather different set of questions, these are really questions about the morality of social allocation as it is viewed by the townspeople. They have little to do with place per se but they draw attention to the complexity of the relationship between place and social system.

This leads then to a consideration of the normative aspects of place. Clearly, if place includes a notion of appropriate or inappropriate behaviour and of appropriate or inappropriate people, and if this is part of the stock of knowledge of the members of a small community, then place, both symbolically (as when its associated action pattern is not taking place) or actually, is a form of social control. It seems plausible to argue that norms of this kind constitute a kind of normative structure which has not been extensively commented upon in sociology, and that though the norms themselves are "in the heads" of people they are actually symbolised by places, rather than remembered. It might be the case that anyone might report that "You should not talk loudly in a church . . ." but the presence of churches and the actions of people in respect of them constitutes the most

powerful reinforcement of the norm. It is one which as we have seen, continues in the absence of a service in the church and exerts an influence upon the behaviour of visitors, but not perhaps so strongly on the "backstage workers", the women who maintain the church and who have a right to be there.

This aspect of place I suggest, transcends the individual places and makes the whole assemblage of places a source of constraining as well as permissive norms, for the converse of each "thou shalt not" is an equal and opposite "thou shalt". Places exert different degrees of constraint, between the sedate parks and inner harbour beaches and wilderness of the coast there is a dramatic contrast in behavioural freedom - action which is permitted in the one place is proscribed in the other and vice-versa. But it is not merely the case that one place is different from the other, but that the pattern and interrelation of places is such that the individual is enmeshed in the system of constraints, so far so that inappropriate behaviour, or even appropriate behaviour by inappropriate people, constitutes an offence against norms which will have the effect eventually of bringing sanctions to bear. The most coercive of these is exclusion from a place or places, in some cases resulting in voluntary migration from the community.

In conclusion then the systems of meaning which places symbolise, include as a component normative controls on individual behaviour, and on the access of individuals and categories to those places. The fact that access is socially allocated and is related to the structural relationships which exist in the society should be seen as interactive, so that though access to places is appropriate for some people and not for others this tends to be

converted into a norm of exclusion and inclusion, which can be used to control individual behaviour.

3 Valuation

Valuation and Values: The claim that both social action and the participants in it can be judged appropriate or inappropriate which was made in the last section leads to the question of valuation in regard to place. To begin with some terminological undergrowth must be cleared away, for although the terms "value" and "values" are used in sociological discussion with a freedom that presumes that they are quite self-evident in meaning it is not completely apparent that they are. In fact the following seem to be encompassed in the term:

1. "value" may be used verbally; that is, it expresses a relation between a subject and an object in which the object is given a rank relative to something else. "Gold is better than silver".
2. "value" used substantively applies to some statement concerning a social goal or attitude that is approved of by members of the society - individual liberty, loyalty, religious freedom.
3. Evaluate refers to processes by which objects, including ideas, people, artefacts, social actions, are given rank relative to others.
4. "valuation" (n) refers to the results of this process.

Though they are close together, meanings (1) and (2) are somewhat different from (3) and (4). The first two uses imply a stable consensus to which social preferences may be referred. Like Sumner's mores they give metaphysical sanction to norms. The usages noted under (3) and (4) are concerned with process.

The term "valuation" is preferred by Gunnar Myrdal⁵ since as he says "('value') . . . has a connotation of something solid and homogeneous while our hypothesis is that valuations are conflicting . . ." and "(A person's) valuations - that a social situation is, or was, 'just', 'fair', 'right', desirable or the opposite, in some degree of intensity or the other - cannot be judged by such objective standards as science provides"⁶. Myrdal's reasons for making this statement are not that there is a lack of instruments for measuring valuations, as that valuations are contradictory, or vary with the situation, as well as having different degrees of generality. They refer to "different levels of the moral personality" (page 72). It is Myrdal's hypothesis that the trend of modern intellectual and moral life is from specific valuations to general valuations, from gemeinschaft to gesellschaft. The "American Dilemma" is this conflict of valuations, for Myrdal's view is, as it was Tocqueville's and for that matter any non-Marxist social philosopher's, that society is a moral entity.

It is not, of course, relevant to pursue the theoretical discussion further here; for the purpose of this section the term valuation will be used to refer both to the process and its outcomes, with the full realisation that evaluation is individual and psychological, though of course it takes place in a context

of cultural and social features that provide cues and prompt toward particularities of the valuational scheme. Before leaving the more general aspects of valuation, however, we should note that valuation, quite apart from the rationalisations which justify particular valuations because (as Myrdal suggests) of the necessity to appear rational to others, is subject to feeling. The basis for valuation then, is liking or disliking, desiring or being repelled by, pleasure, boredom and pain. This is no more than to touch upon the etiology of valuation, but it raises the further question of whether we feel about something because other people do so, because it is part of the valued cultural context, or whether it is individually perceived as pleasurable or unpleasurable (or neutral) and thence collectivised through social process. The answer we give to this is of some importance - if we affirm the former then we stand in the sociological tradition with roots in Durkheim's Rules, if we affirm the collectivisation of sentiments then the assumption is that the individual, not society, is the prime datum. Once again the sociological answer is that both are true, in a sense every individual is a new deal, but the cards which are dealt are those available from the culture of which he is part. To insist on one position or the other is simply to deprive ourselves of the subtlety of interplay and to limit the possibilities of change and innovation⁷.

Do norms flow from valuations or is the relationship between norms and valuations reciprocal? The Sumnerian view is that norms are validated by mores, and certainly it is to be expected that norms are unlikely to contradict valuations. On the whole though norms and their enforcement depends upon the existence of some

group or individual who has the power to promulgate, impose and sanction norms. At the simplest level such powers as those of the committee of a sports club or the trustees of a hall constitute authority which can impose norms, yet these norms, apart from those that control technical procedures, are likely to be in conformity with some rather general conceptualisations of what constitutes good or appropriate behaviour. The more general point seems to be Durkheim's, the breach of norms tends to reinforce valuations - one might add, the fear of the potentiality of a breach - and that consequently the relationship is reciprocal. Conflict arises where the promulgating authority fails to recognise that the valuational scheme has changed in emphasis, and that those behaviours which norms are designed to control or encourage are no longer part of the valuational scheme that gave rise to them. It is as though the Auckland City Council were to insist that bathing suits stretching from neck to knee should be worn, or that laws against witchcraft should be enforced.

Valuation is a fundamental human activity and the attempt of each generation to extend its valuations to the next is a fundamental part of the social process. The functions of valuation are to maintain continuity in a social group, and, through the consistency of valuations and norms to maintain the structure of social relations. In the small community this may not be too difficult a task, and one of the ways in which it occurs is through the valuation of place.

Valuation and Place: Place is the subject of valuations. Such valuational schemes are reflected most obviously in economic terms, where the price of a house lot will be affected not only by access to amenities and services, but by prestige, concepts of beauty, and so on. Except where there is no choice other than to accept company housing as was the case in Tokoroa originally, or in the English "tied towns" New Zealand towns are shaped by a valuational consensus, which may, in the original phases of settlement have been dictated by purely functional features, but has, both through the rigidities of the market system and the stabilisation of the population become a valuational scheme in its own right. Such valuational schemes appear to have a number of different dimensions in Harbourtown, though there is an absence of consensus about these schemes, or rather the weight placed on one or another valuation was variable.

The dimensions most commonly mentioned were, functional, economic, recreational, traditional, historical, and to a smaller extent, aesthetic. In the Service Club survey of Harbourtown, there was generally expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the town, though a few respondents raised objections to such matters as the neglect of commercial premises, and the need to "tidy up" and plant trees.

Valuational schemes, however, do not only say how places ought to be, they also refer places to specific valuational criteria. For example buildings which are architecturally valueless or much modified are valued because of their historical associations, and the relationship of some places is seen as appropriate and attempts to alter this relationship are

objected to. Such a situation arose in Harbourtown when the council sold land to a company for the establishment of a supermarket and ran headlong into opposition from the clergy and laity of a church which would be virtually screened out by the new building. A similar controversy arose when it was proposed to build a new section of road to avoid a difficult junction, and yet another when a firm of consultants proposed a plan to close part of the main street to traffic.

These examples do not illustrate the normal differences over functional planning in Harbourtown, they show that differing valuational criteria were applied in each case. Valuation in relation to place is thus not expressed rationally though rationalisations will often be invoked, rather it is embedded within the stock of knowledge. Places, in the valuations that are expressed about them reflect not only the valuational schemata which the culture has available, progress-change-rationality-functionality versus tradition-stability-history-aesthetics, for example, but also the social groups which assert the valuations which are dominant. Place incorporates valuation as one of its symbolic elements. Indeed to look at a map of Harbourtown is to look at a map of the valuational priorities of the most dominant groups of citizens.

Place, then, obtains its valuational rank from several different sources, firstly there are functional valuations which allocate places according to the functions they carry out. At this level the type of social action which is common to a particular milieu may have a considerable influence, sports fields need space for supporters, parking, dressing sheds and so on. Beyond this however, lie national and local cultural schemes

which shape the valuational structures. Residence and work are segregated, commercial centres are kept for this purpose alone, industry is located separately from other areas, and cemeteries, schools and churches find locations which are based on their place in the valuational scheme rather than on functional characteristics alone. A similar approach may be seen in relation to what is to be considered "wild" land or wasteland, what sorts of trees are to be considered expendable and which should be preserved, and in relation to those historic places that count and those that don't.

Finally the valuational priorities as reflected in the structure of the community tend to be those of dominant groups in the society. Had the Maori population of Harbourtown been dominant then doubtless the now unsightly reclamation of the creek would have been a maze of eel weirs and canoe moorings, the grassy park with its orderly trees would have been the site of a marae, and the surrounding flatland a collection of houses and gardens; but even if this contrast is too extreme we might remark that whereas Harbourtown has had its own well-developed Rugby Park for over half a century, it has lacked a soccer ground until very recently and has no Rugby League ground at all. Though its Protestant churches are well built, centrally located and large, its Catholic church is sited on the outskirts of the town in a rather shabby area. Though great emphasis is laid upon the relatively long history of the town, in fact most of the historic buildings of any architectural merit have been demolished in the last ten years to make way for architecturally inferior modern buildings, or else "modernised" in ways that mar their character. These features point to both stability and

change in the valuational consensus as they point also to change in the social structure.

4 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter we have been concerned with the main aspects of place considered as a social fact. The discussion has shown that place has social action, signficatory and historical aspects and must be analysed in terms of these and it has shown that there is a reciprocal relationship between place and social action. In discussing the symbolic aspects of place it has been noted that place may, with greater or less specificity signify the type of social action which is appropriate to it. Place also has a symbolic content insofar as it connotes other socio-cultural features of the community.

In considering the other aspects of place we noted that place is the object of processes of social allocation in respect of social categories and structural groups. When such allocations are made, following lines of sex, age and group affiliation, the allocation becomes part of the meaning of the place and tends to perpetuate this form of social differentiation.

The discussion of social allocation led to a consideration of valuation. Valuations, it was suggested, constituted a higher level of constraint than that of the particular milieu, and were related to the capacity of a dominant section of the population (not necessarily a majority) to gain assent to its valuational scheme. Valuations not only established functional relations between milieux, they also exerted an influence over the eco-

system, making it subject not merely to factors which were functional, but to others which were moral or aesthetic. The valuations in turn which were demonstrated by the place related to the dominance of particular groups and strata, and changes in place were taken to be symptomatic of valuational and ultimately social structural change. The reciprocity of social action and place was repeated for place and social structure, and was expressed by such factors as the distribution of milieu "on the ground" and their ranking in relation to one another.

Place it has been shown is not a substratum which is separable from social action but is in fact part of social action. It is true that some kinds of social action may be transferred from one milieu to another, but a considerable amount of social action is nevertheless strongly identified with particular places. It is relatively difficult to remove action to another milieu unless it happens to be one of like order so that the "fit" between social action and place is not seen to be in conflict with societal norms, valuations or symbols. In the small community of Harbourtown, it was argued, the consequence of the relatively fixed and stable character of this structure of concrete places and socio-cultural features was to maintain community stability and continuity. The corollary of this is that change is a challenge to the conservation of the community.

Myrdal noted both the movement from the specific to the general valuations, and the fundamental conflicts of valuations which existed for the individual. The small community integrally related to a wider ecosystem, is subject to changes which, though they appear to originate within the local social system in fact have their origin outside it. It is with these changes that the

community must come to terms, always in the form of a valuatinal compromise. Attempts to bring about change within the community affect the valuatinal consensus and give an opportunity for valuatinal priorities to change, commonly they involve or imply structural change, and they usually either manifestly or latently have consequences for place. It is difficult in the extreme to imagine some type of innovation which does not have a consequence for place and consequently place can be taken to be part of the social facticity and indeed, a fundamental part of the stock of knowledge of the community.

Notes and References

CHAPTER V

1. A longer period of field work might have revealed more such milieux, especially if the relatively secret worlds of children and young people could have been probed.
2. As Nelson suggests (Nelson 1973) farm people regard Harbourtown as a "district" like their own.
3. Since the original field work was carried out (1968-1970) Harbourtown's population has virtually doubled as the result of the establishment of industry. New housing is within borough boundaries and the industrial development provides wage work. Further development in the area however, will begin to imperil farming and has already significantly affected the ecological balance.
4. Since Maori children usually went about naked from infancy to puberty, the provision of gender specific terms might seem to be superfluous. (Such terms however are not merely ostensive, they probably reflect the cognatic Maori kinship system.)
5. Myrdal 1958, 77.
6. *ibid.*, 71.
7. One further point must be raised, though it will not be followed at length - if valuations are socially induced and are relatively stabilised (the condition which Durkheim thinks will prevent a rise in suicide rates) will this not have the consequence of freezing the social system?
Durkheim sees this as the antidote to anomie, to that weakening of social constraint where the valuational scheme is out of touch with the realities of social life, yet, one must argue also that the reverse, the society of inflexible mores, is as destructive as the anomic condition. In order for there to be scope for human inventiveness and expressivity it seems certain that the valuational scheme must contain ambiguities and "weak spots" - yet it is to this that most community-minded people, leaders and followers alike, seem to be most firmly opposed. The conclusion to be drawn is that the community as a closed system, whether of local or national scope, is a figment of the authoritarian imagination.

CHAPTER VI

Habitat and Environment

1. Nature and Culture: Environment and Habitat

The distinction between nature and culture, Claude Lévi-Strauss maintains, despite its lack of significance as an historical account of human development, "does contain a logic fully justifying its use by modern sociology as a methodological tool". Lévi-Strauss wishes to demonstrate that nature end where rule-making begins; that what is most fundamental about this distinction is that it does not correspond simply to a distinction between biological processes and socio-cultural ones, but that culture works upon nature so to speak and thus,

Culture is not merely juxtaposed to life but in one way serves as a substitute for life and in the other uses it and transforms it, to bring about the synthesis of a new order. 1

From the position of an analyst of society the fruitfulness of a distinction of this kind becomes clear when, as Lévi-Strauss does, he seeks to explain some apparently non-rational part of human social relations. Thus the strange series of taboos which make up incest regulations, become explicable when they are seen as part of the "synthesis of a new order". There is, however, another point to be considered - all accounts of culture presume the existence of something that is "not-culture", that is to say, a world which is outside society, is a-social and perhaps anti-social. This same conception exists in everyday life in the

distinction between wild and domesticated, between savage and civilised, between emotionality and rationality, between childishness and adulthood.

The distinction is to be found in many myths but it is not confined to societies which have mytho-poetic systems of explanation of the relationship of man to the world, nor is it absent from those societies which have rejected the mytho-poetic in favour of scientific explanation. In such societies however, the mytho-poetic is more commonly transferred to the area of expressive life and is removed from its central explanatory position.² It would be reasonable to refer to such societies as being techno-scientific in nature, since the forms of explanation having the greatest prestige are related to technology and science. That no society is yet free of myth, however, is to be noted as significant, for mythic explanation can co-exist with techno-science. It is common though, that whatever the role of myth may be in the socio-political sphere its results in science are to block off enquiry and constrain it within bonds which it cannot, by itself, break.³

Science represents the most fully cultural of human activities since it is a product of mind, or rather, of a specialised aspect of mental functioning, reason. Scientific enquiry and its results objectify the distinction of nature and culture in a very marked way, but this should not lead us to suppose that science is the sine qua non of culture, on the contrary it is the salience of mind, not of a particular aspect of it which sets culture off from nature. The process of scientific enquiry however, moves its objects away from nature and into culture in particularly dramatic ways. Physics, for example, has, in less than a century

transformed human capabilities and created an image of the universe which is at variance with anything which has pre-existed it.

The nature of matter, the laws of celestial motion and the capacity to produce nuclear fission move the material universe from being given to experience as part of the natural world, to being part of the cultural world.

The process of civilisation is also a process of the enculturation of nature. By degrees humans have contrived to convert the wild into the domestic; plants, trees, birds and animals have been taken out of nature, land has been turned to human purposes, even mankind has been drawn from nature into culture by the act of placing a technology of greater and greater sophistication between himself and the natural world. In no case is the process reversed and it may be that it is irreversible to any but the smallest degree. There is no way back from knowledge.

If there is some absolute way in which we can distinguish the natural from the cultural world then it is of greatly lesser importance than the way in which the dichotomy is used by social groups and is used in turn in sociological analysis. It does not matter whether something is absolutely natural to the extent that it must simply be accepted as a fact before which human beings are helpless; what matters is that every culture has a different set of facts that it places in the natural category. For the purpose of sociological enquiry and discussion we make the same distinction into nature and culture, but in a way that serves to make clearer the way in which the organisation of thought and action among a given people takes place, even where there are no terms which are directly

translatable in the usage of the people in question. Is this to say then, that nature and culture are extrinsic categories imposed by the observer? It is not improper if they are, since the distinction is a methodological tool and is therefore to be regarded as only as valid as it is useful. The categories, it is maintained here, are intrinsic as well - whether or not the people in question makes such a distinction, whether they have different terms or none, the test is whether they act in respect of the own world as though it had such a division. If by some chance we were to come upon a people who regarded the world as entirely uncognisable - entirely nature - would that not constitute a problem as real as that proposed by a people who see the world as entirely cultural?

In a previous chapter⁴ this distinction has been made in terms of environment and habitat. Environment has been given the meaning of the world as it is given before human intervention - climate, topography, geology, plant and animal life. Environment is normally the study of geography and the other earth sciences but in the special areas of cultural geography there is a clear overlap with social anthropology and sociology. In sociological considerations however, it is not so much the environment that is of interest, as it is the uses which are made of it, and it is not so much these uses in themselves (the proper field of the ethnographer) as it is the cultural systems which define and prompt these activities and integrate them with other areas of social life. To the African herdsmen who lived on the Veld for example, and to their Afrikaner successors in many cases, there was neither sense nor meaning in the act of investing enormous amounts of wealth and energy to extract a few truckloads of carbon crystals from

the earth which, for a much lesser investment supported plants and beasts sufficient for humans to live on without discomfort and upon which to build substantial political and economic systems. The environmental givens had totally different meanings in one system from those that they had in the other.

All descriptions of environment therefore, for sociological purposes, are from the point of view of what is relevant for the social group under study. In Harbourtown the economics of Maori life before the colonial period are completely irrelevant - there is no sign of any similar European use of the environment, if we exclude the use of waterways in former times. Even here the resemblance is gross and is in no way continuous with the uses of the earlier period except perhaps in the use of the Harbour as a source of wild foods. There is a resemblance, after all, between the modern flounder fisherman equipped with a Tilley lamp and a manuka spear tipped with a piece of number eight wire, and his Maori counterpart of a century and a half ago using a raupo torch and a spear little different in materials and technique of use.

But is the environment comprehended only in the physical conditions and resources which it contains for a particular society, or is it necessary to add something more? The present argument is that, to have an overview which will contribute to our understanding of place, we must also look at the cultural history of the group in question as it bears upon their present mode of existence. A community's corporate existence and the existence of its material location, is a response not only to its economic base and its cultural inheritance, but also to the contingencies of time in its particular location. History viewed as a cumulation of acts,

processes and events arranged and interpreted through judgements of value is part of the apparatus by which people understand their own situation. The sociologist must understand this understanding.

Beyond this comes a further task. In the first paragraphs it was stated that the process of civilisation is the process of the enculturation of nature. The equivalent in material terms is the conversion of the environment into habitat, a process which comes from the human use of the environment, but which paradoxically begins in the mind. Yet this process is always incomplete, nature co-exists with culture, environment with habitat, there are wild birds and wild plants, winds that blow where they will, and, in humans, actions, thoughts and emotions which spring from nature rather than culture. The environment can never become wholly habitat, even by the processes of naming and categorisation; there are ineluctable aspects of nature that will not be denied. Our exploration of the mundane world therefore must ask how it is that Harbourtowners deal with this problem.

2. Harbourtown in space and time

i. Location

Harbourtown is set at the head of a tidal estuary on a large North Island harbour. The Estuary, as it is known locally, is largely mud-flat, an arm of the harbour about ten miles long, with a channel navigable at high tide by boats with a draft of not more than three feet or so. The channel is still occasionally used by fishing boats and is marked with long branches of

manuka with the twigs left intact. Apart from the fringe of pohutukawa trees growing on the waste edges, native growth has been stripped from the banks of the Estuary and the surrounding land in the process of agricultural development except on the northernmost reaches of the west bank where, no longer a river bank, but the Peninsula, it becomes the rugged south head of the Harbour.

To the east the land runs in rolling alluvial soils for a dozen or so miles. The gullies bear small creeks, a few of them permanent, which run to small mangrove-filled estuaries on the Harbour. The land is well adapted for dairying, the predominant form of agriculture, and the few acres used for orchards and small crops, stand out in the gentle sweep of dairyland that can be seen from Dome Hill, three or four miles outside the town.

To the south and not more than three miles away is the estuary of a major river, The River locally, but, although in early times a portage route ran from Harbourtown to a landing on the river, Harbourtown looks to the sea. The southward river flats were, until the turn of the century swamplands subject to flooding. They were drained over a lengthy period, but with the economic depression of the thirties, unemployed men were put to work carrying out major drain building, and though local people still refer to the area as "the swamp" flooding seldom occurs now.

To the west, running from the north side of the river mouth to the south head of the Harbour, a range of hills, running from two or three hundred feet at the southern end to close upon a thousand at the northern screens Harbourtown from the prevailing westerly storms coming from the Tasman Sea. These hills are built up

from wind blown sand and their surface soils are sufficient for pasture land. Bush still remains in the deep gullies at the northern end, though timbering and agriculture have removed most of the trees of any size.

Beyond the hills, low ranges of dunes from the nearly thirty miles of surf beaches which lie between the river and the head. At four places gaps occur through which it is possible to reach the beaches. One of these, two miles from Harbourtown, Lone Gull beach, is used by local people and visitors for surfing and surf fishing, the latter a sport with its own intricacies of technology in which ingenious ways are devised for taking fishing tackle out to the breaker line against both wind and tide. The beach, however, has a reputation for treacherous shifts of current, and the Harbourtown Surf Lifesaving Club maintains a patrol on it in summer weekends.

The sand dunes to the south are a source of work for Harbourtowners and district people. A pine forest covers the dunes and in the mid nineteen-sixties an extractive industry was set up with the aim of exploiting the iron sand deposits commercially. A small steel mill has been established a few miles north of Harbourtown, and sand is given its primary processing at the mine then transported by truck to the mill. For the first time in a century work other than agriculture and its services has become permanently available in Harbourtown.

The rural county of which Harbourtown is the westernmost borough, was, until the post-war (1939-45) period, entirely agricultural. Hilltown, to the east, gains its living largely from market gardening on the rich volcanic soils nearby.

As well as being on the main rail and road routes it is the agricultural and administrative centre of the county. A little to the south, perhaps five miles distant, is Riverside; a town somewhat similar in size and function to Harbourtown it was once dependent on the river traffic, but now is an agricultural and service centre.

To the north of Hilltown a chain of small towns, stations on the main trunk line, have been absorbed more or less wholly into the southward spreading Auckland conurbation. Once rural centres, they became suburban in response to the growing population and industrialisation of South Auckland. Not highly regarded as residential places - Aucklanders have always looked to the east and to the Pacific - these centres became the points for the development of such industry as the city has. Around the railway and southern motorway a straggle of factories mainly of the uglier and more polluting kinds was built up during the nineteen thirties and at more accelerated pace in the post-war period. The largest of these the major meatworks and related industries, blanketed the area with fumes and polluted the Harbour with its waste products. This part of the city (then about a quarter of a million in total population) was the home of the industrial workforce, but the introduction of a modern sewerage scheme in the early 1960s changed its reputation as a place of stink and squalor and made it more attractive for suburbanites.

This ribbon conurbation, broken in places by the building of more expensive houses ("executive homes") and the development of further industry taking advantage of the available labour

has reached to within a few miles of Hilltown, and it is now possible for workers to travel easily to the industrial region. The failure of any but the least imaginative planning in this suburban development, has left Harbourtowners acutely suspicious of mass development, and though they too, with the coming of industry have had to accept a considerable increase in the town's population, the borough has striven to keep its own form of "suburb" as unlike the state housing of South Auckland as possible.

The environment then, within which Harbourtowners perform their workaday tasks and follow their leisure pursuits is one in which there is a considerable richness of opportunity. The coast is available for fishing and surfing, the freshwater lakes in the sand country are stocked with trout. The Harbour is available for boating and on the silt flats of the Estuary flounder can be speared or netted for the trouble of going out on a suitable night tide. At the north end of the town is a safe swimming beach and others along the Peninsula provide a pleasant change of scenery for those who like to go there. The River is a venue for duck shooters and whitebaiters in the season, and a very few miles drive means that most fruit and vegetables can be bought direct from the grower.

Nevertheless, as later discussion will show, Harbourtown people tend to live within their town and find their diversions there. They differ in this respect little from the farmers who surround them but this is perhaps due to a different organisation of time. Where farmers live their lives according to the demands of seasonal work, Harbourtown folk keep office and shop hours and regard their weekend as their leisure time. Where farmers tend to regard the

local hall and the district itself as well as the farm as their sources of recreation and sociable meeting, Harbourtowners put a relatively greater barrier between themselves and nature, and place a relatively greater weight upon relationships with other people as a source of recreation. For them the recreational visit is the trip of an hour and a half or so to the city, or of twenty minutes to Hilltown. Within Harbourtown itself they engage in a wide and complex collection of voluntary organisations and their various activities. Though the country interpenetrates the town in a variety of ways Harbourtowners seem to see themselves as townsmen who live in close proximity to the country and who are not really detached in life style from the city, which they repudiate only because of its scale.

ii. The Economic Base

Harbourtown people see themselves as part of the total of the New Zealand socio-economic pattern, and their expectations in every aspect of material life hardly differ at all from those of other New Zealanders. Thus, in the census of 1971 (that nearest the research period) Harbourtowners were not significantly either better or worse off than other New Zealanders in the possession of cars, refrigerators, washing machines, t.v. sets and so on.

In one respect however, there had been a substantial change. Whereas in the 1960s some Harbourtown people had had to travel to industrial work in other towns or in South Auckland, work had become available in their own district. The new mill recruited labour in the town as well as creating new housing and greater

demand upon the established shops and services, and it had the additional advantage that it increased the opportunities for workers to increase their skills and gain job promotion. At the same time a demand for casual labour and shift time work, gave an opportunity to the younger farmers who wanted both the extra cash and a change from farm work.

The mill produced other changes as well. A new primary school was opened and the old buildings at the original school were replaced. There was a greater demand for trade and professional services, and an increase in retailing. Very slowly a change from the former dependence on rural servicing has begun to take place.

Harbourtown, however, remains firmly embedded in its network of farm services. Good years for the dairy industry inevitably affect the town, both in the amount of money spent and in farm related commercial activities. There was a lack of opportunity for women to work and little opportunity for school leavers who wished for anything in the way of a career.

Harbourtowners saw their economic position as limited but not disadvantaged. It was true, they agreed, that there were only limited opportunities for young people, but this had to be accepted as inevitable. The hope was that some of the young people might come back, and local people pointed out that some local boys and girls had come back as school teachers and that others were engaged in trades or other work in the district and nearby towns. Living in Harbourtown, it was frequently pointed out, had other compensations, it was "cheaper to live" (though paradoxically people complained about the prices in local stores) it was "peaceful", there were good recreational opportunities, one didn't "live in the

rat race", there were "no rich and no poor here".

This tension free economic condition was a goal which, Harbour-towners maintained was generally realised in their town, but they were not, nevertheless, utterly free from some sense of unfair distribution. This was usually projected outside the town; farmers were often said to be better off in many ways than townspeople (though in fact farm cash incomes did not differ much from those of townspeople) and the farm population tended to be seen as being in a privileged position. Deeper resentments however, were reserved for urban workers, more particularly for militant unionists who ~~was~~^{were} seen as "bludgers" wreckers, work-shy and so on. In this respect Harbourtowners were probably not much different from other dwellers in small rural towns, traditionally the most conservative politically and the least tolerant industrially of all New Zealanders.

This economic and political conservatism was reflected to some degree in fears about the new industry in the district. In Harbourtown there was a faction for change and another for conservation, but both tended to be populist in their approach. Thus, the highly respected mayor was criticised for being over friendly to the new mill and the plans for housing and other development in the town. The criticism arose less from any general dislike for "free enterprise" "progress" and the other Victorian goals dear to Harbourtown's speechmakers, as from distrust of large scale business, of outside control, and of changes in lifestyle. Harbourtowners were quick to point out that support for innovations did not come from locals but from "newcomers", cosmopolitans of one kind or another, who lacked long association with the town. As one notable local remarked, "They" (meaning people who were

only first generation Harbourtowners) "are starting to call the place 'The Village'..." by which he meant that locals were being categorised as peasantry.

Economic change brought with it demographic change. The most distinct kinds of change were those in gross numbers and the increase in the Maori population. The latter increase made a noticeable change, which, while it did not bring about racial tension, did not pass unnoticed. In fact the increase was mainly in the numbers of school age children who made up about 15% of the school age population, a result of the fact that Maori immigrants had both larger and younger families than Pakehas. Predictions that the influx of new workers which was expected as the mill labour force increased would inevitably include Maoris and Polynesians were met with some unease, and at least one Councillor believed that there was "an understanding" with the mill directorate on this question.

Harbourtown, in 1966, had had a century of virtual ecological stability both economically and demographically. It was not unexpected therefore, that local peoples models were those of a homeostatic situation. Improvements to the incomes of their businesses, farms and wages were thought of as a good but not if the price were to be the disruption of established life patterns. Like the other features of their town the economy and the population structure were seen as part of a temporal and spatial continuum and not as things in themselves. Harbourtowners were Tonniesians modelling their social world on a notion of gemeinschaft which outweighed, they frequently asserted, mere material gain.

3. The Socio-cultural Uses of the Environment

i. Introduction

The importance of particular economic uses, and the sheer scale of population give distinctive characteristics to place. Harbourtown and the surrounding districts clearly constitute a very fine ecological balance which has been maintained by the fact that outward migration of the rural work force and the spread of the Auckland conurbation has allowed some people to find work outside the district, while continuing to live in the town. Economic features however, should not distort consideration of the environmental setting. If the human use of the environment is an economic one and thereby a socio-cultural use of a kind not differing from other farming areas (dairy) in the North Island, it is nevertheless, not the only use to which the natural environment is put. The extent to which the environment is "natural" is, of course, open to question and it make relatively little sense therefore, to continue at this point to use an unexamined concept more appropriate to geography than sociology.

If one flies over the district the contrast between the "natural" and the "socio-cultural" environment is quite clear; the county from ten thousand feet up is the cliché patchwork of paddocks, it is a harmonious economic pattern which stands out in juxtaposition with the apparently uncontrolled west coast, the harbour, and the bushlands of the northern extremity of the Peninsula. Whatever the county is, it is not in a "natural" state and the human activity of more than a century of settlement has been dedicated to the effort to turn nature back, to push it to the useless margins where,

if it cannot be civilised it at least can cause no damage.

The natural environment is used. Those pieces of unsubdued, but not uncontrolled nature are the areas put to recreational use, insofar as they are used at all. The Estuary is used for yachting and fishing, and the west coast beaches, particularly Lone Gull Beach, as places for surfing and visiting. The responses in social organisation are easy enough to see; Harbourtown has its yacht club, surf lifesaving club, boating club, acclimitisation society, and local representatives of a number of national societies such as the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

Harbourtowners' efforts are, however, to enculturate nature.

Foreshore reseves acquire boat ramps, grassed areas, picnic barbecues, play areas for children, caravan sites, and neatly aligned rows of pohutukawa trees inside small wooden palisades. Those areas immediately adjacent to the town where nature has by neglect evaded attention, become the target for citizen's groups such as the Lions and Jaycees who quickly get to work to remove the rubbish in a burst of communal effort. With the old tyres, broken bottles and discarded bedsteads, all too commonly go the volunteer native plants and ancient Maori sites, to be replaced bby the familiar amenities and improvements.

Within the borough itself there have been energetic programmes of reconstruction. The small freshwater creek that runs into the Estuary was for long a nuisance to transport, it was bridged, but left behind a marshy wilderness onto which the local shops backed, and which bred swarms of mosquitoes and sandflies. The Council initiated a programme of reclamation which has confined the

creek to a narrow bed and provided a site for a swimming pool, playground and kindergarten. Along the other bank treeplanting, to screen the back of the shops, has started, and there has been talk of closing off the upper Estuary with a causeway and lock gates to provide a permanent seawater lake at the town's back door.

A century ago the founders of Harbourtown planned a canal to connect the Estuary and the River. This scheme has never been fully given up although by now it is too expensive to be practical; the reserve over the canal route still exists and there is occasional discussion of the project. The internal coastline of the borough that is still in private hands is much in demand for building sections, and reserved sections of the shoreline are actively being developed as parks.

The pattern of human use leaves relatively little scope for nature, and it becomes virtually impossible to talk of a "natural environment" within the boundaries of the Borough. Environment is converted into habitat, quickly and effectively in accordance with values that are economic and cultural, in which "use" equates with functionality - mere contemplation being little regarded. True, the rain still falls and the winds blow on Harbourtown, wild birds (though indigenous birds are not as common now as introduced ones) fly overhead, and fish, undisciplined by human activity come and go in the Estuary, but where artifice cannot control these natural features, provision can be made for them. The townsfolk pay for these measures and ask angry questions when the pace of change is not to their liking.

ii. Valuations, Knowledge, and the Natural Environment

Enough has been said in the foregoing sections of this essay to establish that the natural environment of Harbourtown is "natural" only in the sense that it constitutes a resource which existed before any human intervention had taken place. Though Maori tribes had occupied the area for centuries their contribution to its modification is to all intents insignificant in Harbourtown and the County as it is today. The stock of knowledge of Harbourtown people is, so far as the natural environment is concerned, that of other New Zealanders. It clearly distinguishes the natural from the enculturated environment, but in fact the enculturation process has been fairly well accomplished and only rather minor changes need to be made. These are such things as the conversion of uneconomic areas to recreational uses in the process of which activity economic purposes, through the attraction of visitors, and new permanent residents, are latently served.

The technological development of farming, communication and transport has liberated Harbourtowners from the constraints of the natural environment to such an extent that, short of a major earthquake or wholly unprecedented storm or flood, there is no limitation which cannot be overcome by the adequate application of funds and technology. This constitute a basic theme of the stock of knowledge; it is not in any sense specifically local, (it is probably true to say that it is common to all New Zealanders) but it has nevertheless special local points of focus.

Such knowledge is subject to cultural interpretation and in Harbourtown one finds a local variant of the techno-scientific viewpoint. The distinction between the natural, and the enculturated

which has been turned to economic ends, is blurred by relativistic notions about nature which admit things that are clearly part of culture to the category of the natural, and leave truly natural things, that is, the environment which is untouched and untouchable, somewhere on the margins of experience to be considered relevant only insofar as special precautions have to be taken in dealing with them.

Enculturated nature, "quasi-nature" as it might be called, is drawn within the boundaries of habitat. Where the townland thins and merges with farmland is one kind of socio-cultural boundary, a boundary with its own imperatives; where the town incorporates and disciplines nature another boundary exists crossing which sets up new norms. These transitions are part of the Harbournowner's stock of knowledge, a stock which is special and local in a sense that makes it a variant of the national stock.

The town-farm boundary is normatively constraining in precise ways. Farmlands are fenced to within a few feet of road boundaries and whatever may lie beyond in the way of desirable locations, to cross one of these fences is clearly a trespass - a farm is like a house lot, it is private property, but it differs in that it is productive territory. Thus the mushrooms in the paddock and the wild ducks on the stock pond are equally the farmers property along with the stock or crops he has intentionally raised; to get them involves asking permission or stealing. Farm fences are peppered with warnings to trespassers, and in the duck season to shooters - some farmers take advertisements in local papers to give further notice of their legal and customary rights to keep people off.

There is an unwritten code also concerning proper behaviour

on farms for non-farm people who visit farms..Harbourtown people know this code, which covers such matters as closing gates, avoiding stock paddocks and crossing fences at strainer posts, and a number of other practical matters and courtesies.

When Harbourtown people move into the informal recreational areas such as the beaches and picnic places within the borough they cross an invisible boundary into the quasi-natural world. Though these places are thought of as being "free" areas in fact they are highly coercive and have distinct norms of their own. The movement is not from constraint to freedom, but from one form of constraint to another. This is illustrated in the behaviour patterns of such places. Boats are launched at ramps and cars are driven off into layby areas, children and adults wear clothes that are thought of as "holiday" or "casual" and are quite bizarre in colour, cut and style. Expressive as these garments may be they are as much a uniform as day wear for work is and proclaim as clearly what norms are to be observed. No Harbourtownner would think of swimming in the nude or even of permitting a small child to go naked in one of these quasi-natural places. In this he does not differ from other New Zealanders, he sees nothing out of place in taking portable furniture to West End Beach, turning on a transistor radio and eating specially prepared food. He would certainly not gather driftwood and light a fire on the beach to cook the fish he might have caught, and only children will venture beyond the well demarcated ends of the beach along the foreshore. The beach is further enculturated by the provision of other amenities for picnickers, tables and seats bolted to concrete

foundations, swings and a waterslide for children, a barbecue, changing sheds and public lavatories. The whole is a disciplined and organised reflection of life as it is publicly lived.

By contrast true "nature" appears at Lone Gull, one of the West Coast beaches, accessible along unsealed country roads through a gap in the dunes. At Lone Gull there is a heavy surf, the beach, black iron-sand, stretches for two miles between low headlands beyond which lie yet other beaches southward to the River and northward to South Head. Lone Gull is seen by Harbourtowners as dangerous, as indeed it is though probably not more so than other beaches on the west coast. "Danger" however, is associated with nature and applies no less to other undisciplined places.

Some attempts have been made to enculturate Lone Gull Beach, there is a levelled off area for car parking with a forty gallon oil drum or two for rubbish. The Surf Club has a small club house which is used on summer weekends by the patrol which sets out the flagged safe swimming area. Apart from this Lone Gull is largely natural, the foreshore dunes are covered with brown tussock, sea lupin and native grasses and flax, there are no well-defined humanised areas, and a half mile walk or less takes one out of sight in the continual haze blown up off the surf.

Harbourtowners go to Lone Gull Beach, but only to exercise special skills, surf-fishing, and for the hardier young people, surf board riding. Local farmers exercise race horses on the beach and some of the more adventurous surf fishermen take their four wheel drive Landrovers up to a favoured place at low tide; recently motor cyclist have taken tobroadsiding on the beach.

The normative constraints of this area are those primarily related to physical safety but there is also no release from the constraints of propriety observed elsewhere. The Harbourtowners takes with him into nature the norms and role expectations of his culture.

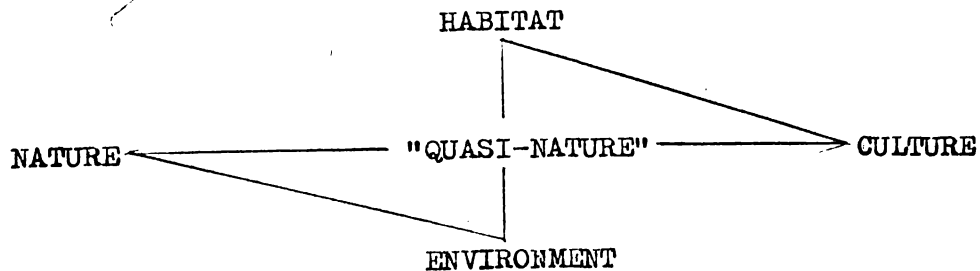
The stock of knowledge includes knowledge of the categories of habitat and environment which are local and familiar. In general both farm and townland are regarded as habitat, and it is considered appropriate and "good" to work upon and modify them. They are tractable and can be "improved" and improvement always takes the form of reducing the untidiness of nature. It is only when nature is irreducible to order, as it is at the west coast beaches, that habitat ends. Even at those places on the north of the Harbour, Muriwai for example, where Aucklanders have built holiday baches, the effort at enculturation is relatively small and defensive, rather than offensive.

It seems plausible, and it is supported by what Harbourtowners say and do, to see a clear and contrasting set of evaluations in the distinction which has been drawn here between the natural and the cultural environment. Habitat is positively evaluated, both for economic and recreational uses, and also for its predictability and malleability. To spend money either collectively or individually for the improvement of habitat, whether it be a public park, the provision of a sewer service, a tar sealed road or painting a house, is seen as laudable, though there may be debate about priorities when it comes to spending public money. Conversely any intrusion of nature into habitat is seen as

inappropriate and calls forth action, from the householder quelling weeds in his garden to the Borough Council serving notice on the owners of vacant lots requiring them to have them cleared.

Habitat is clearly good, safe and desirable, whereas nature is bad, dangerous and, in some senses, undesirable. The collectivity can tolerate nature when it does not encroach upon habitat, where it does considerable effort and money is put out to enculturate it and remove its undesirable features - wild life, disvalued plants and natural processes. Harbourtown thus, ^{is an example} of and a stage in a continuing process of converting natural environment to habitat, and zealousness in pursuit of this goal is chief among the civic virtues.

The distinctions discussed above may now be drawn together to form a conceptual scheme which represents in formal terms what is displayed by Harbourtown people in their everyday behaviour.



The paired oppositions are synthesised, it might be argued, in the category of "quasi-nature", which is nature rendered safe but still removed from the world of daily economic life.

4. Time and Habitat

i. Continuity with the past

In the previous section it was maintained that the social interaction of men and their environment had the consequence of converting the natural environment into a social or "enculturated" environment or habitat. Nature was replaced by an enculturated version "quasi-nature" which is, in fact, nature redeemed from wildness by the actions of humans who invest it with uses.

We might at this point, and quite provisionally, visualise Harbourtown as a two-dimensional plan consisting of a series of zones extending outward from its geographical centre. The most central zone is pure habitat, the next zone is quasi-nature, and the farthest zone is nature itself. This plan oversimplifies the reality; there are many subtleties to this scheme of categorisation and evaluation. It became difficult in the previous discussion to speak of any sample place without reference backward in time - "x was once noted for this purpose, but now is used for that," "that hillock where the church now stands was once the site of a Maori fortification" and so on.

In the discussion which follows this scheme is pursued, for these innocuous sayings which are mentioned to an enquiring stranger almost as a matter of course, are an indication of the way in which the taken for granted reality embodies elements of social meaning. Is this history? The answer must be that the model is historical, and that is the term which Harbourtowners apply to it, but it is not history of the kind that historians write. It is "local history", but local history as any perusal of the dozen

or so district histories produced and bought each year ,
is history of a very odd kind. It is a history in which there
is almost no discussion of economic, political or social trends,
either nationally or locally, it does not seek for causes, nor does
it try to show any emergent change; it is usually highly optimistic,
it focusses on the doings of selected people and families, and it
retains all sorts of trivial details. For example,

"...Half a century of municipal enterprise and progress
has transformed Mt Eden into a fair residential
district, in which the impression is one of never-ending
delight. Tree-lined streets, red roofs, surrounded
by green lawns and an abundance of flowers and shrubs,
contribute everywhere to an atmosphere of quiet dignity
and charm. . .

5

and

Mt Eden has always attracted self reliant progressive
men. The settlers were of a hardy type who toiled
long hours for a small return, and those who followed
were a thrifty hard working community. As the
population increased many became prominent in business
and professional circles in the city...

6

The shortcomings of histories of this kind are obvious when
they are considered as histories, they challenge no assumptions,
nor are they meant to, for their purpose is simply to give support
to existing values. What would the author of the above excerpts
have made of the fact that the local schoolteacher was forced
to resign from his job after it was alleged that he had behaved
improperly to a senior girl pupil, or that the school committee
dismissed a cleaning woman who refused to continue work at the
payment offered? Would he have read it as significant of the moral
tone of the 1880s, or would he have buried it as only likely to

cause embarrassment to descendants who might still live in the borough. In the second case would he have seen that the refusal of the cleaning lady, a poor widow, reflected a change in the conditions of employment and the demand for labour, that the charwoman was going the same way as the bootboy and the kitchen maid?

Local history walks a narrow line between truth and slander, and it usually fails to discern the inexorable national trends which have their refractions in local life. The perspective of time is too short, grandchildren still live in the district, the picture comes to be dominated by "prospects of never-ending delight"; the truth, that a little girl got into trouble for eating peaches in school and that her subsequent gossiping put a schoolmaster out of his job, and what that trivial incident meant, is hidden behind the gold watch-chains and handle bar moustaches that look at us out of the brown presentation photographs. There is a truth here but it is not a historical truth; it is a truth about the generation that writes and reads local history.

Nevertheless "local history" is important in understanding the total social fact that is the community, it tells us what is valued from the past (though we must conjecture why it is) and commonly, what is valued is place. Local history, and this is part of its fascination, always happened "here", not in any generalised way but on particular street corners, in this house, on that rock on the river bank, over there where the church now stands. Time is built into habitat as an extra dimension and

that time is the property of local people and their descendants. That is why they do not ask for the truth, but ask only for a restatement of a truth they already know.

Against "local history" must be put "history" - one might call the former mythology but for the fact that it contains real people, happenings and places, though it colours and selectively interprets them - but objective history has only one role here, it is to show how external factors in time shaped the milieu, placed Harbourtown where it is and explains its present. To understand that milieu and the way in which it sustains the community, we must have recourse to local subjective history - the intersection of time and place.

The point is that the time continuum is both chronologically and socially subjective. Local people are not unaware of objective chronology (dates) and they revive in folk stories the ways in which people lived in the past. This kind of history is the history of life style, spoken of partly in terms of how people lived, but exemplified in matters of dress and furnishing, places, genealogy, and relatively little in incident other than the remembered tales of grandparents. It is a history of ancestors, of "who" and "where" not of "why", and to no great extent of "how". The objective and explanatory local history would in fact damage myths or place them in jeopardy, might reorder the relations of dead generations and take away the certainties on which self-regard in the present is based. It is of importance for a local man to say to the sociological field-worker, "I'm a Vickman! We're one of the oldest."

families around here. My great-grandfather built the store over there." Bob Vickman takes pride in the fact that he is immovably part of Harbourtown and that the store building still bears the family name, that he can point out the graves of his great-grandfather grandfather and father in the cemetery, that his family held land, stabled horses, rode with the Volunteers, were schooled in the old schoolhouse, and that they are related to a number of other "old families". In this, the fact that the store opened in response to the river trade, that it declined in the depression of the eighties that there was no estate to inherit because of economic and political changes, is not of first importance. It is the identity of person, genealogy and place which is of real significance.

ii. History in the local setting

By New Zealand standards Harbourtown is old, indeed, it is referred to in gazetteers of the eighties as "one of the oldest towns in the province". However, it is certainly of greater recency than Russell in the Bay of Islands, by perhaps thirty years - not long as time goes, but long enough to exclude it from the earliest phase of settlement history.

The Harbour had been a major highway for the Maoris of the region, from the River a small creek led inland and was used as a means to bring canoes to the short portage after which they could be launched in the Harbour and could then travel by means of further portages to the eastern side of the Auckland isthmus. This route led by means of the River into the heartland of the

North Island and brought the Harbour into the sphere of interest of the river tribes. West and south of Auckland the tribes formed a powerful confederation, but to the north lay another. The numbers of fortifications on the Auckland isthmus testify to the number of times that this territory was fought over - indeed, it was known as Taamaki-makau-rau, Taamaki of the hundred lovers.

As matters stood in 1840 when William Hobson, the newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor made Auckland his capital, the isthmus was only sparsely settled. John Logan Campbell, arriving in 1839 in anticipation of the settlement, found only small villages, but also little willingness on the part of local chiefs to sell the land. These chiefs were allies of the southern tribes and land was to remain an issue for many years to come. Hobson established his capital on the isthmus, and, since access by waterway was all important, exerted a powerful influence on the future development of the region.⁷

The Bay of Islands had taken the first impact of European settlement, but the transfer of the capital had reduced its significance economically and left the northern tribes in a position of disadvantage. The tribes to the south, however, were in the position of having acquired much of the new technology fairly painlessly, and found that the new town created a demand for the products of their gardens and farms.

George French Angas, travelling in 1844 noted the existence of cultivations of kumara, potatoes and maize, he met European pig buyers on the river, and remarked on the extent of the river trade.⁸ Firth, quoting Swainson, remarks that in one year alone

1792 canoes entered Auckland harbour supplying, among other things, 200 tons of potatoes, 1400 baskets of onions, 1700 baskets of maize and 1200 baskets of peaches.⁹ At least similar quantities probably came via the store and trading post established at Harbourtown in 1843, and possibly more since trading vessels of some size were operating on the Harbour.

Hobson died a scant two years after his appointment to the Governorship. The Maoris, literate in their own language and confident of their position tried to influence the appointment of his successor. Te Wherowhero an important chief who Angas had met wrote to the Queen in the following manner:

My subject is a governor for us, and for the foreigners of this island. Let him be a good man; look out for a kind person - a man of judgement. Let not a troubler come here, let not a boy come, or one puffed up with pride. We the Maoris shall be afraid. Let him be good as this governor who has just died. 10

Within a few years a governor was appointed who might have been chosen to fit Te Wherowhero's description, Captain George Grey, "a troubler", "a boy", perhaps also a man "puffed up with pride" though a pride of a kind not likely to disturb the Maoris of that time. Grey took office in 1844, had within a few months quelled the uprising among the northern tribes, the result of the decline in their fortunes due to the transfer of the capital, and set himself to the business of making New Zealand secure for European settlement.

He enters Harbourtown's history briefly, in 1849, with the establishment of a permanent ferry service between the village and the capital. Harbourtown at this period had already a stable core of settlers and farmers; by 1855 there were twelve men who

had the necessary property or income to qualify as electors. The electoral roll for that year lists their occupations as farmers, hotelkeeper, settler, boatman, mariner, storekeeper, carter and labourer. There is a notable absence of tradesmen; farmers predominate and doubtless did all their own work. Photographs taken at this period show that buildings of considerable size had been erected possibly with the help of tradesmen from Auckland. At all events Harbourtown at this point was a thriving commercial village, its hotel and stores standing alongside the road from the wharf, its first civility emerging with, in 1858, a school, a chapel, and evidently a life of its own - in 1856 a Methodist missionary had drawn eighty people to Sunday Service in a local store - the town had emerged from the bush farms and settlers' whares.

In the 1850s the opinion and attitude of the colony in New Zealand was of high optimism. Auckland had a population of nearly 2000 in the town and another three thousand in the immediate district. The town was, as Swainson describes it, "like an English watering-place" though, as he remarks a little further on, the new town was much less formal in manners, customs and conventions than its English counterparts. There seemed to be no reason to suppose that the immediate problems of colonising the land, establishing good relations with the indigenous people, and civilising them in the pattern of Victorian bourgeois democracy would not be solved painlessly and without disadvantage to either side. Swainson, perhaps not more of an optimist than most, remarks,

In one respect, Auckland is happily distinguished from small colonial communities. Society is not divided by political animosities or religious bickerings. Party spirit is neither violent or general; and owing to the perfect ventilation afforded by the newspapers, the political atmosphere never becomes surcharged by an accumulation of noxious vapours. 11

He notes the emergent egalitarianism ("rank station, fortune, family connection, unless supported by character, ability, public spirit, or liberality receive but small respect; while ready homage is always paid to real merit"); but notes also "the difficulty for ladies of finding and keeping good servants". There is, however, an absence of serious crime or any problem with the Maoris.

"Their territorial rights" he says, "as owners of the soil too, have always been scrupulously recognised and respected by the settlers in the district; each party from the first has seen the advantage to be derived from the presence of the other, and friendly relations have uniformly been retained between them." 12

Admittedly Swainson was writing for the enlightenment of prospective immigrants, he was moreover a Victorian liberal, but he had been Attorney General of the colony since 1841 and was certainly well acquainted with the opinion of the time. How was it then, that the picture of enlightenment, liberal values and general economic, social and cultural progress should have, within a few years, changed to one of war?

Some of the answer may be sought in the unintended consequences of the liberal approach to colonisation which emerged in the Treaty of Waitangi, that document by which the Maori tribes

ceded possession of New Zealand to Queen Victoria in return for her protection. Liberal sentiment in Britain recognised that the naked exploitation of New Zealand would mean reliance by the Maoris on land sales in order to get the European goods they wanted. By making land sales to the Crown the only means by which expropriation could take place, it seemed possible to have an orderly colonial development.

This policy, put into effect by Hobson, had the consequence of cutting off the flow of goods to the Maoris, and the removal of the capital from the Bay of Islands to the Waitemata had the additional effect of depriving of European goods those tribes which had the longest acquaintance with them. The European settlers who included among their other activities land speculation, were also dissatisfied.

Felton Mathew, Surveyor General, who came in Hobson's entourage, was highly critical of Hobson of whom he remarks "incompetent he ever was to the conduct of so important an enterprise", and still more so of the Treaty. In his journal entry of the same date as the above he says,

But a very serious, and in my opinion very legitimate source of dissatisfaction is to be found in the preposterously absurd way in which the land question is being treated by our Government, and the folly of treating with a parcel of beastly barbarians as if they were civilised and enlightened beings... 13

Mathew does not waste his pepperiness on Maoris only, who, with some justice, he says, do not understand the pre-emptive right of the Crown, "they must not sell to anyone but her little majesty; who knows and cares almost as little about them as they about her."

He also attacks the Colonial Office, ("that most elaborate coxcomb, the Marquis of Normanby - author of divers trumpery novels...") the settlers and the Governor unsparingly. On February 5th, 1841, almost a year after the first settlement, Mathew predicts that there will be war, (there is some likelihood that this section of his journal was summarised from notes and letters, perhaps as late as 1842, in which case Mathew is giving himself the benefit of hindsight) and indeed in 1844 came that new war with the Maoris under Hone Heke and Kawiti, which Grey brought to an end in 1845.

The "parcel of beastly barbarians" had lost their first encounter with European arms, largely because their leaders had lost prestige among their own people. One effect of the pacification of the north was that it ceased to be economically significant for the greater part of the century and exerted no political effect of consequence.

In 1859 the tensions created by the increasing rate of land sales and the influx of European settlers led to the next conflict of settlers and Maoris. The war, which became identified with the Maori ambitions for self-government on the one side, and with the land-grabbing greed of the Auckland settlers on the other, resulted in a long series of skirmishes which denied the central area of the North Island to settlement until 1865 and in the area known to the Maoris as Te Rohe Potae, and Europeans as the King Country, for a fair period after.

Those wars had been fought by Imperial forces, by locally raised regiments and by irregulars. They had involved national pride, jingoism, and a comforting sense of justice well done

in the confiscation of thousands of Maori acres. By the Treaty Maoris had given the foreigners a country, by the wars of the 1860s they created nationhood, founded upon ability in battle. So well established was this that New Zealand was to send a sizeable corps of mounted infantry to South Africa in 1900, many more men to Egypt and Europe in 1914, more indeed, than any other Empire nation in proportion to its population, and thereafter contingents to every major war until the present.

The trends of colonial development then, were to subdue and exploit the land, expand transport and communication, and develop the clear economic and political dominance of the British settler faction. The creation of the economic base was what the settlers energetically undertook, but the notions of orderly development, of British country house and cathedral city reproduced in the new land were notably at odds with what was actually happening. Wakefield's Canterbury settlement had a semblance of Britain but Wellington was less of a success in this respect, and Auckland, by contrast an unplanned growth, with its ladies who could not find suitable servants, meant that the leisured middle class had a hard time of it and finally, liberated to some extent from convention decided on a more egalitarian style of living.

The settlement period had been one in which there had been on the one hand, a sincere attempt at a humanitarian colonisation in which the two races would have complementary economic and political roles and would eventually blend to become one. On the other, the problems of land expropriation, the existence of a rapacious band of adventurers and petty bourgeois capitalists, and the

ideology of social distance expressed in one form in Mathew's "bestly barbarians" observation, in another in Isaac Featherstone's "dying race" theory, and finally the possibility of decisive military action, conspired to produce a situation of growing tension.

Sinclair divides the early colonisation period into three main phases. In the first of these (1800-1840) the Maori actively sought to gain European cultural forms and artefacts. The second phase (1840-1848) was " a period of active though sporadic resistance to settlement ... this opposition, though it may have represented Maori sentiment, was unorganised". Sinclair's third phase extends from 1848 to 1858 and is the decade of the development of organised resistance to European settlement, at least insofar as this meant further alienation of Maori land.¹⁴

Grey dealt, in his first governorship, with the war in the north quickly and decisively, but in his second he inherited not merely the bunglings of his predecessors, but also an enemy who had found a greater degree of organisation, leaders, at least one of whom, Tamehana Tarapipipi, ~~was~~ was a man of great sophistication, and a policy which was more than the frustrated reaction of the previous war. The cause was a self-governing Maori state, but the impulse was too late by twenty years. The outcome was foregone and would only take time to be realised.

In Harbourtown, still only a handful of warehouses, a few cottages and a church, the effects of the war were to be dramatic for the Maoris though for Pakehas the outcomes were no more than a scatter of shots and some military gestures.

The climate for war between the Maoris and the settlers had been established by the strident voices of those settlers who wanted invasion and the confiscation of Maori land. Sinclair records that the Auckland newspaper "The Daily Southern Cross" "proclaimed itself proud to be called the 'war-at-any-price organ'."¹⁵ Indeed, the opinion of the settlers had settled to one which was the direct opposite of the egalitarian humanitarianism portrayed by Swainson, and we may expect that such views were shared by Harbourtown people. Grey, having accepted the necessity of war as the means to establish sovereignty fully and to satisfy settler demands, proceeded to establish military outposts at such places as would provide an adequate defensive (or offensive) front for Auckland. This chain of strongpoints, of which Harbourtown was one, stood on the frontiers of the tribal lands of the supporters of the Maori King, that same Te Wherowhero who had written so appealingly to the Queen in 1842. They were both menace and provocation.

The history of the Waikato wars need not detain us here. They were brought to a successful conclusion in 1865 and their immediate outcome was the punishment of the "rebel" tribes by the confiscation of a large area of land. As things turned out the Harbourtown tribes were divided in their loyalties. By kinship and long association they were related to the belligerents and some of their members went to join them; others supported the settlers, but it made little difference in the end. Along with the Waikato tribes the Harbourtown people lost their land. Their capacity to control their lives on the basis of economic

power was thus destroyed and with it, any possibility of retaining a measure of political independence. The Waikato tribes had not recovered by 1914 and retained a tradition of non-co-operative, but non-violent resistance to the government until after the Great War.¹⁶

The period after the wars was one of colonial consolidation and of the establishment of a unitary social, economic and political system throughout the islands. The centralisation of government in Wellington, the establishment of a coastal shipping trade and the building of railways, above all the impetus given by the demand for cheap Imperial wool, beef, mutton, butter and cheese and the establishment of the technological means for shipping them to the British market, established by the turn of the century, a self-confident nation of close to a million people which regarded itself as another England, or, at any rate, as a full member of the Empire.

For Harbourtown, the important changes that occurred within the last quarter of the century were brought about by the extension of the railway system, which, by 1874, had reduced the importance of the network of waterways by which Auckland had been supplied. The railway passed well to the east. The system of water transport became of local importance only, as a means of carrying passengers and goods from the various ports on the Peninsula, and supplying the requirements of farm development. The war which had been fought in the name of sovereignty had in fact destroyed the vigorous Maori economic development to the south, and as the Maori tribe entered the

period of non-cooperation the European settlers turned their attention to the promise of more rapid communications.

Other changes occurred. In the flush of euphoria following the end of the wars an immigration campaign has been intensively pursued with the aim of settling the newly confiscated lands. The result was a period of over population followed by a sharp decline. The fault was the government's which, in its attempt to conquer and develop had created the conditions for an economic depression. Many of the settlers abandoned farming for gum-digging and the gold-fields, but the result was that a population which had been thought of as being primarily a permanent rural labour force became a transient one. By the turn of the century Harbourtown seems to have stabilised as a small service town, and the completion of the railway branch line in 1921 established it as a contributing provincial sub-centre, a role which did not change until industrial development began in the 1960s.

iii. "The Past teaches many things . . ."

It is notable that the various local histories published as the county and its various townships reached their centenaries regard history as ending with the Great War. For Harcourtowners the railway meant more than that they had a better form of transport, it meant also that they were no longer pioneers or settlers, but were part of the provincial system. In fact the depression of the 1930s affected farming populations throughout the country, but Harbourtown seems to have passed through this period with no memory of its impact, great though it must have been.

Politically Harbourtowners remained loyal to the conservative "farmers governments" (W.F. Massey, Prime Minister in 1914, was M.P. for the county) and continue these loyalties today. Nor are there discernible local traces of the various migration waves which affected the town, apart from some remaining German and Yugoslav surnames, there is nothing to show that immigrants of other than English or Scottish stock settled in the town. Harbourtowners themselves are aware that recency of migration establishes one's place or lack of it, in local genealogies, but there is little otherwise to suggest that change is other than a process of introducing new technology, which is adapted and assimilated without greatly disturbing existing social relationships.

The development of Harbourtown as a complex of milieux, thus, is strongly influenced by economic adaptation and change; the sailing cutters and scows gave way to steamers, the steamers to railways, and the railways to cars and trucks. Farming became increasingly capital intensive, working horses disappeared and tractors and machinery replaced and displaced human labour. The industries which relied on native resources, gum digging, flax milling, timber felling, waned and disappeared - beyond these things Harbourtowners seem curiously unable to interpret their history. It is not because there is a lack of a sense of the past, but perhaps because the capacity of local people to effect change except in rather small ways, no longer exists - it has been replaced by regional and national forces; there is no longer an equality of interplay between locality and nation, as there

was in the early settlement period.

History, that is the objective chronology of events weighed and interpreted to permit the understanding of the present is irrelevant to Harbourtown people, as we noted earlier. That is not to say that "history" is not cited commonly in order to explain or give validation to the present. When however, the evidences of history are sought for, the local historian falters. The dimension of change most easily perceived is that of technological innovation and "progress", the reality is that things have not changed much, and that it is the tension between those forces which come to bear upon local social relationships, and the attempts of people involved in those relationships to conserve them, and in doing so to render them more perfect, that leads to the local historical sense. It is in this way that place is drawn in as physical evidence of a history where things do not change, whereas the ideology of change, development and progress requires that they do.

A local historian writes,

Nineteen hundred and sixty-five, therefore, is a time to take stock, to remember those who have played a part in bringing about the prosperity which is enjoyed by all today. Especially, however, is a debt owed to the pioneers who founded the various districts and towns...

The past teaches many things, some aspects of which may have not been apparent to those who lived through those times. For example the chapters in this book dealing with the Waikato War and the events which led up to it will be read with regret by a generation who have learnt to value the endearing qualities of the Maori people. The history of the pioneering period...is the story of men and women with stout hearts who triumphed over tremendous difficulties. Circumstances certainly played a part, but the deciding factor was their determination to succeed.

This must also be true of the future. Success in the years ahead will largely depend on the people who carry on this heritage.

"Circumstances" then, play a part, but it is the sturdy and determined pioneers who must be given the credit, for it was they who could affect events. A myth is being created in order to invest the present and the past with meaning. Lévi-Strauss has this to say,

As for events themselves, I have pointed out that they are attested otherwise than by authentic documents, and generally better. Archives thus provide something else; on the one hand they constitute events in their radical contingency (since only interpretation, which forms no part of them can ground them in reason), and, on the other, they give a physical existence to history, for in them alone is the contradiction of a completed past and a present in which it survives, surmounted. Archives are the embodied essence of the event.

By this approach we recover, at the very centre of the savage mind, that pure history to which we were already led by totemic myths. It is not inconceivable that some of the events they relate are genuine, even if the picture they paint of them is distorted. 18

and,

...classificatory systems thus allow the incorporation of history, even, and particularly, that which might be thought to defy the system. For make no mistake, the totemic myths which solemnly relate futile incidents and sentimentalise over particular places are comparable only to minor or lesser history; that of the dimmest chroniclers, ...nothing in our civilisation more closely resembles the periodic pilgrimages made by the initiated Australians, escorted by their sages than our conducted tours to Goethe's or Victor Hugo's house, the furniture of which inspires emotions as strong as they are arbitrary. As in the case of the churinga the main thing is not that the bed is the self same one on which it is proved Van Gogh slept; all the visitor asks is to be shown it. 19

Local history then, is like myth and place, in it, is like a churinga or Van Gogh's bed. Such a view at least makes comprehensible why it should be that Harbourtown people and other historians, whether savage or civilised spend so much time identifying place with history. But this, let us be clear, is not historian's history, and it is perhaps the reason why some local historians, like the author quoted above, falter. For they teeter on a fence on the one side of which is myth and, on the other, the interpretation of events. Few local people will actually, "read with regret" the events which led to the Waikato war and what followed them. Those who do so will probably not feel regret because of the endearing qualities of the Maoris known to them, but because of a sense of justice and a need to understand real complaints in a palpable present. That is not the way of most people, however; a truthful history would be unflattering and would show, not continuity with the past, but discontinuity - a myth in which sturdy pioneers go off to tame the frontier and survive its hardships, will hardly stand up to the documentation of ruthless acquisitiveness by some, the grievous exploitation of gullible others, and a general cover of spurious legality. It is the myth that will survive.

Does this, however, let us dismiss truthful history as only another myth, though this time one which satisfies those with a grudge against the status quo? Is historical debunking no more than a manifestation of a different but equal interpretation? It is toward such a conclusion that Levi-Strauss seems to lead us, yet it is a conclusion which flies in the face of the sense of

what scholarship is. For local people there is no such dilemma for that is not the plane on which local history gives meaning. In the case of Harbourtown the point of local history is to establish continuity in place and its specifics, and in social location, and to invest these with the emotional power which will sustain their underlying structures; in the case of a Chinese equivalent, the point is to establish discontinuity between modern Chinese society and its feudal predecessor - continuity here is the struggle of the people, not the structure of social relations.

But each is a myth. We must distinguish history from its functions and its uses. The functions of history exist in no one person's mind, they are unsought consequences of the past in the present; uses on the other hand are intentional constructs. Each is sociologically significant, though in the present essay, the first is no more than sketched, the second exemplified, and the third irrelevant to immediate concerns.

5. Conclusion: Time and Space - Nature and Culture

This chapter began with a discussion of nature and culture and of the usefulness of this dichotomy in sociological analysis. It was maintained that in the process of becoming civilised nature was converted into culture, and that when place was the focus of attention the analogous process was the conversion of environment into habitat. Human action (and this includes thinking) is the means by which environment becomes habitat.

But, as the ensuing sections show, this process of enculturation takes time, and it is the kind of time called "local history" which replaces the objective time which we measure in terms of elapsed hours, days, or years. This elapsed time is swallowed up by the need to construct myths of continuity with the pioneering ancestors and thereby to assimilate their virtues as the totemist is thought to do by ritually eating the totemic ancestor. Local history is thus not about events so much as it is about ideal social structures. It validates the claims of the descendants to a status which is wholly ascriptive, and to whatever honour goes with it.

The transition from nature to culture is the work of the ancestors and it must be continued in the present by their descendants. The physical evidence of the work of the ancestors is place itself, Harbourtown, the shops, houses, streets, the trees, the graves, the relics reposing in the museum. Harbourtown is an intersection of space and time, but one that follows a trajectory into the future which is consistent with its trajectory from the past.

The categories of "environment" and "habitat" are cut across by the categories of "local history" and "place". Any milieu ~~ore~~ assemblage can thus be placed in relation to these two orders which, though they are conceptually separated in this discussion are not in everyday life. Thus it is that Harbourtowners can see their town as habitat as opposed to environment, culture as opposed to nature, and also as a distinct entity characterised by particular historical and geographical characteristics. That objective habitat and environment, and history and geography succumb to the construction of a local reality is no more than we should expect.

Notes and References

CHAPTER VI

1. Lévi-Strauss 1963. Above all, it is beginning to emerge that the distinction between nature and society [i.e. culture, L-S's note, same page] while of no acceptable historical significance, does contain a logic fully justifying its use by modern sociology as a methodological tool. Man is both a biological being and a social individual. (3-4)
2. If political ideology, and particularly the "cult of personality" is excluded. Institutional religion has tended to be replaced as an explanatory system, at least in the west, by religious experience manifested in charismatic and ecstatic forms.
3. The cases of Lysenkoism in the USSR and of "Jewish physics" in Nazi Germany are only two. As Koestler shows, science may also generate its own constraining myths. Koestler 1964; 1967.
4. of Chapter III, i.
5. Franklin 1956, 30.
6. *ibid.*, 61.
7. Campbell 1952,
8. Angas 1847, II, 35.
9. Firth 1972, 448-9.
10. Angas 1847, II, 53.
11. Swainson 1853, 66.
12. *ibid.*, 73.
13. Mathew 1840, April 6th 1840.
14. Sinclair 1957, 61.
15. *ibid.*, 270.

16. Land confiscations in the northern Waikato totalled 146,000 acres. Compensation totalling £8,000 was paid for these blocks. Even before the claims were settled government surveyors had begun to subdivide the blocks for immigrants. It is a measure of the completeness of the Maori defeat that there was no resistance. (But of O'Connor 1967, for a description of Maori passive resistance and non-cooperation with regard to conscription in 1914-18.
17. Morris 1965, 18.
18. Lévi-Strauss 1966, 242.
19. *ibid.*, 244.

CHAPTER VII

Harbourtown: Place and Milieu

1. Introduction

The theme of the previous chapter, that environment becomes habitat through human working upon it, that that working derives its form from a specific cultural tradition and that it occurs in an historical setting, leads to a view of human settlements as the product of deliberate actions on the one hand, and of a flow of unintended consequences on the other. It is not merely that actions are directed to goals, that the rebellious tribes must be subdued, that bushland should be converted into farms, or that railways should replace coaches because they are faster and more efficient, but that in achieving these, or any goals at all, new processes are set in motion. The alliances and oppositions, the rationing of wealth and the functional interrelations, all of which are embedded in a cultural and historic context, give rise to a societal form which is manifested in a habitat of a particular kind. This habitat is "held in shape" not merely by functional imperatives but by ideas about it; it is a construction which is embedded in the consciousness of its inhabitants.

In the chapter which follows the focus is narrowed from the more general concerns to the specifics of social place. Here Harbourtown is considered as a specific place which may in turn be considered as an assemblage of other places. In doing this it has been necessary to compile a list (hereafter called "the milieu inventory") of public places in Harbourtown. This list, which appears on pages 409-416 details the public milieux of Harbourtown as it was in 1968-9. Changes of many kinds, not least of which is a doubling of the population numbers have made this list

a historical curiosity, nevertheless it serves the purpose of this discussion, and the very fact that such a change has taken place is perhaps some justification for compiling it in the first place.

One matter should be noted however, the milieu inventory is no more than a first attempt to analyse place, it is not the sociological result of a survey of Harbourtown but the prime datum on which a sociological analysis might be based. Furthermore, the present inventory, because it is confined to public places is incomplete. How much of the social life of Harbourtown occurs behind the closed doors of private homes, how much occurs on the telephone, the great ramifying network of casual talk, gossip, off-the-cuff arrangements and so on, must all pass unexplored; it is inaccessible by the methods given here and indeed, is inaccessible by any method available to a field worker. The milieu inventory is an attempt to count and classify the bones of a small town but it must be remembered that they articulate to form the whole skeleton, and, even when assembled, still do not constitute the living being.

2. Milieu redefined

1. In Part I the theoretical basis for an analysis of milieux was outlined. It must be the purpose of this section to show what has been suggested can be plausibly supported when it is used to treat a mass of data. The thesis, however, hinges upon the building of a bridge of evidence and argument between the physical and concrete milieu of Harbourtown and the social action of its people. I have argued that this can be sustained because a characteristic of milieux is their capacity to be the silent witnesses of social meaning. Now, of course, one might say, "only those places which carry meaning are milieux", but this provides a perfect circularity in which the whole argument becomes self-supporting. Milieux

are not defined by meaning, they are defined by being "theatres for social action"; through this use of them they become "charged" with meaning, if that is not too mystical a phrase. They become identified with certain action patterns, they "mean" those action patterns and they retain that meaning even though the personnel, those who carry the meanings, change. ¹

To proceed with the matter of defining milieux then, we may set out the following characteristics: any place that is the venue for social action may be referred to as a milieu.

However, it seems reasonable to suggest that not all milieux are to be included, for if we understand "social action", to mean any social interaction, or "any action carried out in virtue of a role" we shall find milieux scattered everywhere. This might be called the "Queen Elizabeth's bed" problem ("Queen Elizabeth slept here") but it is not unreasonable to attempt to resolve it by looking at the folk model and by taking into account frequency of use. Thus it becomes evident that if a place is designated a milieu in the folk model it should be considered for inclusion in the sociologist's inventory, similarly if a place provides a venue for action on a repeated basis, even though it is not firmly recognised as a milieu in the folk model it should also be included.

Is this a confusion of realities? The answer must surely be negative - the sociological model of milieu is different from the local person's, it is of a different order, compiled for different purposes. In the end however, the sociologist-observer must make a decision. In the interests of methodological puritanism (the word is deliberately chosen) the decision to include a particular milieu should be based upon careful tests of authenticity; in the actual practice of field work such testing is often not necessary, sociological good sense and familiarity with the field are sufficient.

Milieu can now be redefined as "those venues of social action and interaction which, either through use or local sentiment, achieve a permanent status for some group of individuals." For the moment we can defer further discussion of their characteristics in order to examine the inventory of milieux.

ii. The varieties of milieu.

In Part I it was suggested that the most profitable way of classifying milieux was by the dominant action pattern with which they were associated. Thirteen categories of action pattern are defined for Harbourtown, none in themselves of particular novelty, (see Table VII.1) Categories 11, 12 and 13 require some comment. Category 11, Non-specific interaction, covers those places in which people meet casually but have no specific or defined functions. These areas, probably the most important in the creation of civility, should not be dismissed as a mere residual category. It is probable that many milieux having a specific action pattern designation also fulfil functions as places of non-specific interaction. In Category 12, Ethnic, no milieu falls within Borough boundaries, there are two marae nearby, however, these serve multiple purposes for Maoris. The Indian community has a hall at Hilltown. Category 13, Miscellaneous, contains a number of private homes and farms which are used for various annual events.

The following table shows the proportion of milieux in each category.

TABLE VII 1.

Milieux by Dominant Action Pattern

	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
01 Government and Administration (National)	5	2.5
02 Government and Administration (Local)	3	1.5
03 Religious and ceremonial	21	10.6
04 Economic:	39	19.7
1. Distribution	10	5.0
2. Production	4	2.0
3. Banks and financial		

	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
05 Educational	9	4.5
06 Recreational	31	15.6
07 Health and Welfare	11	5.5
08 Professional Services	18	9.0
09 Communication and Transport	4	2.0
10 Trade and Personal Services	28	14.1
11 Non-specific interaction	7	3.5
12 Ethnic	-	-
13 Miscellaneous	8	4.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	198	100
	<hr/>	<hr/>

From this table it is quite easy to see the extent to which Harbourtown's economic base dominates the town; Categories 04, 08, 09 and 10, together account for 41.8% of the milieux in the Borough. If the economic activity of the town absorbs 42% of available public milieux, may we not expect the interests of those who use (and own) these milieux to be predominant in all public issues and all other social action to be an epiphenomenon of the economic system? The short answer is that a lot if it is, and that though it might be interesting to consider exploring some Marxian hypotheses, such modish considerations must be set aside. Clearly the citizens of Harbourtown must earn a living- and those who can do so within the Borough (others commute to industrial workplaces) must, on the whole, do so by providing a needed service. As might be expected, retailing, various trades and the supply of rural needs are the backbone of the town's economic life. The town's two clothing factories take advantage of available women's labour, the other factories are small employers of men and most are virtually one or two man production units.

The largest single category after the economic milieux is that of the recreational milieu which contains 16% of the total. This again reflects the nature of the town - most of Harbourtown's recreational life is organised

by its large number of sports clubs and voluntary organisations. Since, with the exception of public facilities which are kept up by Borough funds, these amenities are provided by the efforts, both in fund-raising and physical upkeep, of the users there is no lack of occasions for cooperative action on the one hand, and for minor positions of leadership on the other. Harbourtown's weekly newspaper is filled with accounts of fund-raising activities by all sorts of clubs, and with accounts of their annual general meetings at which the officers are elected for the following year.

Religious and ceremonial milieux, with 11% of the total, cover a range of milieux from memorial stones to major buildings. Churches and their associated buildings play a large part in the life of the town. The decline of church life, everywhere complained of by ministers of religion, is perhaps less noticeable in Harbourtown, nevertheless, proposals for union between the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist churches have been a source of considerable debate in the town.

Professional Service and Health and Welfare milieux are those which are common to medical, legal and similar services. The relatively high proportion stems from the fact that Harbourtown also serves its rural hinterland. Professionals, it might have been expected, would have located themselves at Hilltown, but Harbourtown as the centre for the west part of the county has a long history of professional association. Until recently the town had its own Magistrates Court sittings and also a general hospital. Improved transport has meant the centralisation of such services but the town is still the provider of sufficient work for the professional practitioner.

The milieux associated with "non-specific interaction" are largely those already designated as public parks or reserves. They are non specific in that they are not given over to particular action patterns, but they do

have preferred patterns which tend to predominate. During the working day much of Victoria Street itself constitutes a non-specific milieu. People meet and talk, a good deal of the town's business is arranged in meetings on the footpath, and so are its political affairs. Visits to shops are sometimes frustrating for visitors because of the propensity of customer and shopkeeper to carry on conversations at some length - sociability is highly valued and time less so. Most shopkeepers know their customers by name and also a great deal about them - in not a few cases they are kin or neighbours. It is, therefore, difficult to exclude the element of sociability in much that Harbourtowners do, nor to overlook the fact that most public milieux are used nearly as much for sociable purposes as they are for the purposes for which they are nominally intended.

The remaining categories are small. Local and national government accounts for only a few milieux, the former being the local offices of government departments. Communication and transport milieux are also small in numbers, though of course, if the reductio ad absurdum of considering all streets and footpaths such milieux were carried out, they would clearly outnumber all others in the town.

Educational milieux are those in which formal and intentional educational activities are carried out, there is, in addition, much informal education as well as the specialist education which is carried out by such voluntary organisations as the Young Farmers' club and similar groups. School rolls reflect both the familial structure of Harbourtown and its adjacency to surrounding districts. In fact the rolls are somewhat larger than might be expected but this is due to the Education Department's policy of closing rural small schools and bringing children by bus to larger schools in rural towns. Harbourtown pupils are brought from the surrounding districts for a distance of about four miles, but secondary pupils travelling from the Peninsula travel a much greater distance.

The schools do not reflect fully the extent to which education depends upon local initiative and financing. Pre-school education is provided by the local branch of the Play Centre Association on a voluntary basis, and this organisation has acquired its own premises. Adult education is provided from a variety of sources but is based almost entirely on Harbourtown College where night classes both in hobby activities and in formal school subjects are provided. In addition Auckland University conducts some lecture courses through its extension department.

Though educational activity covers a wider range than the formal milieux would suggest, in fact most such education takes place within recognised educational milieux. The other activities are largely built into the context of sociability, so much so that it is difficult to separate them. In the case of service clubs, for example, which invite visiting speakers to address them, education is a minor part of the total activity of the organisation. This is true also of many of the other clubs to which Harbourtowners belong.

In general then, the public milieux of Harbourtown constituted a varied pattern on the ground. Though most milieux had a dominant action pattern, many had action patterns which overlapped with those carried out in other milieux. For this reason, perhaps, the range of milieux specialisation is a little misleading since no single categorisation adequately represents the totality of events in a milieu - once again the folk model must be drawn in, for it is what Harbourtowners understand rather than what suits sociological elegance, that matters.

3. Milieux and Social Ecology

i The definition just given provides the researcher with a means for isolating milieux from other features of the social habitat. Milieux are by this definition distinct habitat units which together with other non-milieux make up the social ecology of the town. The contention advanced here is that milieux are not merely the material substratum of a social entity, a town, district or neighbourhood, they are that neighbourhood and are intimately involved in the mental picture which is individually and collectively held of the neighbourhood by its residents and by outsiders.

As yet, however, the object sorted out of the social totality lacks dimensions. Whatever the apparent likenesses and differences may be between milieux it seems necessary to pin at least some of them down in terms that are fairly precise so that we may come to some conclusions about the way in which milieux are assembled. About one point we must be quite clear since it will form the centre of later discussion; the assemblage of milieu is a social construction - there is absolutely no reason why the hospital, the abbatoir and the cemetery should not be next door to one another except that valuations which are socially created and maintained rule against it; indeed such apparent oddities can occur without remark in other cultures.

The problems that arise are those of decision and are therefore problems in which measurement and quantification may be of use. Measuring and counting will not however, automatically settle all doubts. There must be a logic to the activity which will take care of the problem. What decisions must be made and what information is necessary in making them? The first is the degree to which one milieu is independent of another. Such a problem, as Barker shows in his discussion of behaviour settings² is really quite arbitrary, what has to be decided at the outset

is what level of independence one wishes to establish; a very high level will select milieu as being the spaces in which individuals carry out their own actions, a very low level will merge the town into a single undifferentiated milieu, include it with the district, or merge districts to take in the whole nation. The point need not be laboured since Barker (1955) has already minutely discussed the problem. The question with regard to milieux is what characteristics can be measured usefully. The following list is indicative of characteristics of milieux - these will be discussed in a moment.

Characteristics of milieux:

1. Physical size
2. Physical location
3. Adjacency
4. Occupancy
5. Artefactuality
6. Multiplicity
7. Dependence on other milieu
8. Population
9. Dominant action pattern
10. Sacredness/secularity
11. Restrictiveness/missiveness
12. Aesthetic value
13. Historicity

The thirteen characteristics listed by no means exhaust the characteristics that can be supposed to exist in all (or some) milieux, they merely indicate the richness of milieux as social constructs. We note immediately however, the fact that some characteristics are "harder" than others, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 all refer to physical characteristics; 6, 7, 8 and 9 refer to social characteristics, and 10, 11, 12 and 13 refer to cultural or "meaning" features. Of these characteristics it is necessary to ask which are relevant to the problem of deciding the independence of a milieu. Each of the categories must be considered in turn before a

synthesis can be arrived at.

ii. Physical characteristics

Size (1)

The size of a milieu cannot be decided until what constitutes the boundary of the milieu has been decided. This of course is part of the problem at hand. In the meantime it may be remarked that physical size has probably little to do with the independence or even the importance of a milieu. Though important milieu may often have relatively extensive boundaries, examples come to mind, and it is certainly the case in sacred milieux, that the "core" of the milieu, the holy of holies, is very small indeed, while it is surrounded by some very large elaborate building.

Location (2)

Milieux are located in different parts of the town according to principles of meaning, rather than to geographical properties. It is unlikely that a football stadium would be located on the top of a hill but is not impossible; the segregation of milieu on a topographical basis must be taken into account, but there seems little consistent relationship between location and independence except where physical location and function are indispensably connected as in the case of a wharf or airfield.

Adjacency (3)

There seems to be a better case for declaring adjacency an important characteristic for deciding independence. Two milieu occupying immediately adjacent sites, say church and church hall, present a genuine problem of decision, regarding their independence.

Occupancy (4)

The degree to which a milieu is occupied may have some relation to its

independence. Some milieu, however, are occupied only rarely, the war memorial for example, or the cemetery, yet they lose nothing of their individual distinctiveness. Occupancy must be taken in connection with social characteristics to which it most nearly belongs.

Artefactuality (5)

This term refers to the extent to which a milieu is a deliberate construction, i.e. an artefact. It seems to have nothing to do with independence directly.

iii. Social characteristics

The most outstanding social characteristic of a milieu is its dominant pattern of action (9). In every case there is some such pattern from which the milieu is identified or categorised, and frequently named. The multiplicity action patterns which is carried out within a milieu superficially has something to do with its independence but closer examination suggests that this may be misleading. The Harbourtown R.S.A. Rooms (6.16) for example are used for a large number of different purposes, indeed this is a source of income for the R.S.A. and helps to pay for the upkeep of the building, but it does not make it more difficult for the Harbourtownner or the sociologist to distinguish it as an independent milieu. In an absolute sense multiplicity denies the use of a milieu to its dominant action pattern, in this case it might be viewed as actually mis-classified in the folk model, but it probably little affects its independent status. In the case of the R.S.A. Rooms both the legal ownership and the preemptive right of use is recognised.

Population (8)

The population of a milieu is that category or those categories of people

who can use it. A milieu which can be used by several categories is more "open" than one that can be used by one social category only but it is not thereby more of an independent unit.

Cultural characteristics:

The characteristics listed here are those which refer more particularly to the "meaning" of a milieu but they are not by themselves indicative of independence but refer to a different order of interpretation.

In consideration then, of the question of the independence of milieu we come to the problem of the choice of suitable indices. Of those discussed Adjacency emerges as the most clear indicator, but it obviously cannot stand alone, the question of the category of the action pattern must also be taken into account. Some of the problem can be overcome by instituting no comparisons between articles which fall into different categories (there would be little point in doing so), and by confining comparison to areas for which an assessment can be made on a simple numerical scale. As with Barker's behaviour settings, if the value reached on a combination of scales falls above or below a certain point, independence can be assumed.

iv. Independence and Interdependence

To permit this the following scale, the Independence Scale (I) is proposed. This is made up of two sub-scales, the Adjacency sub-scale and the Action Pattern sub-scale. Scores on the sub-scales are summed. A score of six or more is taken as an indication that two milieux are not independent, a score of five or less means that there is complete independence.

Independence Scale

Adjacency Sub-Scale

0. The milieu is not within the same territorial area as any other milieu.
1. It is within the same general area (e.g. street) but is spatially separate from another milieu(x).
2. It is within the same territorial boundary (e.g. fence) but is spatially separate from other milieux.
3. It is an integrated part but physically separate from other milieux (e.g. under same roof; adjoining one wall)
4. It is an integral part but is formally separate and maybe separately named, e.g. chancel and nave in church; basketball-court markings in gymnasium.
5. There is no acknowledged formal boundary between two parts e.g. sidewalk in Victoria Street.

Action Pattern Sub-Scale

0. The dominant action pattern which takes place in this milieu is completely independent of any other action pattern.
1. The dominant action pattern is an independent part of a larger action pattern (e.g. of a major institution).
2. The action pattern is usually dependent on another action pattern having taken place in some other milieu e.g. Council sub-committee meeting held in Councillor's home.
3. The action pattern is dependent on another action pattern having taken place beforehand in the same or categorically related milieu. e.g. burial in church cemetery.
4. The action pattern(s) is dependent on another taking place simultaneously.
5. The action pattern cannot be distinguished from any other.

On this scale I⁵ milieu are those which have a high degree of independence though they may vary somewhat between themselves. Setting

the index lower would merge several complexes which now stand separately and are so recognised within local understanding. The fact that the analysis generally corresponds to local ideas lends some support to the belief that this scale is adequate.

Some examples assist.

- | | | | |
|-----|------|-----------------------|----------------|
| (1) | 036 | Cemetery | I ³ |
| | 036a | Ex Servicemen's plot | I ⁷ |
| (2) | 031 | Anglican Church | I ² |
| | 032 | Anglican Hall | I ⁴ |
| | 033 | Anglican Vicarage | I ¹ |
| (3) | 061 | Bowling Club greens | I ² |
| | 061a | Bowling Club pavilion | I ⁷ |

Example (1) shows that two milieu that might have been regarded as independent or nearly so, are in fact highly dependent. In example (2) the Anglican Church Hall and Vicarage are shown to be independent, though the hall is less distinct from the Church than the vicarage. In example (3) the Bowling Club pavilion can be seen as dependent entirely on the greens and is only used in fact in relation to the club and the greens or for indoor games in the winter. These examples indicate, in passing, that the increase of the decision point to 6 would have produced a larger number of milieu, but at the expense of local categorisations while a setting point of 4 would have merged milieu which local people regard as separate. The inventory given in the appendix shows only I⁵ milieu i.e. those whose ratings are 5 or lower on the Independence Scale.

One further advantage to be gained by a study of the Independence Scale is that (being also a measure of dependence) it shows the direction in which dependence exists. In example (2) the Hall "depends" on the Church and not vice versa. The absence of the Church might impair the Hall's use (as a hall) but the absence of the Hall would not affect the Church.

v. Multiple Use Milieux

Multiple use may be defined as those uses to which a milieu is put which lie outside its dominant action pattern. In some cases however, notably that of various halls and other public and semi-public buildings the dominant action pattern is the holding of meetings though in fact, the hall may be identified with one group.

The following table summarises multiple uses by milieu categories. The number of uses and the number of hours per year are estimated.

Table VII 2

Multiple Uses: Summary

<u>Category+</u>	<u>No of uses</u>	<u>Frequency p.a.</u>	<u>Total hours for year</u>
01 National Government	-	-	-
02 Local Government	1	50	100
03 Religious & Ceremonial	14	73	220
04 Economic	14	63	80
05 Educational	7	48	125
06 Recreation	11	70	269
11 Social Interaction non specific	4	20	93
13 Miscellaneous	5	5	18
	<u>56</u>	<u>329</u>	<u>905</u>

+Categories omitted nil entry

The table in this form gives only the barest information - we note immediately however, that the religious, recreational and educational milieux had very heavy use. In some milieu the number of annual hours is inflated by the fact that these milieux have standard hours. The local Government offices are open for forty hours per week throughout the year

with the exception of the Christmas New Year holiday and public holidays, the assumption of a fifty week year then, is a safe and easily calculable base. The hundred hours or 5% of time given up to multiple use in this milieu is the result of the offices being made available to an officer from a Government Department in Hilltown, who spends two hours a week at Harbourtown.

It seems reasonable to make this a distinct and separate use of the milieu. A comparison on the independence scale establishes that the I rating of the visiting officer puts it on the borders of independence (ratings 4,1), and it is not out of the way therefore to argue that the office occupied in this way becomes temporarily a separate milieu.

Recreational milieu gained their multiple uses principally through use by various clubs and voluntary organisations. The R.S.A. Clubrooms for example were used by twenty-four different organisations. Many of these used the rooms only once or twice for an annual general meeting or end-of-season social function, but others held all their meetings there. The Clubrooms can be seen then, to have an important function in providing a place for community meetings.

The other halls and meeting places were also frequently used. The church halls while ordinarily being the meeting place for church affiliated organisations such as the Sunday school and Bible class and Women's club, were also made available to private groups such as the Plunket mother's club or the St. Johns Ambulance Association. Sometimes such multiple uses involved a dramatic shift of identification as for example, the use of the Church of England hall for a yoga class, but generally there was a certain degree of coincidence between the dominant action pattern and the kinds of multiple uses that occurred. The church halls were used for youth club and senior citizens activities and others with a service element to them rather than for purely recreational purposes.

The use of economic milieux for purposes other than the dominant action pattern is very difficult to analyse without far more detailed research procedures. It has been pointed out already that, there is a great deal of activity in shops and work places that consists of sociability or other non-economic activities, Council business, church business, club and lodge affairs, neighbouring and service club activities, even kinship, all give rise to interactions within the economic milieu. It is this flux of informal social interaction that exists as a field around the economic milieux that gets so much of the town's affairs into perspective. It is perhaps not fanciful to see the concentration of economic milieux within the town centre as the ecological base for the town's social life. It is the place of maximum meeting conversation and discussion, it is the place of maximum availability (a shopkeeper is always in his shop) and it is the place where things can be quickly communicated.

The formal multiple uses of economic milieu related mainly to economically related events such as the promotion of travel and trade, the Miss Auckland Competition, but shop premises especially were used for displays and publicity of a community nature, such as the development of activities for National Education Week, railway enthusiasts display, and so on. These however, were minor in themselves.

The educational milieux, the two primary schools, kindergarten, play centre, and college, contributed in two main ways to the system of community action. Through their own activities the schools provide a basis for parent action - the Parent Teachers Association who carry out improvements to the school grounds and raise money for amenities. Secondly, they provide a variety of milieux for activities such as sports, drama and adult education.

The kindergarten, playcentre and primary schools are used mainly by associated groups, but the college is the setting for a number of unrelated events such as band concerts, some sports such as indoor basketball and

amateur dramatic productions. This is due in part to the availability of the gymnasium classrooms and hard court areas, but in addition as part of the school's responsibility under the Manual and Technical Regulations the school provides a programme of adult classes which extend the use of facilities such as art studios and wood and metal work shops to the public at large.

The remaining category, the non-specific interaction milieu is something of a contradiction and involves a finer discrimination again than the measuring instrument is capable of. Indeed it might be argued that the category, "non-specific interaction" is not conceptually permissible.

It has been already suggested that "non-specific" is no more than a term of convenience. In fact these milieux can probably be resolved into a number of sub milieux. What is specified about these milieux is rather what must not happen rather than what must. Cars cannot be driven on the right or parked on the footpath in Victoria St, bicycles may not be ridden on the grass in West End Reserve, and traffic must not be obstructed in the Town Square. Special permission from the Borough Council permits part of these generalised milieux to be used for specific purposes. For example the Square is closed for traffic so that the Christmas carol singing can take place. Stalls are set up off the footpath for various charitable purposes, and for a major trade promotion week a parade was held.

That milieux should be available for such purposes is not in dispute apparently, but as the table shows only a limited number of uses is permitted. These uses, stalls, parades, street collections and ceremonies, are sponsored by organisations which need to reach a wider public than could be reached on their own premises and consequently they move into these the most public of milieux.

Consideration of the next table shows the extent to which multiple action patterns (subordinate A.p.5) were distributed among the various milieu categories. The majority (37%) occurred in recreational milieu with a further 19% occurring in educational and non-specific milieu (it must be born in mind that this is not a count of recurrences but only of discrete action patterns by type), the remainder accounted for less than a third.

Only a small number of milieu categories were used for community purposes. This arises in the first place from lack of suitability, and in the second from sheer undetectability. We may presume, however, that whatever subordinate patterns arose in those milieux for which a nil return is shown the number was not large, or not large enough to draw the notice either of local people or of the newspaper. Undoubtedly, however, numbers of committee meetings and so on occur without the knowledge of anyone other than the members involved. It is a token of the invisibility of social life that only an ex-member of a Church governing body could say where and when it met, that school committee meetings are sometimes treated as private gatherings and that even fully public meetings such as the monthly meeting of the council were seldom attended by the public.

A consideration of the types of action pattern that used milieu in a subordinate way draws attention to the number of activities which were concerned either with finances or administration, together these two made up 33% of all such action patterns, equal to the far more varied recreational and sports activities. Voluntary service activities such as service club working bees, made up 11% closely followed by educational action patterns, agricultural demonstration for example. All others were hardly significant.

Fund raising activities overwhelmingly took place in non-specific interaction milieux, as might be expected, since their aim was to contact a wide range of people, and the administrative meetings made use of available

TABLE VII. 3

Multiple Uses by Milieu Category
and Subordinate Action Pattern

<u>Subordinate</u> <u>A. P.</u>	<u>Milieu Category</u>											<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Govt.Nat.</u>	<u>Govt.Local</u>	<u>Religious & Ceremonial</u>	<u>Economic</u>	<u>Educational</u>	<u>Recreational</u>	<u>Health & Welfare</u>	<u>Prof. Service</u>	<u>Communication Transport</u>	<u>Trade & Services</u>	<u>Non Specific</u>		<u>Ethnic</u>
Govt. & Admin.	1	1											2
Admin. Vol. Organisation			1			11							12
Vol. Service Activity			3			8				1			12
Educational			1	3	2	4							10
Fundraising			2	1	6	2				13			24
Commerce & Advtg.			1	2		1				1			5
Recreation & Sports			6	5	10	11				4			36
Religious						1				1			2
Ceremonial				2	2	2							6
Ethnic													
Other													
	1	15	13	20	40					20			109

public halls, recreational and sports activities tended to spread across the range of milieux but had their highest incidence in the recreational and educational milieux.

From this survey we can come to some preliminary principles which are perhaps generalisable.

1. The public milieux of a town having the general socio-cultural characteristics of Harbourn town can be divided into those which are related to the immediate social ends they serve and those that are generalised. They are the sites for dominant action patterns, buying selling, learning, teaching, recreation, religion and so on, and are differentiated into as many varieties as there are sub-groups to identify with them.

There is probably a calculus, yet to be worked out, which will explain this by means of population characteristics, income and some other factors. It need not concern us here unduly though it has relevance for planners and may be taken up elsewhere.

2. The specialised milieux are inherently less adaptable to multiple use than those that are, or become generalised, it therefore follows that generalised milieux are developed as a second stage of functional necessity.
3. The organisation of milieux topographically takes place both in relation to the time span and rate of increase in the town, and to the "hierarchisation of values", that is, to the establishment of an order of priorities which has a consensus to support it.

To rescue these remarks from the social science gobbledygook into which they are rapidly drifting, let us put the matter in this way. Harbourn town and other places like it have, as it were, a basic set of milieux which serve specific purposes (shops, churches, etcetera) and a second set which provides for more varied activities. This second

set arises later than the first set and it is conditioned by changes in taste, interest, population structure and the like. In the same way the geographical location of milieux arises as the outcome of a complicated set of factors bearing on one another and not merely as a result of geographic or economic factors.

So much then, for a survey of milieux. There is more to be extracted of an empirical nature than is apparent here, but these matters depend upon more detailed field work than was undertaken for this study. Let us now return to questions of the meaning of milieu.

In the foregoing discussion milieux have figured as isolatable units of the habitat and environment of Harbourtown people. They, at least as much as the action patterns that take place within them are the town. It is the unique fusion of milieu and action pattern that gives the town a historical locus, but it is the persistence of milieux that provides continuity.

This point needs some further explanation. Milieux do not by themselves characterise the town; it is the collectivity of milieux which does that, but even so, if it be viewed in terms of the categories, numbers and spatial relations of milieux, the effect is to drop the town into an appropriate box along with others which show similar characteristics. What makes Harbourtown not Taihape or Huntly, is the milieux plus action patterns which it has, not improbably the people who enact the actions and who are products of culture, sociological environment and individual psychology, and a local history. To an outsider the differences may be barely apparent. It may be that as sociology tells us, one Jack is much like another; in the minds of Harbourtowners such an idea is ludicrous - who is mayor or councilman, makes a difference to the way the council works and what it does. The way the game is played and who plays it are part of the historical reality; they intersect with the

"rules of the game", which sociologists try to uncover, and which are not infrequently confused with the phenomenal reality to which sociological reality stands approximately in the relationship that Ohms Law bears to my electric radiator.

Milieux however remain as apprehensible empirical units with enough concrete characteristics to make them useful. In this analysis the characteristics so far dealt with are the numbers, the independence, the spatial relations of milieu in various categories. There are a number of other characteristics that might be dealt with "openness" for example, i.e. the extent to which a milieu may be used by any category of person or the extent (closedness) to which it is restricted to one kind of person. The chancel of a church during a service is restricted to males who are ordained as priests or who hold offices as assistants to priests, just as the ritual of the mass is also restricted, for its performance, to priests, and the church itself restricted to members of the sect.

Another characteristic is the interrelatedness of milieux i.e. that milieux fall into clusters or networks due to the fact that people who are involved in one of its characteristic action patterns must use another milieu and action pattern. The shopkeeper and the customer both use the bank - the characteristic interrelation of the shop, is with the bank, the goods depot and the post office, not with the hospital and the school. This characteristic is also of course intimately related to social action but it can be discussed without going far into the dynamics of social action.

There are various physical characteristics of milieux which also help us to analyse the sociological dimension, for example the question of the degree of "structuring" of the milieu may be useful in relating it to the kinds of action pattern that can take place within it. Highly structured milieux are those where boundaries, internal structures such

as chairs, tables and platforms are in standard positions; milieu with low structuring are those in which there is no particular pre-determination of the kind of activity. As examples here, a milieu of very low degree of structuring is the grassy slope on the far side of the reclamation. Generations of Harbourtown children have played on this slope on their way to and from school and a well beaten track leads to the school grounds, a track that is even used occasionally by adults. This milieu has only rough boundaries, the roadside, the creek, the fences of adjoining properties. Apart from the track there appears to be no internal structure other than that provided by the slope of the ground. Harbourtown children, however, see the slope differently, parts of it are suitable for sliding down, others are level enough to sit on and play games of knucklebones, the large macrocarpa tree at one side is a climbing place, and various logs and small bushes provide scenery for dramatic games. In this milieu however the material aspects are "used" they do not dictate. By comparison the school classrooms are highly structured milieux since the orderly lines of tables and chairs set the framework for most of the action that takes place. Most highly structured are the basketball and football areas in the school grounds. These sub-milieux dictate precisely what action will take place when a game is in progress with no more structuring than a few lines on the ground.

A third characteristic is the size of a milieu. Some milieux are relatively small, accommodating only a few people, and others large. The significance of an action pattern does not of course bear any relationship to the number of participants or the size of the milieu; in Harbourtown, measured in terms of real outcomes, the Council meeting has more importance than the local football match, but in terms of the social ecology neither could be the size of the other either in physical dimensions or numbers of participants.

Trite though this observation may sound there is, nevertheless, an important relationship between size and other ecological variables. The very restricted size of most inner London suburbs often means the inclusion of a much larger number of public milieux than are included in Harbourtown which is comparable in area to say, Hampstead or Kentish Town, yet the various milieux are not in themselves much smaller. The concentration and greater density of such areas, permits a much larger population, as well as a reduction in scale. Harbourtown at comparable levels of concentration might be reduced to the area of three or four London streets.

Extension of this idea lets us look at the problem of size in two quite distinct ways, on the one hand we can concern ourselves only with the question of the relationship of size and function, the dimension first considered above - on the other hand there is the question of size, i.e. physical dimensions of the community, in relation to the characteristic assemblage of milieux. This is the problem of scale. Finally there is a third aspect, that of the relationship between population size and the numbers and kinds of milieux that exist in a given community.

The characteristics mentioned to this point are conceptually confused. They may be re-ordered as:

Ecological characteristics. Assemblage

1. Population size in relation to numbers and kinds of milieu
2. Community physical size in relation to numbers and kinds
3. Interrelatedness of milieux.

Of these three, 1 and 2 are comparative characteristics and require the existence of a number of ecologies or a theoretical model, which will serve as a baseline for comparison. It is not possible to get far with the size factors until there exists comparative data from the same culture. This then permits the isolation of the effects of size with some degree

of confidence that it is genuinely a cause of the phenomena of ecological differentiation. It seems unlikely, however, that there is very much to be hoped for, there are a number of other factors which may intervene, the economic wealth of the community for example, the provision of state funds for development, district migration patterns, climatic freaks, fashion, speculation, and a host of others. All these demonstrate the futility of seeking a non-social determinism for differing assemblages. Variations in any one of the factors may affect the nature of an assemblage but they do not consistently determine it. Of course diligent collectors and quantifiers of such data will pursue their correlations and in doing so will uncover much of value in making sociological interpretations, but per se they do not constitute a sociological explanation.

The third of the above characteristics, Interrelatedness, is clearly important since it shows the extent to which differentiation and specialisation are connected in any given case. To simplify here, differentiation of milieu is a matter of numbers within classes, a community showing say, one church serving the whole population is religiously undifferentiated, one like Harbourtown showing five (one for each major sect) is moderately differentiated, when there are several for minor sects or different religions there is obviously a high degree of differentiation. Specialisation is a different but closely related aspect. If there were two Anglican Churches, one for Pakeha and one for Maori, that would constitute specialisation, a similar case is that of a shop which sells only electrical goods being established alongside a general store which had or could order in an electric stove or refrigerator.

As these examples suggest the conceptual ground becomes treacherous when dealing with differentiation and specialisation. Does not differentiation depend entirely on population heterogeneity - no Presbyterians hence no Presbyterian Church? But there may be Presbyterians who go to another town

or attend one of the other Protestant churches, a Presbyterian Church may be simply a product of the numbers of Presbyterians, the degree of wealth or of organisation, or some combination of these. In other contexts the sect or practice may be proscribed or penalised and thus becomes both physically and socially invisible. Such was the case of the Muranos, forced converts to Christianity in Spain, who practised their Judaism secretly, and of Catholics in Britain under the penal laws. Harbourtown has no such proscriptions of course, though rumour had it that some families living in a rather secluded and beautiful place not far from the town, practised nudism.

Measures for interrelationship are simply enough constructed, the Independence scale deals with the problem of sub milieux by assimilating them to the I⁵ category, but interrelationship between milieu at the specified level of independence may be ascertained once more by scaling. If comparisons between every milieu and every other had to be established the task would become impossibly laborious, could be computerised, but would yield one suspects, little better results than the intelligent observer using his wits. In shadowy positions a scale helps however. The problem in this case is that what is actually shown to be interrelated are the action patterns of diverse milieux. This is acceptable perhaps if we are willing to accept that milieu and action pattern are sufficiently closely identified for interrelations in the one to be thought of as interrelations in the other. If such a result can be obtained then it should show the extent to which particular milieu are integrated with others into discrete sets, or clusters. The question is one of detail but it leads in interesting directions since it may have specific implications for the understanding of the problems of specialisation and differentiation.

Indicators for interrelationship which show some promise are:

- (a) Interaction
- (b) Exchange
- (c) Function

Two milieux may be said to be interactionally related when the members of the action pattern of one milieu can in virtue of their status interact in the other milieu. So stated the idea seems simple enough but the problems involved in constructing a scale are complex. Substantial refinements of the scale points here are necessary to show the direction of interaction (i.e. who initiates it) and the scale (i.e. the simplicity or complexity of the interactions).

The Exchange indicator can be scaled more readily. Exchange is by definition symmetrical the problem resolves itself into a question of the compulsoriness and kind of exchange, i.e. the extent to which the goods or services given must be "paid for" at once etc.

The Functional relationship resolves itself into the problem of the necessity of one action pattern to the other and vice versa in order that the goals of the participants may be reached. This too is capable of scaling.

When all is said and done is it all worth it? It is if we wish to gain an objective description of the community social ecology, but it may do no more than confirm what is accessible to observation and the confirmation of local explanation. It leads in directions which are potentially rewarding so far as gaining applicable techniques is concerned. Otherwise it is rather dull.

TABLE VII.4

Interrelation scale

A. Interaction scale

1. Weak interaction. Persons from either milieu penetrate the other but have no named status there, or participate in the d.a.p.
2. Asymmetrical interaction. Persons from one milieu enter the other, may have named status, but always as clients, or status inferiors. Subject to norms of d.a.p.
3. Symmetrical relationship: each milieu contributes to others equally.
4. Status in Milieu 'A' creates automatic status in Milieu 'B'.
5. Performance of Status in 'A' is dependent on Status in 'B'.

B. Exchange scale

1. Very weak exchange. Individuals supply goods or services to other milieu on a voluntary basis, with payment deferred, or reciprocal in kind, or not obligatory.
2. Goods or service from A. Occasionally supplied to B.
3. Goods or services supplied to A for which A pays indirectly e.g. through taxes.
4. Goods or service supplied direct and reciprocal repayment in cash.
5. Goods or service exchange essential to functioning.

C. Functional interrelationship

1. Both have same functional category
2. A performs minor function to B and/or vice-versa.

3. A and B permissively related alternatives available
4. A and B combine to perform some functions
5. Functional interrelationship is fully established. A cannot perform functions without B etc.

vi Public and Private Milieu:

The milieu inventory given here lists only "public" milieux. There are of course many private milieux notably the homes of Harbourtown people. The division between public and private however, is not as clear cut as it might at first be thought to be. Harbourtown people have to work at boundary maintenance, both figuratively and literally. They do not accept a free flow of strangers across the boundaries of their homelands and they attempt to create clear deterrents to trespass.

It has already been noted of farms and it can here be added of house lots, that there is a code for their use and entry which is familiar enough to most Harbourtowners. In response to my question for example, to a prominent Harbourtowneer concerning Maori residents, he remarked that they were given (the emphasis was quite unequivocal) houses by the Maori Affairs Department which they then proceeded to neglect. "You'll recognise them" he said - "They all have an old car lying on the front lawn." The sequel to this anecdote came when in showing some photographs to the same person he pointed to one of the houses and said that it belonged X to X, a Maori. I asked innocently where the old car was and was told that if there wasn't one there now there soon would be. The "old car" story is not wholly without foundation however. I was to hear the same remark from other informants.

What is signified by the "old car" story is that the front of the house is public property to some degree. The milieu must be maintained

according to the standards of propriety of other Harbournowners. Its boundaries cannot be crossed easily but they can be looked over. Fences are not usually high and often are no more than symbolic; the front garden and lawn are cultivated and planted more for viewing than for other use, the dominant action pattern of the front of the section is gardening, i.e. the maintenance of the plants and lawns, and their extension and improvement. Even the grass verge and footpath outside the section boundary must be regarded as part of this milieu since the verge is carefully mowed, the edges of the grass trimmed and the footpath swept clean of grass clippings.

Inside the boundaries of the section the back garden, (invisible from the road) the house and outbuildings constitute a complex set of milieux in themselves. Too diverse to be analysed here and not altogether relevant, the milieux involved are far less accessible to people other than those who are members of the occupant's networks or who have some service to perform, than is any public milieu. The transition from public to private however starts at the front verge, and "publicness" declines rapidly as one approaches the front wall of the house - paths mark the route to the backdoor, the normal place for any but absolute outsiders to come to, but even where the alternative movement round the side of the house is possible, no-one would consider using it. The backyard like the interior of the house is a private domain, but even here there are zones of privacy. In the house the bedrooms are the most private milieux taboo even to some members of the household. In the backyard the vegetable garden and the back of the section are usually the buffer between adjacent lots and the household section. It is noticeable however, that the garden is not usually treated as an extension of the house but rather as a surrounding space to it - most social life goes on inside the house and little in the garden.

The public/private line is differently drawn in some cases. Some self-employed business people conduct their business from their homes in which case a room becomes a milieu much more in the public domain than the rest of the house. This is the case with a number of tradesmen and professionals. In other cases the private house becomes temporarily a public milieu for the business of conducting meetings or entertainments. Mrs Henry Miller for example advertised in the local paper that a kitchen evening would be held at her house for Jean King whose engagement had been announced some time previously; another advertisement gave the date of a demonstration of rose pruning at the home of a horticultural society member. Such arrangements were given a degree of formality beyond that of the occasional committee meeting or other small gathering but the public notice did not imply a public invitation, in fact such gatherings were almost exclusively made up of the close associates of the person advertising.

Private milieux thus, can be partly made public and in any case have public aspects to them. They do not on the other hand ever fully become public; their status as private milieu complexes always outweighs the public element. "Public" and "private" then, rather than being concretely discernible characteristics are formal categories; categories which are concretely represented by fences, gardens, plants and so on. But to this point we shall return in due course.

vii Symbolic Milieu

Probably no word is more easily misused in sociological literature than "symbol". It imparts a nicely mystical sense of that which is more profound than the merely representational. In this section I shall use "symbolic" to mean "signifying other than what it is". This may seem vague enough, but let us consider it further.

There is a sense, it is not the sense with which we are at present concerned, in which every milieu stands for something other than what it is; a house may mean the home for a family, but it may also signify stability, wealth, reputation or aesthetic sensibility; a symbolic milieu however, is one in which there has been no attempt to satisfy utilitarian requirements. The utility of a symbolic milieu, is to symbolise, to stand for something else, a value, an idea, or an event.

In Harbourtown the symbolic milieu per se relate to the town and events of local or national importance. The War Memorial has already been mentioned, the stone obelisk which stands at the junction of three streets, inscribed with the names of the local boys killed in the Great War, but wars are commemorated elsewhere in the town, in Victoria Street a concrete obelisk reminds people that a fort was built on a small hillock, now the site of the Wesleyan Church, for the protection of the residents in the Land Wars of the 1860s, the Second World War is commemorated with a plaque in the War Memorial Hall and with a monument in the grounds of the college. Finally Harbourtown cemetery has a special Ex Soldiers plot where men whose families wish it may be buried, the expenses of a memorial being provided by the Returned Servicemen's Association, a national organisation.

These monuments symbolise the sacrifice of life made by Harbourtown families in foreign wars. They bear inscriptions reminding the reader of the virtues of loyalty, sacrifice and courage, the tone is, one might say tiresomely so, heroic, as indeed it must be in order for the enormity of the world wars to be rendered endurable. Such psychological observations aside these monuments and the commemorative services held annually on April 25th show the functions of the symbolic milieu particularly clearly.

Some of them have no dominant action pattern associated with them but there are still norms to be observed in respect of them. They cannot be treated as neutral objects, defaced, or used for purely utilitarian purposes.

Historical markers constitute a further kind of symbolic milieu. They were erected by the Historical Society during the county centennial celebrations and mark places associated with early settlers, the first landing place, the site of a missionary station, of the fort. It is noticeable that the commemorative tablets remember the doings of Europeans only, and tend to overlook the fact that 1000 years or more of Maori history passed before Harbourtown boasted its first settler's shack or its first public house.

The two kinds of symbolic milieu demonstrate the continuity of European dominance of Harbourtown and pride in ancestral achievements, the cemetery just outside the residential area well demonstrates this. The cemetery can be divided into a number of different sectors but symbolically most important are the Ex-Servicemen's plot and the small knoll where the oldest graves stand. These two sections stand for the dual involvement of Harbourtowners in their district and the world outside. The early settler memorials are an indisputable link with the past - almost the only one as all, or virtually all, the early buildings have been either demolished or defaced -, and the Ex-Servicemen's plot echoes the only other activity Harbourtowners have felt sufficiently moved to commemorate.

The outside world draws Harbourtowners away, but ancestry and sacrifice keep the links of town membership strong.

Symbolic milieux are a very small percentage of the total milieu of the town; they were a mere five in all in 1968, but they are not important for all that. If it can be argued legitimately that people

put up memorials to the social structure and that such memorials are the signposts pointing to the dominant groups in society, then Harbourtown, at least ideologically, is centred upon its forbears and its ex-soldiers.

The point just raised seems to have the weight of common experience behind it. In New Zealand these are notably few memorials to the common labourer, none at all to ordinary women; a few to Maoris but only of the friendly sort and then to chiefs, a few to sportsmen, and one or two to intellectual notables with a distinctly regional flavour. Robert Burns for example merits monuments in a number of cities; there is none to W.B. Yeats in spite of the fact that Irish settlers played as great or greater part in New Zealand's settlement as Scots. We are perhaps at the mercy of enthusiasts when memorials are erected yet some enthusiasts are more efficient than others on the face of it, and the only convincing reason why this should be so is that the persons or groups to whom monuments are dedicated are representatives of values implicitly or explicitly supported by the dominant social group or class.

Lest this be thought too much a piece of bargain basement Marxism we should perhaps consider what would happen if memorials were proposed to disvalued or degraded persons. Where are the statues to Julius and Ethel Rosenberg or Roger Casement, who commemorates, in New Zealand, Archibald Baxter - there are no statues to Mata Hari, surely as much a sacrifice as Edith Cavell? The purpose of memorialisation is to represent to us a value proposed by a respected group and assented to by the consensus of the rest inasmuch as they care at all. A last word on this matter is the connection with the monumental figure of a Maori chief in a full length cloak standing outside the Auckland Post Office. This figure designed to face into the square was turned by the City Council to face the wharves, perhaps to glower helplessly and serve as a warning

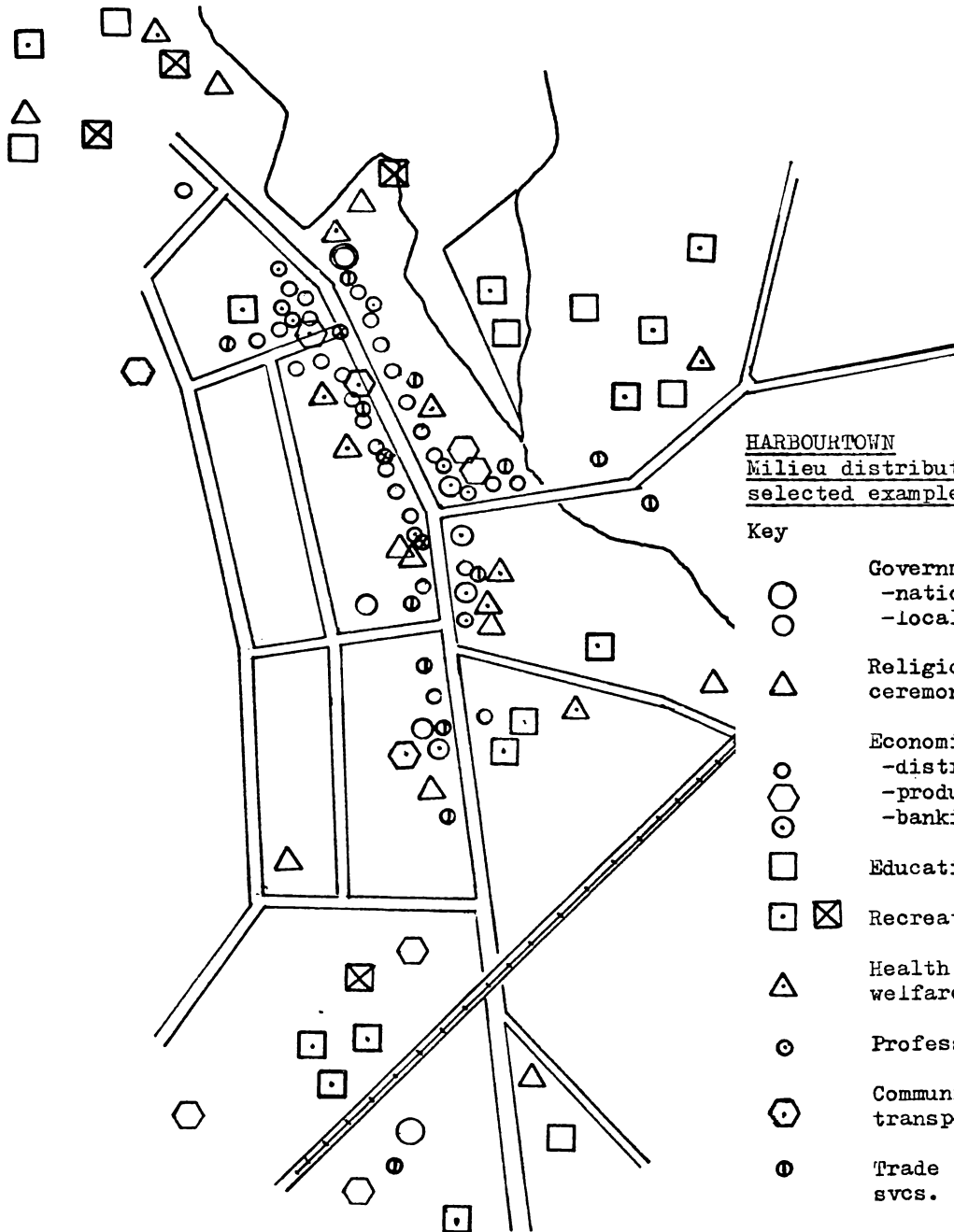
to his naughty descendants high tailing it to nights of sin on the cargo boats. Memorials we should note are not only to the social structure but also to its dead ancestors, a mark perhaps of respect for the stereotypes of the dominant class as well as to its values.

In Harbourtown at least the symbolic milieu unequivocally announce who is ideologically dominant and they must be heeded for that reason.

viii Milieu clustering:

Milieu present themselves to ordinary experience as discrete entities of a more or less complex kind. As we have seen some of this complexity can be analysed in terms of the interdependency of milieux which is established through their action patterns. It becomes possible to distinguish milieu from one another without great difficulty. However, as it was noted in the discussion of interrelatedness, some milieu cluster together. It would be enlightening to discover the principles by which such clustering takes place. Initially the assumption has been that milieu cluster as a result of some common feature which they have, but further consideration shows that in fact, milieux "clustering" (the belief that there is some interrelation between, say schools, homes, etc) arises as the result of individual behaviour. That such behaviour is a response to social models, which in turn reinforces, is quite clear, but in fact the "cluster of milieux" can be conceived simply as a network of places used by a particular person in response to needs and norms which belong to his social location.

At any point every individual has a unique set of milieux yet, if we were able to sum these, enough regularity would appear to justify the statement that a pattern existed. Children between the ages of 5 and 11 regardless of any other social feature spend their week days



HARBOURTOWN
Milieu distribution
selected examples

Key

- Government
 - national
 - local
- △ Religious and ceremonial
- Economic
 - distribution
 - production
 - banking
- Educational
- ⊗ Recreational
- △ Health and welfare
- ⊙ Professional svcs.
- ⊕ Communication and transport
- ⊖ Trade and personal svcs.

going from home to school and returning again. They constitute the primary relationship of home and school.

The clustering of milieux thus presents a difficult methodological problem. It has already been suggested that we cannot view milieux as related to one another in their own right. No matter what a milieu is, it cannot do anything, and interrelationship is, beyond question, a matter of doing or "being done to", either now or prospectively. Interrelationship therefore must take place through the agency of some person or group, and that action is carried out in virtue of the fact that the two milieux are seen as going together. In fact, of course, they not only "go together in a classificatory sense, but they also "go together" in the sense that the actions carried out in one milieu have something to do with those in the other.³

"Go together" and "something to do with" are deliberately chosen lay phrases. They are deliberately vague ('interrelationship' is no less vague it simply sounds more technical) since I cannot yet specify their content in terms of empirically verifiable cases. Before pursuing the argument further some suggestions can be made.

1. A cluster of milieux is a group of milieux which are thought of by their users as composing a class or category e.g. shops-- factories -- warehouses -- banks.

2. Interrelationship takes a variety of forms

- (a) Antecedent relationship

- i the action in a milieu is a prerequisite for carrying on of the action in the milieu we take as a reference point, e.g. bread is made at the bakery and sold at the dairy. The chain of relationship is not one of infinite regress, it stops at any point necessary

for an adequate explanation.

(b) Simultaneous relationship

Milieu A and B have action patterns which necessarily occur or customarily occur at the same time, e.g. school classes convene and dismiss at the same time so that work in one class is not disturbed by the play of another.

(c) Consequential relationship

The action in milieu A has the consequence of producing action in Milieu B which would ordinarily be inert. A motor accident on Victoria Street corner, has the consequence that the ambulance crew is mobilised. Less dramatically the end of lessons at the primary school has the consequence that traffic is slowed because school traffic patrols control crossings for half an hour or so.

These three are the time relationships but they also imply or, more accurately bring up the question of space relationships. These can be stated as those of:

- (a) identity i.e. the milieu occupy the same geographical space
- (b) adjacency, the milieux are "close together" - here an arbitrary judgement must be made, "having one boundary in common" will certainly do, but is perhaps too stringent, though a shading treating one boundary as the centre point of a scale will serve better.
- (c) separation

Milieu may now be classified for relationship on a two-way matrix:

Time	Space		
	<u>Identical</u>	<u>Adj.</u>	<u>Sep.</u>
Antecedent	IA	Aa	Sa
Simultaneous	IS	As	Ss
Consequent	IC	Ac	Sc

Does this proposal necessarily make the understanding of milieu relationships clearer? It provides us with a means of labelling the relationship, there is indeed some value there but it is only a little above the unexamined common sense view. It provides for process, however, in that it may be argued that certain kinds of actions, shopping, schooling, etc imply chains of actions which take place in other milieux. There does not seem to be any reason, in principle, not to make the analysis at either end, either with milieux, or action pattern, since each implies the other. Nevertheless the model so far does not satisfy. What is necessary is a form of measurement which will simply and concretely distinguish the tightly clustered milieu from the less tightly clustered, and the isolated. The classification used above cannot do this since there is no conceptual superiority of antecedent over simultaneous or any other relationship. There seems little to be hoped for in these categories so far as developing a measure is concerned, and no other easily usable measure suggests itself.

What then lies in the other direction - that of the analysis of personal milieu networks? If personal networks are sufficiently common to be strong social patterns of which individuals show simple variations, we might then look beyond a purely ecological analysis of milieux with its problems of clustering, change, succession, conflict and the like, to a social analysis in which milieux use can be predicted entirely from a knowledge of the structure of social relations.

It is here that ecological analysis becomes fully sociological though it is easy enough to see how it can become the victim of sociological simple mindedness. It is useless to go with survey questionnaires about milieu networks, for what we are dealing with is a "social fact" not the sum of individual actions. Summing such actions will indeed

tell us much, but surveying will do no more than give us a sketchy account of individual hopes expectations, lies and prevarications. Essentially then, the methodological task is to find a means by which with a certain degree of confidence we can plot the milieu networks of individuals through noting their actual movements, by discovering the folk model and comparing it with actual behaviour, and, in the end making an intelligent assessment of these data.

What has been discussed so far is really a question of contrasting viewpoints which yield different but complementary results. Looking upon milieu clustering as the outcome of different functional requirements of humans en masse is by no means utterly misleading - it is the approach that has informed most town planning practice whether professional or lay, but overstresses the rational instrumentality with which humans are supposed to use their environment. Enough has been said here to suggest that milieux are only partly rational, intelligent and functional constructs, and that the other part is a complex structure of meaning.

To draw the arguments together let us restate the main points:

1. Milieux may be regarded as clustering according to the systematic relationships of the dominant action patterns carried out within them.
2. Links of various kinds may be specified but underlying these is the link of regular and repeated interaction by individuals.
3. By viewing any individual as the originating point for interaction and the use of milieu we may arrive at individual milieu networks which are generally social patterns appropriate to the social location of the individual.
4. Individual networks can be compared and their common features summed to provide typical patterns. Such patterns will undoubtedly show clustering of milieux, but this describes and does not explain clustering.

It seems then that there is no good theoretical answer available to the question of why clustering occurs and how it occurs. This is a problem of some significance for it indicates at least, the inadequacy of current theory and does nothing to rescue us from the basic predicament, the problem of predicting milieu clusters. The alternatives available don't help much - the "functional relationship" explanation will work for some cases, but not all, the "individual network" explanation has the advantage that it accounts for the individual's probable range of milieux, but it still when all is said, relies on a very simple utility theory. The reason why some milieux are clustered together and are thought to be properly so, and others are scattered haphazardly over the face of the map, has something to do with utility, convenience and transport, but not everything, indeed it is far other and more subtle reasons which are effective here.

For more consideration of these problems then, it is necessary to go to the next section, that on the meaning of milieux.

4. The Meaning of Milieu

Symbol: This section starts with the paradox that the "milieu is the meaning" that is milieux do not act transitively on the mind - they are there and are simultaneously apprehended by the individual. I do not see a sign saying "cafe" and thereupon start feeling hungry, enter the cafe, buy a cup of coffee, cake, leave when I have eaten them, having been prompted to these actions by the sign. On the contrary my hunger may prompt me to look for a cafe, or seeing a suitable cafe I may discover that I am hungry. Much, however, is implied by the adjective italicised in the previous sentence. "A suitable cafe" is one which is socially congenial with my model, it seems clean, the clientele is not grossly different in class or other indicators (I might not enter a cafe full of truck drivers, might feel out of place in one full of fashionably dressed women), the food offered is of the kind I like or expect, the price range will be within what I consider appropriate for a morning break. How do I learn all these things, and how do I decide so quickly, instantaneously even that this rather than that cafe is the one for me?

The psychology of choice in such cases does not concern us here, though of course it must be considered essential to any full explanation. It can be suggested that the primary cue for individual choice in matters of food, entertainment and clothing will have much to do with the individual's cultural experience. What he perceives first or as the most powerful cue is not simply a matter of personal choices and tastes but of the socially implanted expectations which he has.

Milieux "mean" at several "levels" as the previous discussion suggests. In this respect then, milieux, and this is true to some degree of all milieux and not of some only, are symbols and not simple signs. A cafe "means" food, but it also "means" class, custom, entertainment, friendly interaction and perhaps a number of other things. In Harbourtown

Vickmans building "means" not only the shops which occupy its ground floor, but also the age of the town, association with an early settler family, and a representation of the meaning of "old" in visual and architectural terms. The building has as it were a patina of meaning. which for some of the older people in the town, reciting this or that anecdote of some event which they remember, is deeper than it is for younger people or for new migrants.

There is, however, a functional sign element in many common milieux, that is, they "mean" primarily, what they are. This is of course an over-simplification, but not a deliberate paradox. In those milieu which are concerned with providing goods or a service, the "sign" element is strong, there is almost a one-to-one relationship between milieu and meaning - the clothing store announces itself by means of a display in the window, so does the grocery store, the service station and the builder's yard are immediately recognisable. These milieux nevertheless are always more than their sign function, the level upon which strangers and visitors work, and some milieux are ambiguous being signs of different kinds to different groups. The open strip of grass in front of the courthouse in Midwest, Barker says, was treated by children as a place to play on, while adults solemnly walked round it. So it was also in Harbourtown that homeward-going children saw some front gardens as places to run through to the anger of resident adults, young men with motorbikes saw a particular stretch of pavement in Victoria Street as a meeting place in contrast to other citizens' view of it as a place of free passage, and farmers on sale days saw the street as a place to stop their cars and converse in, in contrast to other drivers who wanted to use it as a thoroughfare.

The sign function is helped out by written legends but, for the most part, these are not essential, they serve to distinguish one grocery or

clothing shop from another, but since each sells the same range of goods in Harbourn town, this differentiation has little to do with the goods stocked and more to do with long term loyalties, the range of extra services such as delivery and small giveaways, and sometimes other affiliations. In some cases, however, there is no obvious way in which a milieu can be identified, professional offices have to be identified by the name and profession of the person concerned, administrative and government offices are likewise indicated as well as some others of a bureaucratic nature. The trades and crafts easily announce themselves; the bureaucrat is interchangeable and must carry his label, figuratively, around his neck.

Some other milieux have to be identified also, "park" or "reserve" attached to a name serves to show that it is a public milieu, but other kinds of open land are less easily identified - a seven wire fence "means" a farm boundary, other kinds of fencing and planted hedges show that land is private. There is no common land in Harbourn town in the sense that it is established for public use by custom; even beaches are not in this category, all land is owned by someone, a private individual, the Borough (which acts like a private owner) or the Crown. However some Crown and Borough land notably the foreshore for a chain above high water mark is regarded as common. There seem to be no place of this kind of which the names don't incorporate a direct reference to the indicator of the appropriate action pattern. What goes unrecognised is that milieux are anything else than their labels say.

The functions which milieux are thought to have are manifest, in Merton's sense, recognised, intended, though we cannot here accept Merton's equation of "function" with "consequence". The "function that a milieu fulfils" is a figurative use only since functions can only, in Merton's terms and they are on the whole the most sensible, mean the consequence of social action. ⁴

Milieux then signify quite clearly their intended uses by one or more visual signs. These uses are unambiguous because they are part of a cultural inventory; indeed all or virtually all of them could be found in any other small New Zealand town. They are more ambiguous to a foreigner, however, as anyone knows who has tried to buy some common article, commonplace in his own country, in some other (the "what is the French for 'toothpaste'" problem). The point however, is that the "functional" level of meaning is the most elementary; it is that utilised by people who visit as the first point of reference, but it is entirely superficial and is never the only one used.

If the "functional sign" is as has been maintained here the elementary system of meaning for milieux then the next question must be as to the number and kind of other complex meanings which milieux may bear "latent" meaning as opposed to manifest. Before coming to this question it seems a necessary preliminary to state that if milieux mean several things simultaneously as it has been suggested that they do, then they behave analogously with symbols, that is they "connote", they do not simply "denote". Some words are the names of things, or rather, they are not "just words" they are complex noises which denote certain objects "wug" we shall say denotes stone, "wugger" a stone mason, the phrase "I am a" simply shows a formal relationship between "I" the speaker indicated by that noise, and stone or stonemason. Since "I" cannot be a "stone", because there is a formal contradiction "I" must be a "stonemason" - "stone" indicates a heavy hard thing, which we have agreed to call by that noise; it is a sign. Some words stand or can be made to stand for several things - on this basis is

most verse written; a noise in a context of noises; a meaning direct and apprehensible and a complex of suggestions over and above that. But the analogy between words and milieux can be carried only a little way, a milieu is a thing, that is it has concrete dimensions, even though as we have already seen these often depend on conventions.

A milieu is not a symbol, but it is something like a symbol. Some milieux have symbolic parts or may be symbolic altogether. A milieu is a "thing" but it is a highly special "thing" it is a social thing - the most characterless lump of rock sticking out of the ground can be a milieu, venerated as the resting place of the Lord Buddha, feared as the altar of sacrifice, worshipped and anointed as the Bringer of Fertility. It's "thingness" is undeniable, but that materiality depends upon societal recognition.

Milieux thus have a distinctively social range of denota. That they may also be of psychological significance for individuals, or have a physical nature and cycle of their own is not really surprising. One might write a monograph on the significance of Fujiyama as a Japanese art, or about the geological nature of the mountain, neither of these would really reach a sociological analysis though each would probably have some implicit sociology written in. Socially the milieu denotes, besides its functional significance,

- (a) a range of social structural meanings
- (b) a range of norms relating to its use
- (c) a range of valuations

Are there more dimensions than these? The answer is surely that if other dimensions exist then they can be comprised within those given here and can only be given sociological meaning within that framework.

There is one more feature which must be considered; that is the "temporo-spatial" matrix. The milieu is both time and place - the spatial dimensions are as fixed or as temporary as the time locus to which it is socially allocated. Things don't gain substantiality just by being old - the veriest stone on Harbourtown's roads is older than the whole of human existence, they are "old" in a social context - Vickman's store is not as "old" as the paa on Paa Hill, by a couple of centuries, but Vickman's is venerated, protected, marked out in every photograph and publication. It has a temporal locus which maintains its spatial one - the paa on the other hand could be bulldozed with scarcely a protest. It has no temporal locus for any but a few of Harbourtown's citizens.

The time dimension is of particular interest in understanding the way in which milieux and action settings are composed, maintained and dissolved. From the point of view of its meaning, however, time designation only seems to be attached to milieux in an unshaded way. "Old" constitutes one time category and "new" another, but there seems to be no way of accounting for what comes in between. The King's Arms Hotel and Vickman's are unquestionably "old" they are associated with the settlers; the "old school" is it seems, so called to distinguish it from the "new school" - however it is also "old" in the sense of being associated with the children and grandchildren of the settler generation. "New" on the other hand applies to milieux, mainly buildings, that have been created within the last few years, and with which there is no "old" to contrast, thus the A.S.B. building, to the "new bank" though of course, there has been an A.S.B. Branch in Harbourtown for nearly a century. There is little enough that is "new" in Harbourtown by any objective calculation but there is a great deal which seems to have no distinctive time designation, perhaps because it is neither

old enough nor new enough, and perhaps also because it is too featureless to be placed in any such niche.

"Old" and "new" thus constitute conscious categories for Harbour-towners but it is more difficult to show time as part of the structure of meaning of particular milieux. Those which belong to the "old" category seem to "mean" settler association, in a few cases they also "mean" identity with "old families", but there seems to be little to indicate any other references for "old". In this case the time meaning is strictly interdependent with structural meaning. The settler families "old families" are an important reference group for Harbour-towners and they, rather than any other events, are what history is about.

That time sets the spatial dimension of milieux is the kind of statement which requires interrogation if it is not to sound like a biblical prophecy. In the model of milieu that has been discussed previously time is dynamic. The milieu is given its spatial existence by the "length of time" that it lasts. For example a circus is a milieu or complex of milieux which exists for the length of the season that it stays in town. This is an extreme case however, circuses occupy pieces of waste land or reserves for the brief period of their visit, but other milieux may have relatively short or long life spans also, thus houses, parks and public buildings all have relatively long life spans, parks, probably in perpetuity, public buildings until they are replaced or rebuilt, houses for perhaps a generation or so.

But it is misleading to say that "time constitutes spatial existence" time does nothing, it is the social definition of time that brings about the creation and maintenance of milieu. Thus it is possible

for the Borough Council to sanction a particular land use on the basis that it is temporary and will not affect the character of a neighbourhood for long, that it is necessary, that the neighbourhood is changing anyway. Time, thus, can be seen as a category or class of ideas which is subject to social evaluation, "old/new", "temporary/permanent", are however different kinds of time evaluations. Old/new it has been suggested have social structural implications in Harbourn town "temporary/permanent" refers to the actual chronological endurance of some thing or things, or even some social structural arrangement. Even here without being over-subtle, the apparently obvious contrasting of things which are ad hoc against those which are intended to be permanent, can be seen to have other references, "temporary" is in relation to social structure something which can be accepted as a matter of expediency by the more influential members of Harbourn town society, but permanent changes must have their agreement or at least ^{no} overt opposition. In terms of meaning, "temporary" is evaluated neutrally or negatively; "its only temporary" means that whatever is the object of the reference may be excused its deficiencies.

The essential point is that time is not an extra or non social condition of the existence of a milieu; it is essentially a social conceptualisation of the speed and direction of change, it is one way of organising consensus about the degree to which things, milieux in this case, may or ought to change. When time references are invoked either as reasons for changing or not changing some milieu, this is no more than a means of providing a rationale on which consensus can be built. To say that some milieu is of historical importance is to guarantee it a kind of social respectability whether it deserves it or not. An appeal to the sense of history may help to create a division

in the sense that it brings together the "civilised" against the philistine, it also creates in Harbourtown an essential validating relationship with old families and with the settler past; finally it is selective, it enshrines only that which is otherwise valued.

Time in relation to milieu perhaps can now be divided into "history" which is essentially a valuation based upon past events and people, or rather, perceptions of either, and "dynamic time" or the time of occupancy or use of a milieux. We now have two models, one, of the meaning of milieu in which "meaning" includes "history" and the other, a concrete model in which dynamic time is related to specific spatial dimensions.

The two models, and they are here to be regarded as conceptual or analytic models, are related to one another through the existence of the physical place which is identified either directly and ostensibly by the inhabitants, or indirectly by observation of their common patterns of social action. These models are, of course, those of the sociological fieldworker, they are heuristic, important only insofar as they help to isolate some phenomena from others and enable us to make some sensible comments about them. They are created to help us to understand what is, to a sociologist, puzzling, though to the ordinary Harbourtownner, is not on the surface, puzzling at all.⁵

5. Milieu as cues for social action

Milieu instruct people how to act. Men who enter churches take off their hats, kneel and behave in other ways that are appropriate, people who enter shops follow a prescribed series of actions as do those who meet in the street, go to theatres, and attend classes. It is maintained here that the milieu in which this action pattern takes place cues the individual to follow prescribed activity sequences and to remain largely undeviatingly within them. Yet it is relatively uncommon that the milieu is unambiguous, that is that it admits of only one kind of primary action and no other, or that there is some list of written rules prescribing the actions that may take place.

Sometimes the physical structure contains strong cues, the provision of seats on a large scale as in a church or theatre suggests to a naive stranger that "sitting" is the main physical activity expected of him; just as a large open space suggests that free movement, walking or running, is allowed. These internal furnishings are obviously cues to motor activity, but they don't spell out the content of this activity, the content cue comes from a reading of signs and a reference to personal internalised information - in other words to meaning.

How exactly does the milieu convey its meaning. We may define a number of differing ways.

1. by physical structure
2. by signs
3. by written information

Physical structure: We noted earlier that gross motor activity is often prompted by the shape and furnishing of a particular milieu. No quantitative analysis is presented here but it is not difficult to see how

the milieu of Harbourn town could be classified according to major characteristics of physical structure and the significance of this factor analysed. It is difficult to presume that physical structure provides major cue to social action except to a naive person - not even a child however fits this description; everyone has memories and experiences to go on and looks around in a new situation for the furnishings which he has been led to expect will be present. .

The physical structure of a milieu can be broken down into a number of obvious features, the size, the observable structural materials, the interior furnishings and their arrangements, decoration and the overall architectural style. Churches and cinemas for example have a fair number of characteristics in common but few would mistake one for the other even if no verbal clues were given, the unlikenesses of decorative and architectural style outweigh such matters as the similar seating pattern. In other words it is the detailed content of a milieu which makes it what it is.

Signs: The unsatisfactory distinction between sign and symbol has once again to be referred to. Signs are also frequently symbols but this does not alter their primary effectiveness as signs. Thus for example the cross, which is displayed somewhere in the vicinity of most Christian churches is an immediately readable sign, which also symbolises Christian beliefs and values. Meanings embodied in signs range from such religious signs as the cross, crescent or Star of David, to the red doors of the fire station, and the displays in shop windows or the instruments in public streets and parks. The signs contained in milieu serve also to set off detailed areas for different kinds of social action as for example, is the case in school rooms, church, and hotel bar.

Written information: Finally, written instructions supplement the means by which many milieu shape social action. In some cases the information is in the form of instructions naming kinds of behaviour that are illegal, but mainly it consists of words proclaiming the name of the milieu and this is sufficient to provide the necessary messages about social action. The milieu thus conveys its "instructions" for social action as a cue to the individual entering it; but the ways of acting are for the most part not given by the milieu itself. This may become more apparent by considering some examples.

Example 1: The Anglican Church

The Anglican Church consists of a number of sub-parts, the main ones are the porch, nave, chancel and vestry. The congregation must enter the church via the porch and they sit in the nave facing the chancel which contains the altar. Each of these areas is a zone of action, the porch with its noticeboard and coat hooks is clearly transitional, people may talk here and do so, but quietly, as though the porch had about it at least some of the quality of the church interior.

The nave is dominated by the ranks of wooden seats which face the chancel. A central aisle leads to the altar, the baptismal font being opposite. The nave of the church is occupied by the worshippers who can do nothing else but sit, stand or kneel facing the altar. They enter the chancel as far as the rails of the altar but do not penetrate beyond them, this zone being reserved for the priest and his assistants. All actions are initiated in the chancel by the priest who also performs some parts of the ritual in the nave as well as preaching his sermon from the pulpit, which though within the nave is still not properly part of it.

To the properly socialised Anglican then the milieu provides the essential cues for the correct performance of the dominant action pattern. Moreover even when the church is not used for services it continues to provide these cues - visitors moderate their voices, the ladies cleaning the altar brasses and replacing the flowers treat the chancel with veneration - though the church is open during the day it is visited only by those who have a legitimate religious purpose.

Example 2: The old wharf

The old wharf is actually a small plot of land which was formerly the base for a jetty at which the shallow draft river steamers could berth to discharge passengers and cargo. It has therefore been a place of some significance to Harbourners in the past, indeed it was the point within a few yards of which the original town grew up. A photograph in the museum shows the site as it was a century ago and identifies the buildings which are still standing. The reserve itself was sheltered until recently by a belt of pine trees and had two or three picnic tables set out by the Council. Fishing and pleasure launches still berth at the wall occasionally.⁶

The old wharf is hardly large enough for any activity except of a sedentary kind but it receives the sun pleasantly and has views down river which even at low tide when the mud flats are exposed are interesting. On fine days shoppers often take a rest or stop to talk there, and at lunch times some of the younger people go there to eat in the sun. The wharf in the days of early hotel closing also functioned as a variety of outdoor bar on summer evenings, some drinkers taking their beer there where they might sit and converse.

The old wharf does not have specified action patterns but it nevertheless is not a place where any kind of interaction at all takes place. Stalls and outdoor meetings are never held there and for the most part no other activity but rest and conversation, and occasionally some boat work takes place in this area.

However inertly, this milieu nevertheless communicates its purposes to Harbourtowners with surprising consistency. Apart from children who play there after school, the wharf remains a place of quiet and repose and is not converted to other purposes.

Example 3: Cemetery

The cemetery of Harbourtown is not associated with a church as is the case in many other districts of the county, instead it is used by members of all sects, the privilege of burial there depending upon residence in the town rather than religious adherence. The cemetery is a complex milieu, perhaps one of the most complex in Harbourtown. Its functional meaning is simply that of a burial place for the dead, and it might be seen as functionally alternative with a number of cemeteries including those of Auckland with their crematoria. However, no burial in Harbourtown is unaccompanied by religious ritual and the final phase of these rites must be performed in the actual interment.

Two levels of meaning, functional (need solving) and ritual can be seen, at the outset and the reminders of these can be seen in the monuments with their religious symbols, and in the solemn processional arrangements of paths and plots. Harbourtown cemetery however embodies more than this. The cemetery is distinguished by four areas which are sub-milieu. The first of these is the "old cemetery", it consists of the graves of the earliest settlers, dating from the

1850's - which stand upon a small hillock visible from other parts of the cemetery. These graves have in a few cases elaborate monuments; they are the graves of "founding fathers" however and the names of lowlier citizens do not occur in this group.

A large part of the cemetery is given over to burials of the late 19th and early 20th century. This part of the cemetery is distinguished by its highly varied and often elaborate monuments as well as by family plots and multiple graves. Here local names which begin with the second wave of settlers, those who migrated into Harbourtown as the county ceased to be a timber and gum digging area and became one of settled farms, are represented. The third part of the cemetery consists of burials made since the Second World War and is marked by the regular rows of headstones which do not rise above the height prescribed by Borough regulations.

The fourth sub-milieu is the soldiers' cemetery, a group of plots reserved for ex-servicemen. Originally such plots were created by the R.S.A. after the Great War in order that ex-servicemen who were destitute or died as the result of war injuries might be given, a respectable burial. The Ex-Servicemen's plot however has come to have a significance of its own and there is some evidence to suggest that in Harbourtown, some men prefer to be buried there than in the common plots.

In addition to the religious meanings the cemetery also acts to reflect the social structure of Harbourtown, with the high valuation placed on long connections being symbolised by the position of graves, the kinds of headstone, and the existence of family plot. The special place given to ex-servicemen is a reflection of a national policy of the R.S.A. but are probably in accordance with values held by a large

number of older New Zealanders. In Harbourtown however, the R.S.A. is a dominant men's organisation its membership interlocking tightly with the senior membership of many other organisations. Such interlocking is not of course part of some plot by the R.S.A., it merely reflects the fact that men in the leadership age group (late forties or early fifties) also saw service in the Second World War, and that a number of older men highly value the ex-serviceman status.

Cueing from the milieu is strongly reinforced in cemetery behaviour by the fact that the cemetery is well cared for. The Harbourtowners keep the cemetery grass mowed and the older graves tidy. It is not thus, an "inactive" milieu in the sense that it is largely outside public interaction as many cemeteries are; Harbourtown Cemetery is seen by many people since funerals are attended by a wide range of relations and friends. The complex of religious symbols and local associations and structural signs establishes however that the cemetery is intensively a ritual milieu; it is a continual reminder of the past and provides continuing authentication of all claims to be a Harbourtownner.

Conclusion;

This chapter has dealt in summary with an analysis of Harbourtown as an ecosystem. In the course of detailing and exploring the possibilities of a milieu inventory it has become clear that an account which is only ecological, that is which having decided a level of selection for units then proceeds to enumerate them and to apply a "hard" technique of stating relationships between them is largely irrelevant to sociological concerns. It would have been possible even with the limited techniques used here, and certainly with a little refinement of them to have followed the path of objective measurement with a high degree of rigour. That this has not been done is not to argue that it should not be, it is merely to say that I believe that other evidence shows this to be a sociologically unfruitful way to proceed. To describe is not to understand, it is not even necessary to understanding, though it helps and refines understanding if it is well done. Like any other research act however, description of even the most careful kind is selective, partial, incomplete.

It proved impossible to write of milieux and to confine the discussion to the analysis of the physical dimensions and relations between the milieux. The dimensions of social action and time continually re-emerged as the proto-theory of the earlier sections suggested that they would with the result that the analysis of milieu had to move beyond the description of the ecosystem to questions of meaning. Milieux it is argued encode "instructions" for social action - that is they are cues, (signs or symbols) which stand for ways or acting and which act as the "theories of social action" the settings within

which regular and recurrent patterns of action take place.

Milieux are habitat units the unitariness of which is a product of common folk definitions restructured for sociological purposes. In general the test of the adequacy of milieu analysis is the extent to which it conforms to the folk model. It is not however a replication of that model but rather an attempt to understand its categories. If the analysis of milieu were to be pressed further than it has been in this study it would arrive eventually at questions about the structure of the models by which social life is organised and to questions about their ontological status. We would have moved from ethnography via sociology to problems of psychology, going in one direction, and philosophy, going in another.

It is evident then, that the comparatively straight-forward programme of the study of the community refuses to remain at the level of empirical description - if we take milieu as the concrete isolate of analysis we are led to elaborate a sociology of place in order to escape the Scylla of psychological reduction and the Charybdis of philosophical controversy. Some attempt to outline such a sociology is undertaken in the next chapter.

Notes and References

CHAPTER VII

1. Not to labour the obvious, except when a population is destroyed or is forcibly removed, change takes place through migration and natural replacement. What happens when people A is replaced by people B? Do they look at the former occupants' milieux with total incomprehension? In Britain Roman garrison towns such as Verulam became a source of materials for building. The Christian church seems to have given the remains of former cultures a bad name, and megalithic structures have often been associated with witchcraft and satanism.
In New Zealand paa sites abandoned a century and a half ago are often regarded by Maoris as being supernaturally dangerous. Elsewhere some milieux seem to be retained easily enough where a tradition or its variant continues. Many of the City of London churches survived the Reformation, and the abbeys and priories which were not actually destroyed (like Fountains and Rivaulx) became protestant churches. A few, places of pilgrimage before the Reformation, remain so for both Anglicans and Catholics.
2. in Barker 1955.
3. I use this phrase analogously, but not identically with the usage which Levi-Strauss introduces. In fact, though there may be functional or other kinds of relationship which in actual terms link milieux of necessity, there is another level at which "going together" is a matter of conceptual notions. It was noted earlier that, no matter how rational it might be to place the hospital, mortuary and cemetery next door to each other, these milieux are seen as antipathetic, from a particular point of view. The same may be said of other arrangements. As Levi-Strauss remarks,
"The real question is not whether a Woodpecker's beak does in fact cure toothache. It is rather whether there is a point of view from which a woodpecker's beak and a man's tooth can be seen as 'going together' (the use of this congruity being only one of its possible uses), and whether some initial order can be introduced into the universe by means of these groupings." Levi-Strauss 1969,9.

In considering the congruities of milieux the problem is made more difficult by the fact that incongruities are not made congruent in such obvious ways as the oddity of the woodpecker's beak and the man's tooth. Nevertheless they too, may demonstrate structures of thought. Unfortunately this line of enquiry cannot be followed further in this essay.

4. Merton 1957, Manifest and Latent Function
5. It is worth considering here that local people do not understand milieux in detail. Their models are partial and deal with the action patterns they are directly involved with. Few non-Masons know Masonic rituals and even relatively accessible milieux, such as the Roman Catholic church remain mysterious to non-Catholics.
6. The wharf reserve was virtually obliterated by a new road which has been carried across the Estuary, now partly reclaimed. The increase in efficiency was not accompanied by a like increase in amenity value - Harbourtown's character, and also the possibility of graceful re-development has now unfortunately been destroyed beyond hope of replacement. Some, but not all, Harbourtowners shrug their shoulders and say fatalistically, "That's progress."

P A R T I I I

Aspects of the Sociology of Place

CHAPTER VIII

Towards a Sociology of Place

1. The social nature of Place

The contention of this essay has been that place is a social fact in the sense in which Durkheim uses this term namely, that place is external to the individual, exerts constraint upon him and coerces his behaviour into particular patterns. In earlier chapters it has been maintained that place not only fulfils these requirements for the recognition of its sociality, it also constitutes a basic item of the social stock of knowledge at hand, that is of the stock of knowledge viewed as a collective entity from which individual stocks are composed. It has been shown that the dimensions of knowledge involved are concerned not only with the constraints exerted by place upon individual or collective action, but in the retention of a variety of connotations which contribute to the continuity of the culture and social organisation. Place has significatory aspects, but it stands in a reciprocal relationship to the collectivity and the individuals who make it up.

Place, it has been suggested, is something more than the kind of social fact that Durkheim was prepared to give attention to - laws in Division and rates in Suicide are diagnostic of social conditions - it is not at all certain whether they are social facts in themselves or whether they are, rather, refractions of some larger facticity. The social fact to which these refer, of which they are refractions, is social integration. There is a fundamental confusion though a subtle

one, in Durkheim's early writing, between the distinction of "the social" and "the psychological" and therefore of two differing bodies of phenomena, and the separability of facts within the social realm from one another. When he comes to considering rates of suicide or forms of religious belief Durkheim returns to consideration of the qualitative aspect of the societal "texture", the degree to which individuals are drawn together in bonds of mutuality and the extent to which they are separated or estranged from one another or from the society at large.¹

What is evidenced by this is the predilection that Durkheim has for seeing social life as dependent upon the consensus of common sentiment - it is the liberal Aristotelian view that man achieves his full nature in society, but that it is the nature of society conversely, the imperatives that are worked out within it, which, in spite of the wills of individuals will set the formal conditions for the realisation of human capacities. Durkheim's view of society, like Marx's, tends away from the everyday world, toward the expression of social conditions. In Durkheim, as in Marx, we find little discussion of art, customs or manners, none of what makes one society different from another in terms other than those of societal organisation. The sociological tradition as it emerges from its two greatest thinkers has little or nothing to say about human culture in any sense which is not ultimately political and moral. In Marx and Durkheim sociology has found its moralists, it has yet to find its aestheticians.

The quest for the understanding and analysis of social facticity has concentrated I suggest upon social organisation, that is upon the relationships of men in groups, to allow for attention to the more mundane levels of social action, and more particularly to the artefactual level. Social organisation seems to be, except in the work of

ethnographically inclined social anthropologists, floating in a dimensionless space, where buildings, trees, machines, noises and so forth do not exist. It is not, of course, to rescue sociology from an alleged philistinism that this point is raised but rather to show that we may approach the paramount empirical reality, social relations, from a variety of aspects, and that in approaching it via the mundane world of things we may learn about it what cannot be learned by considering the relationships of classes, rates of deviance, or ethnic self-concepts. To do this is to move from the world of meanings and theories imposed from above, to the world of meanings and theories disclosed from within. The one does not displace the other in the sociological enterprise, but it may very well complement it.

The position taken here then, is that place is a primary kind of social fact just as social relationships are, and that in order to understand a great deal of human culture it is necessary to start at the material end of the spectrum, or to avoid being misleading, to consider matters that relate to material things as beginning with material things and not with social relationships. If we wish to understand a painting or sculpture then the place to start is with the painting or sculpture, not with the biography of the artist or the social history of the period; similarly if we wish to understand the nature of farming it is more appealing to start with the farmer's activities and views than with government reports on the state of the farming industry.

It will be seen that the sociology of place is also concerned with the obvious, dimensionable, and concrete, it does not start with social relationships, it works towards them. In seeing place as problematic the sociologist thus seeks to explain the relationships between place

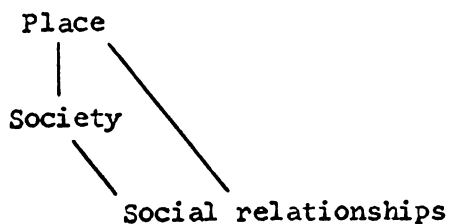
and society with each being inseparable, except conceptually, from the other. The sociology of place, then, works from the particular to the general, from the concrete to the abstract; its starting point is "a place", a milieu, or some collection of places, locatable geographical things, and its explanations are based upon making explicit the socio-cultural forces whose interplay is inescapably interwoven with place. Scale is not the significant feature, place may be a single homestead, or a street corner, or it may be a whole continent, but the three dimensionality of each datum is what distinguishes it from sociological fields mainly concerned with abstract or second order data.

. . .

The relationship between place and society can be stated in its most general form as a simple reciprocal:



in which place is seen as the territorial area within which a particular collectivity is located. As we have seen the physical location is worked upon by the collectivity and becomes not merely an inert environment but 'place', a distinct social reality. In order to understand place however we must also understand societal structures and relationships and these too may be seen to be in a reciprocal relationship.



The third and final segment of the diagram is time. Since all social relationships occupy some point in time considered as relative to the sequence of events in social life, and since, as we have seen, place often has a temporal reference, time here is the time of society that is locked within the socio-cultural frame of reference which is the focus of interest. The completed diagram looks somewhat arcane but it does not imply that all conceivable social matters are comprehended within it. Rather it seeks to express the relationships between primary facts which are socially created and which always imply each other.

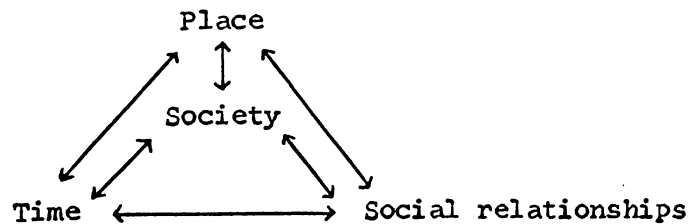


Diagram I

Two further features of this model must be considered. The first is the culture which sets the prerequisites for interpretation - and can be envisaged as an inscribed circle, the second is historical time through which the whole structure passes.

The last named is unduly reified by a diagrammatic presentation; but what is intended is that any society may be seen within its historical context, that is, of the previous events which connect it with other societies and with earlier stages in its own development. Can such former colonial societies as Australia and New Zealand be considered without reference to the parent society from which they originated and without considering the historical events which have come to bear upon them? History, whether international, national or local, is what creates the conditions under which a society will develop and change, in addition and perhaps

more subtly, historical connections set the themes and style of the culture under consideration. New Zealand for example, considered as a national society, carries within its culture a preponderance of ideas, customs and valuations brought from the British Isles by successive waves of settlers. The predominant themes and matters of style as various as cookery, sports, legal and religious observances, are drawn from that source and have been successfully imposed upon the indigenous people as well as migrants from other cultures.

Diagram I is the most generalised form of the sociology of place. It demonstrates that even if cultural considerations could be excluded the analysis of place must take into account the relationships with society, time and social relationships. The model of place then is as follows.

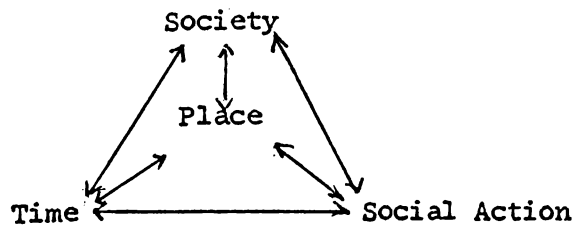


Diagram II

The society/time relationship sets problems in the area of social time which are relevant to such matters as the temporal aspects of social structure. The developmental cycle in the domestic group is a case in point and such problems as the perceived time aspects of social change, the social construction of time and the uses of historical and ritual time scales in maintaining or changing structural relations, remain to be explored.

The society/social action dimension is connected with problems of structure in relationship to process. Raymond Firth made this distinction

in his analysis of the relationship between social structure and social organisation, in which he took structure to be the set of normative relationships between persons and groups whereas social organisation consisted of the day-to-day arrangements, adjustments and alternatives which were if necessary, cooked up to meet proximate requirements.² The problem of Firth's distinction is that it is not absolutely clear in the matter of the different levels of abstraction involved. In fact social structure may be seen as an artefact of scientific observation, an abstract account of the regularities in daily behaviour which stands at a conceptually separate level, since it ignores the hundreds of cases which daily deviate from the structural norm; thus, peers marry showgirls and trades unionists are created peers in spite of structural statements about the rigidity and exclusivity of the peerage.

The structural account however, does express a certain truth; it is that the categories of social classification are thought of as stable even though there is a great deal of deviance, and in being thought of in this way, help to reinforce the norm. Social structure thus is not merely an abstract scientific account, it also exists in the heads of individuals and has consequences for their actions. Social action on the other hand, is the day-to-day set of actions which people take in pursuit of their goals and interests - it is always taken in virtue of other people and it gives expression to the relationship between normative relationships and immediate problems. The meeting of the Harbourtown Happiness Club is social action, but this action is taken in relation to the structural position of elderly women in the community, the structure of voluntary groups, and norms regulating them. It does not matter whether or not the rules of procedure (a minor expression of structural relations) are strictly adhered to, the meeting of the club is held

as if they were, and as if it mattered.

The relationship existing between time and social action presents a further series of complexities which affect place. Every pattern of social action has its particular duration, that is, the length of time by which its particular sequence takes to be worked out, a Maori tangihanga for example, takes whatever time is necessary between the delivery of the body and the final post-burial ceremonies, the anniversary and the unveiling of the tombstone, a period of perhaps a year and in some cases as much as twenty years, while a Pakeha funerary sequence usually lasts from the death to the immediate post-burial gathering and, in former times, the reading of the will. There is a strictly chronological time which is "about right" for these things to happen in and there may be strictly statutory requirements; a body by law must be buried within four days if it is not stored in a proper morgue - but these restrictions do not affect other matters in the ceremonial sequence. Time here is measured by the order of events and what must be achieved in them, not by the clock except in a rough way. At a European funeral a decent pause is observed before the mourners leave the presence of the body, more than this is excessive, less is perfunctory, at a Maori funeral a mourner may be moved to speak to the dead person or a close relation may cling to the coffin before it is to be taken away, the conceptualisation of time is quite different, in these two cases, quite apart from the actual behaviour that fills that part of the sequence.³

As well as duration there is the fact that some patterns of social action recur at regular intervals, club meetings, sporting fixtures and the like constitute one kind of recurrence, daily work is another, and a third is the recurrence of annual and life cycle events. Christmas, Easter and Anzac Day in Harbourtown are annually recurrent and call forth their own relevant action patterns, life cycle events such as weddings and

funerals, twenty-first birthdays, and "kitchen evenings" and "bridal showers" recur for families and peer groups, and reinvigorate the action patterns connected with them. The texture of life in the small town is so interwoven with these events that there often seems little time for people to do other things.

Time and social action relations bear upon place insofar as they confine or limit the use of places, but it is the interaction of time and social action which creates this limitation. Thus the time aspect in relation to place consists not only in actual social time (duration) in which it is occupied but in the importance of the action pattern and its place in the dominant valuational scheme.

As the diagram shows the effects of each item on Place are reciprocated by effects which Place exerts upon each. Place "affects" social structure (that is, is related to) through the significatory power which it holds. Expensive houses in tree-lined streets signify the existence of a group of people who have greater power, prestige and privilege - Melling Hill contrasts with Struggletown and signifies the structural relationships existing between the groups concerned.⁴ Though class and ethnic stratification are significant structurally, place may also signify other aspects of social structure - the predominance of small houses set on their own land indicates the importance of the nuclear family household as a dwelling unit, the predominantly rural or urban fringe location of Maori marae reflects the social location of Maoris, and the efflorescence of seaside "cottages" which are in fact suburban houses, has implications for the structural position of their owners.

Place likewise affects time or bears upon it through the significance of place as the location of past events. The identification of place with historical events is further enhanced by the relationship of time and social structure in that historical events have structural

significance. Not everyone's history is the subject of equal valuation.- in New Zealand the sites of the skirmishes in which Pakeha soldiers were killed are commemorated but those of Maoris, fighting presumably as patriots also, go unremembered. Auckland indeed possesses a memorial which commemorates the soldiers and "friendly Maoris" killed in the wars of the nineteenth century.

Place has a bearing on time in other ways also. Place enters social time not only at the level just mentioned but at others as well, for example, the specific functions of places are placed upon a scale of appropriateness in time, churches are used on Sundays, schools between nine and three on weekdays, and parks and sports-grounds at weekends. Place carries notice of its relationship to social time as an item in the stock of knowledge - people know that recreational beaches are likely to be empty on a weekday, that work premises close at five p.m. and that places which 'look old' may also be 'historic' in the sense just described. Place taken at its most general level may be said to 'ration' time by serving as a known point of reference in the stock of knowledge. One sees people outside the church on Tuesday afternoon and usually concludes that it is not an ordinary religious service that is being held, and looks for secondary cues in dress and manner that prompt the conclusion, wedding, funeral or christening - such cues to the informed local person are almost instantaneous, but even to an outsider coming from a similar cultural background, the prompting to similar conclusions is not difficult.

The examples in the previous paragraph prompt immediately toward the place-time-social action triangle. The relationship between time and social action is that of duration and recurrence, but place affects the form of social action and its time dimension through the functional and symbolic meanings "stored" in it. In the previous example, "people

outside the church on Tuesday", the place (church) "states" the normal time pattern of social action and sets the event in a problem category - is this something that occurs regularly on Tuesdays, is it unique, this Tuesday but not others? Is the action pattern one normal for churches or is it irregular? The sight of people in colourful clothes waiting expectantly outside dismisses "funeral" as a possible conclusion and leaves "wedding" or "christening" as choices; but there might be other possibilities, perhaps it is a meeting of the laity, perhaps the bishop's visit, perhaps merely the special service for a church ladies' guild. Whichever of these solutions to the problem "What is going on here?" seems likely, duration can be fairly easily predicted; the passerby does not expect to come back that evening to find the people still outside, nor does he expect some unusual action to have taken place, to find the vicar hanging from a lamp post, or see a procession with torches and banners heading for the Council Offices.

The place-time-social action triangle also implies and links to the social structure-place-social action triangle - once again the interaction in which we are interested cannot be easily separated from the other interactions - the special problems however posed along this axis are those which relate to the working out of structural principles. Place affects this process in that the position of a place in the valuational structure sets the limits to the degree of "room for manoeuvre" (in Lucy Mair's phrase) which is available.⁵ A baptism can be carried out in the home, at the hospital bedside or in a church, in each case the degree of formality is likely to be different. The structural principle in a baptism is related to the creation by an authorised person of a new member of the sect, together of course, with various religious doctrinal implications, and it is normally performed with the parents,

relatives and friends of both spouses present, affirming the sentiment of solidarity of the kindred and interest in the child. However in the conditions of a bedside baptism the structural principles are largely neglected in favour of the metaphysical and religious propositions involved. A Catholic nurse informant said that she normally baptised all premature babies at delivery whether she was aware of the mother's religious adherence or not; she thought that this was not uncommon.

In any case the matter of place in relation to both structure and action has fairly obvious problems. In general the "rule" that the functional identity of place is correlated positively with the degree of rigour with which structural principles are observed seems both important and empirically verifiable in formulating the problems of a sociology of place.

. . .

The foregoing discussion has been intended to show that the model advanced, in principle at least, organises problematic queries about place tolerably well. The model is not purely descriptive but, in Willer's terms, is iconic. Iconic models are rather common in sociology, models of role and reference group are examples, the famous debate over descent and alliance theory in the nineteen fifties was no more than a dispute over partial models which were iconic in character. The characteristics which Willer notes are:⁶

1. there is a direct resemblance between a property or properties of a group of empirical phenomena (italics added);

2. the properties may be changed in scale or importance and emphasis;
3. they are selective in abstraction neglecting those characteristics not considered crucial to the problem at hand;
4. the mechanism of the model is dependent on the number of properties abstracted and is meant to represent certain characteristics of the phenomenon itself.

Willer's criticism of iconic models as they are used in sociology is that they have the inherent property that the more abstract they become the fewer points of similarity they have ^{between} ~~with~~ the phenomenon and the model. Since the nominally defined features are retained, it is the mechanism that is lost. The model thus becomes incapable of prediction because it has no mechanism. In some models mechanisms do exist, but as Willer suggests they also fail to predict. The reason is not that the phenomenon is too complex, it is in fact that there are vague, or too many mechanisms involved. The result is that contradictory predictions can be made using the same set of relational statements.

The model which has been proposed above is in fact what Willer would call a "conceptual scheme", yet it is one which has tendencies toward mechanism and does not preclude the development of predictive statements. It is proposed that there are constant and reciprocal relationships between time, place, social action, and social structure, and it presumes that the triad relationships involved always imply two others. The model in fact specifies the problematic aspects of these relationships in ways that take as axiomatic, and therefore non-problematic, the reciprocal nature of the relationships. Thus the problems which are of importance are those which are produced by this relationship. They may be expressed in the form "If $A \leftrightarrow B \leftrightarrow C$ then how is this relationship expressed, and

what are its consequences?". If we wish to question the symmetry of the relationships then the problems are of quite a different order since the questions asked will be about transformations of the model. In fact this is not the way in which we want to proceed at all. The conceptual scheme is created for no other purpose than to direct attention toward probably interesting areas. The sociology of place arises from the need to consider a particular phenomenon, namely, that spatial location is not, in the models which people employ in day-to-day life, a neutral background - it matters, and how and why it matters, given that we presume the social construction of "what matters" in all things that have a collective recognition, that have cultural rather than idiosyncratic status, is sociologically interesting.

The conceptual scheme which has been proposed attempts to account for the special manifestations of place by reference to culture and history. In the first case culture is seen as the medium in terms of which place is expressed and which gives form to time, social structure, and social action. The last named seems clearly enough to be culture bound but what of the other two? The cultural characteristics of time have in some part been raised, time is seen as being characteristic of a culture, that is, it is conceptualised in ways which are consistent with the collective or common valuations of a group - this conceptualisation is part of the stock of knowledge, and may be so completely assimilated as to be regarded as axiomatic - the sabbatarian week with its closedown on Sunday is part of the time axioms of New Zealand, but New Zealanders confronted with the sabbatarian week with a total closedown from Friday evening to Saturday evening feel that they have encountered a completely foreign system. This arises not so much because of the shift of the seventh day, as from the rigorous way in which it is observed,

that is, from the change in cultural emphasis.

Time, thus, is a subjective reality taken from the standpoint of a typical member of the society and its particular interpretation within the model is from that standpoint. Social structure is however more of a problem. If social structure is thought of as the term is used here, as an abstraction from actual and existing relationships, then the person who makes that abstraction is outside the culture, (where the reality of social structure is taken for granted) as is the abstraction itself. This objection may be met perhaps in the following way - people within a society make abstractions about it. Some of these abstractions are about the relationships of persons and groups expressed sometimes in normative terms and sometimes in terms of actual or deviant cases. The sociologist interested in structural matters should proceed by a process of statistically reliable observation of actual behaviour if what he wishes to state is the normal structure of social relations. However the abstraction based on the statistically normal pattern ("no matter what people say, this is what they actually do") leaves out the problem of what is seen as normatively desirable. It may be, for example, that forty percent of children are conceived out of wedlock, which may be seen as a contradiction of the marital pattern, but at least as important is the view that the proper state of things is that no matter how conceived children should be born in wedlock, family structures should be preserved and maintained, and kinship obligations attended to.

Social structure is thus an abstraction by members of the society which is stated in terms of prevailing cultural norms. In New Zealand, as sociology students are never tired of pointing out, there is economic inequality built into the social system, but New Zealanders (other than sociologists) stress that New Zealand society is egalitarian, that though

some people are better off than others, this is no more than the just reward for their hard work and enterprise, and that at any rate everyone has the same opportunity to get to a better position. The fact that this is a normative statement ("everyone ought to have equal opportunity") not matched by objective reality, does not disturb the New Zealander's notion of the structural reality. What people state are structural principles which are highly valued, they are the principles around which the concept of what ought to be the case are balanced up with what is the case and explanations of the discrepancy offered. Social structure in this sense is an item of knowledge not necessarily common to the whole society, but prevalent enough to provide a general conceptual pattern. A stock question to beginning students of sociology on whether or not there are classes in New Zealand brings about a fifty percent denial, when the question "how many classes?" is asked, numbers vary from one to seven or eight, with a common statement of three. The discomfort that this question brings about however is due probably to the fact that there is a normative repudiation of class and the consequence of this, in structural terms, is that the class frontiers are highly permeable.

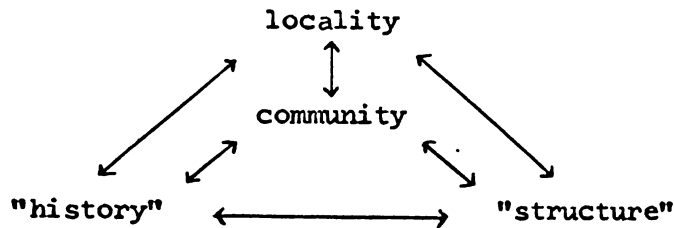
Social structure then can be seen as not being at odds with the other items in the conceptual scheme. It is rather in the ideas of social structure that we are first interested, and in being so, we are retaining the perspective that society is only comprehens^{ible} fully as a structure of concepts which delineate social relations. It is the subtle and complex interplay between such objectively ascertainable things as "places" or "people doing things" and ideas, feelings, valuations and so forth about these things which is sociologically problematical.

If the foregoing discussion is accepted it seems to be reasonable to suggest that the conceptual scheme outlined for the sociology of place is isomorphic with the data of actual experiences, that it is concerned with the interrelation between concrete things and socially constructed ideas about them, that by expressing reciprocal relations between its component items it reduces the risk of distortion of emphasis, and that it leads to the formation of interesting and useful questions. The scheme does not give rise to predictions about the consequences of the relationships between its parts; this is not its purpose. It is intended to order relevant parts of the universe of direct experience in order to allow us to understand phenomena, by attending to their relevant aspects. This is a very subdued form of phenomenology and is subject to the general caveat that there may be unlooked for features from which the scheme might potentially deflect attention. It is not merely a matter of good field technique, that is implied, it is the first principle that all the data and their categories cannot be known in advance. Nevertheless the scheme does hold enquiry within manageable limits and is potentially at least capable of extension to more concrete circumstances.

Is it possible to find more specific applications for this scheme? One which is tempting because the research which stimulated this enquiry was first carried out in a small town, the classical venue for the "community study" is the notion of "community" itself. "Community" is also worth an attempt of this kind since it has been a matter of some controversy in the literature and is now commonly regarded as not having satisfactory empirical dimensions. In this study it has been maintained with fair consistency that "a community" is always spatially locatable and has as its first characteristic a local situation and a concept on

the part of its residents. In these terms then it seems possible to substitute within the general conceptual scheme of place as follows:

CULTURE



By "locality" is meant the assemblage of milieu which are regarded by local people as constituting the territory of their community; by "history" is meant the peculiar series of local events which start with the founding of the community, and by "structure" is meant the groups and their relationships that compose the population. Like the more general model this one must be seen as caught within an historical epoch the forces and events of which are outside local control. Culture, seen in the general model as an inscribed circle might be seen here as escribed, that is enclosing the community and common to its larger societal setting. However, to be more complete, the model should allow for cases in which the local culture is not simply a variant or sub-culture of the national societal culture but is quite distinct as might be the case of an ethnic immigrant community living in ghetto conditions, or one which is much isolated as some tribal communities are.

The community can be analysed in terms of its place, history or structural aspects, but such an analysis will eventually have to deal with the other and related aspects if a full account is what is sought. There seems to be no way in which the fact of interrelation can be

avoided. To give some content to the terms listed in the diagram is to highlight some of the potentially interesting problems.

- Locality:** locality includes both the natural and man made physical locations of the community. (environment and habitat.) Conceptions of territory, its uses, the milieu assemblage, the valuations, norms, and social conceptualisations used in regard to locality.
- "History":** "history" includes those past events and occurrences to which local people attach importance and of which they give accounts, it includes also the documentary records, newspapers, church and school registers, minutes, cemetery headstones, as well as the knowledge of local 'wise men', genealogists and the like.
- Structure:** includes the relationships of persons and groups that are seen as significant locally. Unlike social structure, which has to be deduced from complex sources of societal information, local structure is usually complex and made more so by affective and ideological features or "folk knowledge" which are not necessarily related to national or societal conceptual schemes.

As the diagram suggests each of these three is related reciprocally to the other two. Structure for example is related to history and to locality in such matters as the dominance and persistence of certain families and groups (the old-settler-families in Harbourtown for example) and in the countervailing pressures of other groups. The isomorphic character of this model with the components of actual communities has already been evidenced but the question remains as to whether this special sense of the idea of community is useful - usefulness being estimated by the extent of which it gives rise to or organises enquiry.

A defence of it might be made on the following grounds:

1. Social life is locally and specially lived - the scheme orients enquiry toward the local and special while maintaining the links with the societal and general aspects of social life.

2. The model shows community as generated through the actions carried ^{on} in virtue of each of the three interacting categories and it shows the community thus emergent as exerting control over the categories outlined. History, structure and locality thus constitute the empirical reality of the community and they also constitute conceptual analytical categories which permit community analysis. They do not embrace all the various aspects of community life, religion, economy, political action, kinship and so on, but they imply them and mean that they must be taken into account.
3. The model carries within it the capacity for direct theoretical manipulation for purposes of further exploration. For example, for a given case, Harbourtown might be a case in point, changes can be predicated and problems for exploration predicted. What happens, for example, if there is a rapid population increase? What were the consequences of successive migration waves in the nineteenth century; what are the effects of economic changes on a societal scale; how does change in another part of the ecosystem, e.g. the spread of the conurbation, affect the locality; what are the consequences of environmental changes upon habitat? The model permits us to interrogate the empirical existent as "the community" and to create systems of related hypotheses for further research.

Further Developments.

It would, clearly, be ludicrous to assert that social reality had three and only three dimensions. That is not what is maintained here, what is maintained however, is that no phenomenon suspected of being social can be understood without taking these dimensions into account, they are, if you will, the primitive elements of social reality, which

are operative in the particular idiom of a human group, a culture. It may be that this is too simple a scheme, it does not claim to rise above the "primitive" level, it may be that it is trite, yet if so it is not expressed in the places one would expect to find it, introductory texts in sociology and community studies. It seems then that it is as necessary to explain what the scheme cannot do, as well as what it can.

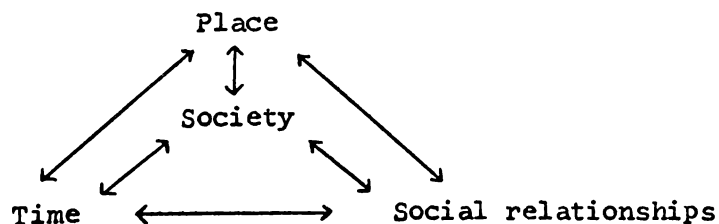
Pervading these discussions is the proposition that social reality is a paradox, it is in the mind of a typical person in a given society, but it is also outside his comprehension in its totality, as Durkheim asserts, and "in" the collectivity - society exists constraining and coercing its members, yet it is also emergent, the product of their thinking, acting and working together in the world of everyday life. Society is a "thing", it has cognisable and undeniable existence, yet it is also a figment, an extrapolation from many actions, words, documents and so forth, never an existent apart from its members minds, words and actions, nevertheless its structures persist in a durable form.

The attempt therefore to resolve some of these paradoxes with a theory, a conceptual scheme or model (the choice of term depends on the degree to which a cast of science is being given to the discussion) results in yet another paradox, a static representation of a dynamic phenomenon which, for all its dynamism, has nevertheless the quality of persistence and permanence in its relationships. Othello is presented in different idioms and at different times, in modern dress or esperanto it remains Othello - the plot summary, producer's notes and cast list is the model which permits us to know what this Othello is characterised by, but it does not prescribe the content or what we will make of the play. It is a means, one means, to the understanding of the

events before our eyes.

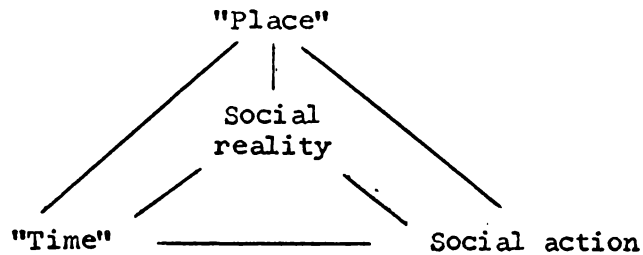
What the model does not do, then is show us its own transformations. When the "primitive" model noted above is taken from having society as its central problematic focus, to having "community" placed in the centre of the triangle it is not because there is an implicit logic in the model, it is our suspicion that it may work to show us something about the empirical reality which ordinary people call "the community". If we were to labour at model building so that "community" were as it were the outcome of a chain of reasoning which led us to say "aha, these equations predict the existence of something which we will designate x - now let us go out and see whether it is there . . ." we should probably spend a lifetime over it. The test of the model is whether it will "interrogate phenomenal reality" and yield answers which make sense to moderately sensible people.

The first attempt was simply to ask whether "society" as people commonly use the term is analysable by the means shown - it is - though the ontological status of what is examined in this case is debatable. The crude verities of common usage, the "primitive elements" were:



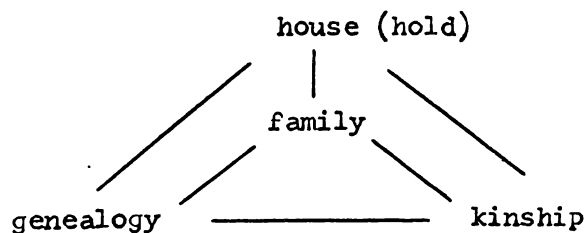
but any consideration which moves beyond these terms as they are used in the common sense world of everyday life to put them into the language of the social scientist leads us to change the order of the thought. Place becomes not simply a spatial location, but one with special

ideational qualities, Time is no longer the face of the clock, and Social relationship's no longer ordinary meetings and exchanges between people. The problematic focus becomes "social reality" and the paradigm is now expressed as:



where "Place" is the total socially cognised physical milieu, "Time" is the cultural tradition, social action is the purposive and goal oriented action of a collectivity, and "social reality" the stock of socially structured ideas.

This process which I trust retains the theme of the primitive elements, that is, that there is not merely an intuitive relationship between Time and "Time" but a redefinition which retains the order of abstraction between Time and the other parts of the model, was applied to community. It does not seem in principle improper to go to a still more concrete level - if the family is taken (in its community setting) to be a problematic focus then:



become the interesting dimensions, where household becomes the coresident "family" group, genealogy, that is to say descent and its reckoning becomes the time dimension, and kinship and affinity, i.e. filiation - the specific structural features which are of interest.

Further examples could be produced scanning the variety of community settings. At this level the focus is that of spatially located social action, it relates to the analysis of the parts, locally recognised, named or pointed to, but not in isolation, for it is the interconnection of part with part in a socially constructed ecosystem that is the real focus of attention. To return once again to paradox, the community parts can only be isolated because they constitute an inseparable whole.

. . .

The sociology of place as it has been briefly and tentatively outlined here is an analysis of the material and dimensionable world. Its focus is 'places', places from the old wharf in Harbourn town, to Chartres, Stonehenge are in some sense artefacts. As we have seen the sociology of place does not stop at the man made environment, but it includes that part which is given, which exists and by its nature can't be modified at its source by man, or not much. Yet it has also been maintained here that the "natural" environment is also an artefact. It is not worked upon with hands and tools, but it is worked upon by the ideas and valuations of the group. The artefactual nature of place therefore constitutes a further area of problematic consideration.

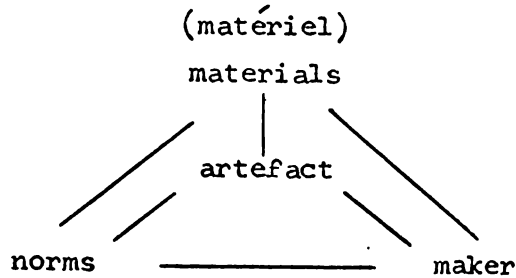
In the sociology of place the artefactual nature of place is treated as, normally, the social construction of place. We are not concerned about how a place is built, whether of brick or timber, in what architectural mode, or even, much about its size, the village church and a cathedral are places about which religious traditions and congregants centre in a complex interactive set. It seems not improper to look upon such places as filling an ecological niche; they have been explained

and understood sociologically when the various dimensions discussed above have been dealt with.

Yet such an approach still leaves the mind unsatisfied. A cathedral is not a village church, Chartres is not Harbourtown Catholic church writ large, nor for that matter is one of the Colonial Gothic cathedrals. The contrast would be easily enough comprehended if it were always at that scale. St Paul's has meaning for New Zealanders even though most have never seen it, such valuations and ideas are not hard to detect. But there are other and less easily discernible distinctions within the artefactual universe. Houses for example, that by objective measures ought to be the same in valuation are not, and the social characteristics which have been so much weighted here go only part of the way to explaining the difference.

It is probable that the artefact level then is a further aspect to be considered in the analysis of place. In the case of the built habitat of humans the processes involved are those of the selection of materials, the kind of design, functional requirements, social signification, technical norms, expressive valuations and the like. Already a complex area has been opened up, but it is one for which discussion must be reserved.

In a preliminary way however we can note that to be concerned strictly with the artefactual analysis of place as a residual means of understanding it, means that a fair amount of the explanatory work has been done already under the wider enquiry. In the most general terms thus we are concerned, in analysing the artefact, with the artefact itself, a maker, materials, and norms.



In this three part model as formerly, we are also concerned with culture as the medium within which artefacts are made, but we are here concerned with a narrow and specific aspect of culture.

Matériel is all those material goods, objects, tools of trade and the like which go into the manufacture of an artefact, the maker is any person or group engaged in the production of the given artefact. 'Norms' refers not only to the technical rules for making the artefact, but the specific kinds of valuational schemes which are employed in controlling the production of the artefact.

As in the previous models an equality of interaction is assumed, as well as a reciprocity and symmetrical exchange between the categories of the model and its focal object. The artefact thus influences the matériel, the maker and the norms that are relevant to its production. It is not difficult to see that each of these parts within the model is also connectable to other aspects of the social setting - materials relate to economic systems, the maker to social structure and norms to the meaning systems of the society. Artefactual considerations therefore can be seen to be intimately connected with the other aspects of the sociology of place though they can be conceptually and analytically separated from them.

The analytical consequences are clear enough insofar as the consideration of the artefactual level can be held to be a further step towards the exhaustion of the sociological analysis of place. There is however a legitimate place for the consideration of the sociology of artefacts.

As Barker and Wright showed in including in their analysis "behaviour objects" - the ceremonial or instrumental objects which have a place within a particular behaviour setting - artefacts play a part in the behavioural sequence which makes them part of it. The sociological considerations however are more likely to be those which relate artefacts to the societal context, to structural motifs, rather than to the setting per se. Artefacts, whether small and portable or large parts of the habitat are meaning bearers. At this level milieux have already been analysed, but there is also a good case for considering them in the general continuum of artefacts of the same class. Thus churches, houses, headstones, parks and so forth can be analysed as individual artefacts and they can be compared as artefacts with others of the same kind. Two houses for example, one with kauri floors and framing, the other with treated pine and hardiflex sheathing, can stand in the same street, have approximately the same value at sale, and be occupied by people of identical class, but nevertheless, not be equal. Destruction of the pinus house will not be regarded with regret, of the kauri house may be considered a 'tragedy'. It is at the artefactual level that the discrimination would be made in this rather improbable example.

Several issues have been raised by the "artefactual level" of analysis:

- (i) the analysis of artefacts per se;
- (ii) the societal and social situation of the artefact;
- (iii) the comparison of artefacts;
- (iv) the behavioural aspects of artefact use;
- (v) the relationship of artefacts to valuations and norms.

Though each of these aspects of artefact analysis could be regarded as a study in itself, each is involved in the sociology of place. Though

a searching enquiry into the form, function, distribution and evolution of particular artefact types is not called for, it is not easy to escape from knowing something about these things. The test is not so much whether the artefact can or should be analysed fully along these lines, as the extent to which these elements are part of the stock of knowledge at hand. Occasionally it is necessary to set such an item against the available "objective knowledge" in order to discover the extent to which the features attributed to the artefact are due to local cultural variations, myths and so on.

As soon as the enquiry moves to this level it becomes necessary to confine it strictly within the sociological framework, however, it is, in community studies seldom a simple matter to do this. In fact the field sociologist can hardly escape knowing if only superficially, technological aspects of the artefact universe (some of which are part of his stock of knowledge in any case) and he must also have an awareness of the other issues in regard to artefacts that have been mentioned above. There is no possibility of restricting enquiry to the "societal and social situation" issue, without consciously ignoring items of the stock of knowledge which will assert themselves or be thrust into prominence at particular points or in particular situations.

The suggestion of a model which focusses attention on the artefactual level of place requires that the sociologist have an intelligent sensitivity to the varieties of response to artefacts which are part of everyday life. There is simply no way in which the observer can say beforehand what will be the most significant aspect of artefactual analysis. Situations change; among a group of motorbike enthusiasts the technology of motorcycling is essential knowledge and much more besides; in dealing with the valuation both natural and man made parts

of a human settlement, equally important artefactual knowledge may be involved. The model therefore does no more than direct attention in what may be presumed to be profitable directions, in order to go further the sociologist himself must judge whether or not it is worthwhile to do so. The touchstone again must depend on the direct indications which come from the common stock of knowledge.

The recourse to the artefact as a prime datum leads in directions which fall outside the sociology of place, yet are not irrelevant to it, for it is at this level that the sociology of place and the sociology of art find a common focus. The possibilities of such a connection will be considered in the final chapter, but the fact remains that in considering the artefactual level in regard to place the expressive as well as the instrumental functions of place must be considered. Harbourtown consists of a not very impressive collection of houses, streets, parks and public buildings - there is nothing which takes the eye as being particularly unusual when Harbourtown is compared with any number of other New Zealand small towns. Such charm as it has comes from the fact that it represents a more leisured and spacious time, and that its citizens have not seen it as necessary to change things much. Yet from the point of view of Harbourtowners, the modest houses and buildings, the gardens, monuments, churches and beaches are all part of the expressive life of their inhabitants. Much of this expressive side of things is locked in the nature of the artefact itself - and it is for this reason that houses are painted, gardens cultivated, and plans made for "tidying up" and "improving" the public habitat generally. For similar reasons, places viewed as artefacts, are graded in relation to their status as expressive objects. No one expects much of factory premises, but there is a tendency for

Harbourtowners to decry the presence of the stockyards in the middle of the town as an example of misplaced instrumentality. In the consideration of the expressive or instrumental aspects of artefacts, and the two are commonly combined, it is likely that we will find an important source of feedback to the evaluational aspects of place. In this way as well as in others, the artefact level is integrated with the sociology of place.

2. Summary and Conclusion

It has been contended here that place is a Durkheimian social fact and that the sociology of place therefore constitutes a distinctive set of problems and approaches for sociology. In order to consider the data relating to place a conceptual scheme embodying the primary categories of time, place and social action was developed and this scheme was explored to suggest its capacity for development in connection with substantive problems of the sociology of place. It has been maintained that this scheme does not fundamentally conflict with the phenomenologically oriented position suggested earlier in the essay.

In considering the analysis of place, it was suggested that the understanding of place was not satisfied in all cases by the results of considering the time, place and social action models, but that there was a further level of facticity which was referred to as the artefactual level. The discussion of places as artefacts either in the sense of being built or physically modified, or of being worked upon as ideational constructs led to a consideration of other aspects of them. These were in particular related to their material nature, the norms controlling their construction, and the groups and individuals involved

in their manufacture. As well it was suggested that the instrumental and expressive aspects of artefacts related them directly back into the more general evaluational schemes related to place. Finally it was suggested that there was a common focus to be found between the sociology of place and the sociology of art, in the consideration of the expressive aspects of place though this theme was left for later development.

At various points in this thesis care has been taken to distinguish social and psychological phenomena and the general view taken has been that while the one implies the other they remain separate universes of discourse with distinctive explanatory themes. This is also applicable to the sociological thinking that takes place as its object. While it is usual however for sociological models to include such matters as the impinging of historical, economic, political and other influences upon the phenomena under consideration, little or no attention is given to individual ways of responding to the phenomenon in question. Though there is no intention to go into this complex field here, it seems that in the sociology of place, perhaps more than in the conventionally central fields of sociology, there is a greater need to take account of a critical psychology. In fact work has already been done upon this - the extensive literature by Barker and his associates on ecological psychology has been cited often, there is the analysis of personal distance in physical settings advanced by Edward T. Hall, the *ekistics* of Theodoris Doxiadis, and the insights developed by architects, planners and social critics as various as the developers of the new towns, as Le Corbusier and Percival and Paul Goodman's *and Tchermayeff*. It remains for this wide and various literature and experiment to be analysed and integrated with the sociology of place - a programme not even, so far, delineated.

Notes and References

CHAPTER VIII

1. Durkheim 1964, 64. ...social solidarity is a completely moral phenomenon which, taken by itself, does not lend itself to exact observation nor indeed to measurement. To proceed to this classification and this comparison we must substitute for this internal fact which escapes us an external index which symbolises it and study the former in the light of the latter.

This visible symbol is law.

and...

1952, 51. The suicide rate is therefore a factual order, unified and definite... In short these statistical data express the suicidal tendency with which each society is collectively afflicted.

2. cf Firth 1951
3. cf Oppenheim 1973
4. Two areas in Lower Hutt, near Wellington. Struggletown was a local nickname for a working class area, Moera.
5. Mair, in Gould 1965.
6. Willer 1967, 37-52.

CHAPTER IX

The Sociology of Place and the Problem of Application

1. The problem of Application

A theme stemming from the earliest sociological writing is the presumption that sociological knowledge must eventually have applications or uses for the improvement of society. Durkheim in Suicide devotes the final section of his book to "Practical Consequences" and developed there the syndicalist proposals contained in the Introduction to the second edition of Division of Labour in Society. Indeed, Durkheim maintains in Rules, that until the development of sociology there was no means by which control could be exerted over social directions. His is a justification for a scientific Morality, which, in the nineteenth century was all of a piece with the rationalism which Durkheim proclaims as specifically French ¹.

A modern Durkheimian, Robert Nisbet, is more cautious but his position is still orthodoxly "scientific":

Sociology is one of the basic sciences It is in the applied disciplines - medicine for the biological sciences, public administration and social work among the social sciences - that the specialised and necessarily limited results of the several basic sciences are brought together and then focussed on specific practical or social problems. ²

The difference now is that the role of the sociologist is to create new knowledge, others will bring it to bear upon concrete problems.

Convincing though this account may sound, it seems that the analogy between biology-medicine and sociology-social work is neither close nor

accurate. It is the case that the results of "pure" biological research, that is, research directed at scientific problems, is converted into applied results - in pharmacology and the various related medical disciplines, but each of these is also a research area in its own right, and the discoveries which are made within each cross fertilise in the research and application process. Nisbet's Olympian model appears to be over simple.

In sociology the links between "pure" and "applied" are even more slender. If there are specific sociological "discoveries" which are converted into "treatments" then it is very hard to call even one to mind and harder still to think of one in which the sociological predictions, if any, were of such a nature that the application to x of procedure y brought about unequivocally result z. Robert K. Merton, following an early suggestion of Durkheim's, codified the notion of manifest and latent function and in doing so abolished the possibility of anything but a probabilistic result for sociological prescription. If it is objected that probability is all that hard scientists have also, the reply must be (i) the probabilistic model for sociologists operates at much lower levels of probability than that of those scientists who can produce physical phenomena, (ii) its calculus is incomplete because though there may be ways of predicting the manifest functions (consequences) $z_1 z_2 \dots z_n$, there is no way of predicting latent functions for the reason that they are latent. Either we therefore throw away latent function as an idea - which, given the nature of human experience seems not to be justified, or we throw away application, which seems to be embarrassing.

The dilemma is solved by some modern sociologists in other ways. The two principal proposals may be called reflexive sociology and radical sociology. The reflexivist position, if it may be so called,

is exemplified by Alvin Gouldner. At its base Gouldner's position is that sociologists must introspect, must consider their own position from outside, as it were, "to acquire the ingrained habit of viewing our own beliefs as we now view those held by others" ³. It is a call for a modicum of intellectual modesty coupled with a frank acknowledgement of the values to which the sociologist commits himself. The problem is not whether sociology can bring about results, but of the relationship between the sociologist and the people studied. In the event, all sociology is applied - how can it be otherwise when the value commitment of the sociologist is a central datum and when the commitment to objectivity and to testing truth claims is disallowed as a value commitment of other than the most naive kind.

Reflexive sociology offers one way through the problem of application, but it does it only through the commitment of the sociologist. It is scarcely debatable that there is a powerful influence from the values of the commissioning body where sociological research is concerned, but the problem of the unintended consequences of social action is still not dealt with. Value commitments will not solve this problem.

Humanistic or reflexive sociology varies in its rigour from the sort of tender-mindedness exemplified in the following quotation:

Sociology needs an alternative to the "despairing debunkers" who focus exclusively on the dark side of man and the repressive nature of society, and ignore human possibilities and potentials in their preoccupation with pathology, cynicism and hopelessness.

4

to the more tough-minded approach of Gouldner. Both are in some sense a cri de coeur asking for a more sensitive sociology, though there is an undercurrent of anti-intellectualism disturbingly present in their writing. With Gouldner however there is a shading off into

the concerns of activism. The position is put by Deutsch and Howard ⁵ as that of "taking sides" - their position is derived from C. Wright Mills, though its intellectual forbear might be critical of the position, in particular of its espousal of a kind of moral simplisticism which seems alien to Mills. The American radical seeks application of his sociological insight or indeed the acquisition of that insight, through involvement. He wants to be on the battle-line fearlessly (and simplistically) demanding "which side are you on?". Not for him cool detachment or the attempt to reckon consequences - "radical" equals "good" and thus as omelettes are not made without breaking eggs, the future will not be made without shedding blood even if it is only that of fellow academics.

Neither reflexive nor radical sociology seem to have much to do with application as it was envisaged in Nisbet's essay. Rather these positions reflect the historical period in which they emerged. Characterised by the anger and disillusionment of alienated and impotent liberals of the upper middle class, they seem to disavow the intellectual problem, namely that society is complex, by affirming either that a pure heart or busy hands - indeed the one implies the other - are sociology in action. To do or think otherwise is to be a cynical nay-sayer or a reactionary.

The problem of application is thus not to be comprehended readily by the approach suggested above, whatever the comforts and results they may bring, it appears that a more pedestrian approach is unavoidable. We may reach this by considering the steps that are necessary to take a "pure" sociological discovery to the level of a scheme "on the ground" - these, in first approximation, are:

- (i) translation
- (ii) adoption
- (iii) the planned experiment
- (iv) evaluation.

The first step, translation, involves the reduction of the technical language and argument to its barest essentials. In other words the theoretical formulations of research must be converted into statements capable of being given a content by a non-sociologist and these statements should also permit to say what actions should (in terms of his scheme) be taken. Thus it is a necessity to be able to state for a group who must carry out the application say, nurses, community workers, planning staff, what phenomena are to be examined, how and with what apparatus.

The prescription looks in itself not impossible of realisation but it is more difficult than is immediately apparent. Two pre-requisites exist, the first is that the level of generality of the proposed solution to the problem and of the problem itself must be defined. If for example, the problem is, in the context of the discussion, a large scale problem such as that of the underachievement of Maori school children, the programme for its solution is likely to be one of a major kind of societal change⁶. For it is clear that the change sought relies upon structural changes in society. If we consciously seek to accelerate the processes by which Maori children enter the upper levels of the school system we must also try to guess at the unanticipated consequences of this action or to rectify them as they arise.

To this we must oppose the "micro" problem and its solution. In this case we are concerned not with the society-wide problem but with the changes to be sought at the most basic level, in a particular

immigrant neighbourhood perhaps, or a factory or school. The micro problem is local and specific with its own special features deriving from the social location of the people involved in it. It is not in principle unlikely that there can be some generalisability of the sociological application that is found to work in the particular situation, but that is not what is or should be sought for. In general successful social action programmes do not readily transplant.

The presumptions of macro sociological application is that sociology can be translated into social policy. Applied sociology then becomes the process of building sociological principles into social policy which in its turn is created and implemented by the state or some other institutional authority. If the matter is medical policy for example, the appropriate sociological principle might be that social location determines not only access to but the quality of services such as education, medical aid, housing, transport and so on. Appropriate research would be cited to substantiate this and the necessary extrapolations made in regard to medicine. The sociological contribution would probably go further and would state the cultural characteristics and other complications such as the group's images of medicine and medical practice, institutional valuations, the presence of competing interpretations such as religious ones of medical phenomena.

The processes of translation in such a case would consist of creating medical policy recommendations which were based upon the attempt to change the situation, to extend medical services with a greater degree of equality and to eliminate the differences in quality. In this process a border has been unnoticeably but irrevocably crossed. It is the border between sociologically derived principles and morally

normative ones. Should medical services be made more equally available? Should the quality of medical service be made equal between fee paying and "non-paying" patients? The answers to these questions can be phrased in terms of some prior system of values only - they are not derivable from sociological information though a case might be made for an economic analysis of costs and benefits. Whether one conceives justice to be fairness, as John Rawls ⁷ does and proceeds from that position to formulate policy, there seems to be no way in which a sociological principle can rescue the policy maker from the use of an intuitional judgement. The sociological analysis can draw attention to contingencies that might otherwise pass unnoticed and can perhaps make the policies more sensitive; it can raise the question of unanticipated (but not unanticipatable) consequences and suggest means of correcting policy for them ⁸.

Social policy it seems cannot be derived from sociological principles nor from any others in social science. Such a view seems harsh and pessimistic; it merely asserts the role of social science as being a further source of data on which wise judgements can be based. These judgements spring from notions of what constitutes justice, that is, from societal valuations which, while they may be the product of a particular class consciousness (bourgeois consciousness) do not go unchallenged, or undiscussed.

. . .

If macro applications resolve themselves into negotiations with the policy making and enforcing authority which are ultimately more or less in tune with the most generalised societal concepts of justice

(sometimes they reject these concepts, as for example when the punishment of criminals is liberalised) then the radicals are right, the change they insist upon and base on the belief that their version of social reality is correct and not contaminated by bourgeois ideology, can only be brought about, as I noted earlier, by structural change. The logic of such a position despite protests to the contrary such as those of Blackburn (see note 8) is that the radical social scientist is the bearer of the truth that sets the masses free from the shackles of false consciousness. As such his analysis is theology, it converts the open society into one where the truth brooks no opposition but must bear down opposing views.

Social policy is not powerless to bring about change but it is likely that while it may be used to initiate change and to some extent control its pace and direction, it does so only when it is seen not to contradict widely distributed societal valuations. This is true at any rate for open societies where governmental institutions are ultimately accountable for their actions. However, the price that is paid for this high degree, potentially of societal control over policy is that the position of the sociologist as the practitioner of an applied science, is limited to advocacy, unless, of course, he accepts the valuational scheme, goals, and ideology of a particular group or institution. As Coe suggests with regard to medicine, this distinction places sociology at the service of institutional goals, and virtually abolishes the role of sociological enquiry as being critical or debunking⁹.

Does the micro sociological scale offer a better scope for applied sociology? Some of the structures which apply to policy apply also at this level. The following may be noted:

1. Sociological enquiry is seen to be in the service of particular interests.
2. Conflicts with the valuational schemes or criticisms of the sponsoring body may be seen as invalidating the results.
3. Though sociological recommendations may form the basis of the groups' policy, there is usually little comprehension of the complexity and subtlety of outcomes.

If these problems can be overcome it might be argued, it should be the case that sociological proposals would cumulate, that out of piecemeal change structural change arises - quantitative changes, by some process not yet described, transmuted into qualitative change. By way of comment it might be added that it may be so. In the event change that actually shows the possibility of altering the established order usually affects power, interest groups or institutional goals. Experience suggests that most groups seeking sociological advice are interested in either simple plans which will show them how to overcome their incompetence, or else confirmation of their existing attitudes.

Micro-scale applications seem to run up against problems not altogether different from those of macro-scale plans; and we are forced to the melancholy conclusion that the problems of applying sociological ideas are very great and that their chances of success are fairly small. Two possibilities remain however; those of understanding and of advocacy.

The first named is, of course, fundamental to the discipline, understanding and accounting for social phenomena extends the range of available knowledge on which social perceptions of possible courses

of action or policy-making can be built. It is in this area that the procedures outlined at the beginning of this chapter become important but the second possibility requires a different approach entirely. The role of advocate is by no means foreign to the sociological tradition but it has rarely merited attention or explanation from sociologists themselves. Advocacy is something more than the advisory role which the previous discussion suggests to be all that the sociologist may hope for, and it is considerably less than that of revolutionary cadre, the role in which radicals see themselves. The role of advocate is that of counsellor, interpreter and "learned friend", its arts are those of explanation, criticism, persuasion and strategy; it is a fundamental role for the intellectual in a democratic society for in such societies intellect does not automatically carry authority, on the contrary as is amply demonstrated by the admiration for the practical, theoretical and direct man as opposed to the subtle, equivocating and critical one, the tendency of democracies is to require their intellectuals to demonstrate that they can do something other than think, in so far as they pay any attention to them at all.

Sociological advocacy is the art of applying sociological insights, including those gained by research, to specific problems. It contains two aspects, the view and the client. The sociologist as advocate presses the case for a particular view on behalf of a particular client and he does so with the clear apprehension that the claim to the truth for which he is advocate must convince not only administrators, policy-makers or the public, but also his academic colleagues. It will have been selected according to a judgement of value (few sociologists are likely to be advocates for a 'return to the cat' or for greater secrecy in government) but the view will also be sustainable on the basis of

evidence, and will be directly traceable to its origins in sociological thought or research.

The client for whom the sociologist may act as advocate may be in the first place the sociological profession. There is much evidence to show that in New Zealand at national and local level there is a degree of sociological ignorance which is matched only by the degree of psychological thick headedness. Though psychologists have been accepted in their role as "straighteners" or technicians of individual consciousness in prisons, the education system and to a lesser extent in industry and medicine, there is much less of a chance for the sociologists to find a role. The sociologist therefore, like the psychologist, though with a trifle more difficulty, is forced to argue for the relevance of his professional insight, before he may begin to represent the interests of a group. Like the psychologist of course he is more acceptable as a straightener than as a critic and there are some signs at least that, providing the results are sufficiently uncontroversial, sociological research may sometimes be sponsored ¹⁰.

Sociological advocacy remains dangerously introverted then, for the meantime, though there may be reason to hope that it may not remain so indefinitely. If the extent to which economists, and, in connection with the ecological movement, natural scientists have become advocates is anything to go by there is a possibility that sociologists too may be able to apply their particular knowledge, especially as other scientists become aware of the incapacity of their own disciplines to deal with the social aspects of their problem areas. The groups for which sociological advocacy may be employed however, are likely to be the poor, the powerless, the voiceless and the ethnic minorities - it might be suggested that the rich, powerful and articulate, have their

advocates in so far as they need them, and that their utilisation of sociology as applied science will be much more of the nature of the engineering of consent.

Whether the sociologist acts as the independent creator of new knowledge ("pure" sociology) or whether he acts as advocate in a particular cause, the problem of translation remains. At first sight translation appears to be a technical act in which the significant features are stripped of their encumbrances of data and argument and are placed at the disposal of the user or used as the basis for specific recommendations, yet there is more to translation than this view would allow, as the foregoing discussion has demonstrated. The underlying problem is that of crossing the boundary from one finite universe of meaning to another, one that in the sociological case, is rendered the more complex by the fact that sociology is deceptively like ordinary discourse in its usages, terminology and data. As anyone who has taught undergraduate students knows, the common misconception leads to the repeated use of unmediated personal experience as evidence. Such experience, in places other than the undergraduate lecture hall, is frequently taken to be the knock down refutation of the sociological position.

It is not easy to define rules for translation. The universes of meaning, sociology and, for example, public administration may overlap widely and in consequence have relatively few difficulties, those that differ a good deal such as those between the everyday consciousness of medical practitioners and sociologists, but which appear to overlap constitute far greater difficulties. In cases where there is an actual conflict between the sociological universe of meaning and that of the group, as is the case with certain ideologically committed groups, such as religious sects and political organisations, no trans-

lation may be possible. The point is that translation is not a mechanical process, it is a negotiated one, and one in which the common presumptions of either universe of meaning have usually to be explored by each group. The conclusion is an interpretation of the sociological finding by the recipient group, the details of which must be haggled over by the sociologist until he is satisfied that he has been understood.

Adoption, the second phase of the application of any sociological finding, consists of the acceptance of the negotiated interpretation as constituting the basis for further action. In the process of translating the sociological information into prescriptions for action the selection of appropriate lines of action emerges. The blurred area between translation and selection is the point at which adoption is emergent, it is the point also at which advocacy may be called upon or given its particular place in the process.

Supposing that sociological findings have been adequately translated and adopted, it follows that applications must be tested and evaluated. For this reason it seems that any applied sociology must incorporate within it means of checking the effectiveness of the application. However, there is seldom time to go through the lengthy process of experiment and evaluation before bringing the full scheme into operation, and it is not improbable in any case, that an experiment will yield only partial results or results that are equivocal, or ones where only marginal advantages are shown to exist. In the end the decision to proceed may well have to be based on a moral judgement. An example is to be seen in the enactment of the Criminal Justice (Number 2) Amendment Bill 1974 which provides for the automatic suppression of the name of an accused person in a lower court hearing subject to certain conditions. The nature of the sociological evidence which

led to the enactment of this measure has not been made public and it may well be that there is none. One would expect, however, that there would be no, or only a low positive correlation between suppression of name and likelihood of re-offence. In other words suppression is unlikely either to deter or to encourage crime, or to be considered as implicated either in prevention or re-offence. This being so the decision to maintain or alter the legislation should be based upon a moral concept, an attempt to consider the benefits to society and the benefits to the offender, and to decide which should be prior under given circumstances. Though there is nothing to prevent an analysis of the outcomes of the policy apart from a government unwillingness to have its policies scrutinised, this seems to be pre-eminently the kind of case where applied sociology would run up against the problem of equivocal results if the strategy of experiment and evaluation had been adopted, and where advocacy would once more be called upon.

The phases of experiment and evaluation as pre-tests for an applied system of social action may not be either practical or desirable given that the condition for which a solution is being sought is already urgent, but the case of "before and after" evaluation should never be omitted. Essentially the applied sociologist must develop a means of making "in course corrections" which will be a response to evaluation based on symptomatic data, taken at selected points. There is no reason to wait for some potentially promising scheme, such as an attempt to get immigrant parents to take part in PTA activities, to blow itself to pieces because of an inadequate knowledge of social networks, when an early evaluation would have made this point clear. If there is a possibility of developing a cumulative applied sociology, then it must grow from the reports and evaluations

of such schemes as are put into operation, and from "pure" research which examines the wider sociological context of such action ¹¹.

I have not attempted to resolve the pure versus applied distinction in this section but, if one may say so without prejudice, it seems difficult to make other than an arbitrary division. All applied sociology implies "pure" sociology, and it is difficult to say with certainty that "applied" sociology can exist at all without a severe compromise of whatever claims to science it might have. In suggesting that the role of the sociologist as advocate is a way out of the problems of application, I am well aware that a number of important questions are begged, the advocacy position at least however rids the sociologist of the necessity to cling to a specific ideology as an insurance of his correctness, though of course, Marxists would condemn this assertion as an example of the very bourgeois ideology they complain of. Through advocacy I suggest, the sociologist might make piecemeal changes in his society, in doing so some conditions for some people may be made better - this may in the end be more productive than waiting for the revolution or the messiah to come.

2. Basic research in the Sociology of Place

It is necessary to develop some prescriptions for basic research (rather than 'pure') which will establish a datum line for other work. It is a logical extension of the thesis advanced in earlier chapters and in regard to the Midwest and Harbourn town materials, that this should begin with locatable entities which in some sense fulfill Arensberg and Kimball's prescription for the treatment of the "community as sample" ¹².

In the remainder of this section I wish to turn to a brief outline of some of the empirical problems in which the sociology of place might find application even assuming the constraints which have been discussed in the foregoing section. In the first place basic knowledge is lacking almost entirely, though it may be possible by the careful search of studies made for other purposes to bring together at least some of the data on which the sociology of place may begin to work. A too modest start has been made in the studies of Harbourtown but it may be possible with a certain economy of effort to make studies which will go further more quickly than could be achieved by intensive long term studies.

For these purposes, and from the point of view of the macro-scale, we may presume that New Zealand constitutes an ecosystem of great complexity but of a rather high level of homogeneity. From north to south the country is characterised by its large tracts of farmland and low level of urban places. Though there are local specialisations such as Harbourtown, or Kawerau or the special purpose communities dotted around the country, the mass of people live in urban places which have many features in common. Moving from north to south the major change in population structure, from which we may infer possible cultural changes and therefore differences in milieu assemblage, are ethnic. The northern part of the North Island is ethnically diverse as the rest of the country is not, but even so there are few towns even on the smallest scale which exhibit complete ethnic homogeneity.

This being so it seems possible to sample this ecosystem in such a way that the main areas of ecological diversity are tested for and the problematic areas located. It seems likely that we might find a selection such as the following, informative.

1. (i) urban centre
(ii) suburb
(iii) suburban fringe
2. rural small towns
3. rural districts without towns
4. areas of special variation, e.g. single purpose towns; communes and intentional communities; areas of relatively great population growth or decline; seasonal places.

It must be stressed that these categories are problematical because the differences in the milieu inventory that are likely to be found within them is presumed. It is not necessary to conduct an endless collection of type cases if the framework of basic data is adequately constructed. This is what is the essential for an applied sociology of place in which the aim is to carry out applied schemes. The building up of such a data base would also produce new results and allow for new theory construction. It must be emphasised however that analysis of this kind can produce only a schematic account and not a comprehensive one. Every place must be seen still as a unique intersection of time, environment and social structure - it is a social construct still imperfectly known and little understood and cannot be treated as though a few simple diagnostic features will do as the base on which to construct social policy.

3. The sociology of place and the planning of new communities

The above scheme while making a systematic analysis on a comparative basis of milieu inventories establishes the "natural" milieu assemblages for a number of differing types of New Zealand settlement.

Applied sociology of the type which has been discussed has as one of its characteristics the idea of deliberate intervention in the natural world, for the purposes of reaching valued goals. A primary area in which applications of a sociology of place might be seen as possible is that of town planning. At its smallest scale the sociology of place is theoretically capable of handling individual action settings as items in their own right, but in fact the analysis presumes external systematic connections and always turns toward the tracing of these.

The creation of new communities has its basis in a number of different sources, schemes for social improvement such as Owen's New Harmony and Lanark^s, the need to house workers as at Port Sunlight and Bournville, the provision of new urban environments, such as Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City, and the attempts to handle urban redevelopment through relocating populations as in the post war English New Towns, in the redevelopment of Rotterdam, and the development of Swedish new towns, such as Valingby.

Whether such communities are created for ideological, functional, political or other reasons, the problem remains that they do not pass through the process of gradual development that typifies natural communities. Accordingly, like Harlow and Welwyn, they tend to have an artificiality of flavour, a sterility of design which, in Britain at least, is reminiscent of a public park. The supply of well planned streets and desirable facilities and amenities, does not overcome the essentially pre-packaged flavour of the town - there is nothing for inventiveness to operate upon, no sense of meaning, or rather only of meaning at its shallowest level, and time seems not to change this - Welwyn, now more than sixty years old, remains as superficially pleasant and otherwise spiritless as it was in 1920. Nor is such a criticism

confined to the garden cities, it was not merely that they were transplanted Eastenders that made Wilmott and Young's informants complain about Greenleigh, it was that they were presented with a milieu assemblage, which in no way resembled the one they had left behind in Bethnal Green. From the densely packed row houses, (still little changed) pubs and small shops around the Bethnal Green High Road, they went to the well planned New Town to find that distances were greater, access to community support less the whole ecosystem attenuated by comparison with what they had been used to ¹³. Morrison ¹⁴, with rare insight, in writing his account of the Jago, pointed out the way in which the Jago functioned as a defensible environment for the people who lived there, it was a refuge for the petty thieves, derelicts, prostitutes and the rest, an enclave among the respectable poor of Bethnal Green, which when it was demolished and replaced could no longer be a home for them. The criticisms of New Zealand State House suburbs are similar, they too are thought of as arid colourless places with few amenities and not much to recommend them other than their provision of high quality housing.

Such criticisms point in two directions, the first is to the valuational scheme of the society and particularly of the critic and the second is toward sociological deficiencies in town planning. The former is of wider sociological interest since it suggests that the basis for social policy, particularly in regard to the provision of housing for the poor or lower income people, pays little attention to anything other than a "needs satisfaction" approach.

A phenomenological sociology on the other hand will aim at probing the meaning of such places for their inhabitants as well as the meaning systems of both planners and critics of these schemes. As the Bethnal

Green study shows, it is not that basic needs were not satisfied in Greenleigh, or even that social needs were neglected, on the contrary they were not, but that they could not take account of the meaning system which is built up by the complex interactions of social life, place and time.

To include these elements in social policy means that, rather than using a "needs satisfaction" model which operates mechanically, we must adopt a cultural model which can sensitively capture the nuances and complexities of place. In this respect the ecological investigation proposed above provides only the starting point, a device for translating to the non-sociologically trained planner, what the sociologist knows must consist of a complex investigation of taken-for-granted reality.

The second problem, that of town planning deficiencies, is of a different kind. In the absence of a sociology of place town planners have had to work intuitionally. They have tended thus to be attracted by models that relate obvious functions in what are regarded as 'desirable' ways - segregation of industry from housing for example - and to make intuitional judgements about the kind of social life that should be generated by the types of planning decisions which they made.

The authors of "How do you want to live?" remark that "there has been little understanding of the organic growth of towns, and this has resulted in the eruption of modern buildings in unsuitable places which destroyed established character and street patterns"¹⁵. But this comment (which is typical of others in the report) seems curiously pallid beside the critical commentary cited by the authors. Here for example is Reyner Banham:

The whole concept of planning . . . has gone cockeyed. What we have today represents a whole accumulation of good intentions. Planning is the only branch of knowledge purporting to be some kind of science which regards a plan as being fulfilled when it is merely completed: there's seldom any sort of check on whether the plan actually does what it was meant to do, and whether, if it does something different, this is for better or for the worse.

The result is that planning tends to lurch from one fashion to the other, with sudden revulsions setting in after equally sudden acceptances.

16

The chapter in the report is prefaced by some twenty-nine quotations, critical of different aspects of present planning practices.

Planning is indicted on grounds of insensitivity, ideologically motivated choices, lack of scientific rigour, and sociological ignorance. It is not improbable that each of these charges would eventually be shown to be only partially justified, there being as many "good" (i.e. generally approved) planning decisions as there are bad ones, nevertheless, it seems at least possible that a sociology of place addressed particularly to the problems of planning might at least reduce the guesswork and make for a more rational basis for planning than the assumptions which commonly underlie this activity. Even so the caveat needs to be entered that town planning is an activity that contains a large measure of imagination and sensibility. Many of the towns and villages shown in the Bell's book ¹⁷ have a degree of integration with their countryside, a sense of human scale, and a control of line, volume and perspective which is entirely lacking in modern plans. Mediocre people create mediocre artefacts - anyone who has spent a year or two in New Zealand could scarcely quibble - but if a town plan cannot be saved from mediocrity by an improved sociological insight it may at least be made more tolerable to its inhabitants and give them room to

make things more comfortable for themselves.

How should we proceed? In an earlier section of this chapter I suggested that an important task for the sociology of place was to sample the ecosystem and to build up from the samples, a library of existing type assemblages. This basic research is necessary to establish under controlled conditions the scope and variety of milieu assemblages. If the strict and rather constraining methodology suggested earlier is adopted then there is good reason to suppose that the samples gained will not be mere catalogues of milieux, but sensitive accounts of localised meaning systems. In the process of carrying out this basic research the sociology of place itself will develop both in the power and comprehensiveness of its models, or so one might expect.

The advantage of such a library from the planner's point of view is that he has access to a body of material on natural milieu assemblages which are culturally relevant, and an account of the principles which govern their formation. Natural assemblages are the product of the special socio-historical conditions under which culture develops, they cannot be reproduced, and should not since they are special adaptations. Curiosities such as the Victorian mansions to be seen in the older parts of New Zealand cities are unrepeatable now because of the changed social conditions; the sudden appearance of a two-storeyed "double T" house in a modern suburban Auckland street would be a matter for wonderment, even the most extravagant "executive" homes are about half the size, being related to the prodigious stamina of the lone female housework athlete, as against the four or five needed to run a Victorian house. It would not be possible, even if it were desirable, to reproduce Waipukurau at Rolleston, and it would be silly to try to build Cambridge or Munich there.

The next step then, is to tease out the principles and structures underlying natural milieu assemblages and to apply them to the task of building ecological models which can be used in the building of new towns. Artificial milieu assemblages have the advantage that they can be constructed in such ways as to give weight to one or other of the features of a natural assemblage, and it may even be possible, once the ecological models have been well enough developed to predict the consequences of such weighting. If for example "concourse" is the sought after developmental theme, then the principles of a natural assemblage such as Harbourtown allow us to extrapolate those milieu which favour concourse and those parts of the meaning system that relate to this activity. Almost certainly however, the attempt to follow such a direction will lead to changes, some of which have to take place in the formal structure and others which arise informally.

An example is the development of the Vulcan Lane pleasance off Auckland's Queen Street, the first hesitant step by Aucklanders into pedestrianisation, a principle adopted some thirty years before in England (in the rebuilding of Coventry) and not unknown elsewhere even in post automobile cities. The city paved over the short street built some benches and placed a couple of trees in pots, and mightily pleased with its daring, stood back to watch. The result was a conflict of value systems which would have been ludicrous had it not been also a working example of the sort of outrageous subordination of public to commercial interests which has come to typify development in Auckland. The street was rapidly discovered by young people who used it as a meeting place, sat (and sometimes lay) on the benches, sat against shopfronts and talked, and engaged in various other disapproved of activities. A young man was prosecuted for playing a flute for

money (though a commercial firm was permitted to broadcast muzak to all and sundry presumably as a free service), police were called to stop the use of improper language by passersby, shopkeepers complained of lost trade, and finally the city, panicked by its own rashness, removed the benches, only to replace them a year or so later with a type specially designed so that they could not be lain upon, nor for that matter sat upon comfortably.

This example is indicative of the extent to which planned functions of milieu will give place to unplanned and unanticipated ones, and the extent to which the valuational schemes of dominant groups can tend to constrain the development of ecological patterns. It is probable that milieu analysis could have predicted some of the consequences of pedestrianisation of an inner city precinct if the basic sociological research had existed and it is certain that the council could have been forewarned of the conflicts which were likely to ensue, but without changes of a formal kind, in antique by-laws framed in a wowsy past, the chances for the assimilation of the milieu into a natural ecological niche were slight. The cultural development of the city which might have been able to occur was largely lost.

The development of models which are extrapolated from empirical evidence leaves the chance that there will be too high a degree of detailed planning. What the exploratory Harbourn town study shows, as Barker's accounts of Yoredale and Midwest also indicate, is that the socio-cultural forces which are at work on the habitat, convert places into multiple function milieux. In Barker's terms multiple behaviour settings which may be quite distinct from one another are established. One of Barker's examples is the behavioural motifs which are set up

by children and adults for the courthouse lawn. In Barker's account children tend to see any open area as a place for active play, whereas adults discriminate much more carefully. In Harbourtown, some mention has been made as to the extent that pavements in the main street, shops, and even the carriageway itself are used as places for informal conversation, doing various bits of council or club business, and so on. It seems not at all unlikely that if that section of the main street were closed to traffic and pedestrianised that Harbourtowners would take it over as a major multiple function milieu.

Two principles seen to be involved from the planner's point of view, or rather a principle and its corollary; it is that, as unanticipated consequences are bound to flow from social action, it follows that the vast range of social action will find a location even if none is provided. The corollary is that planning must leave vacant ecological niches within which social action can locate itself. This means in fact creating a range of milieux which do not specify the kind of social action which is to take place in them, and these have to be of differing scale and location. It is not a matter of putting in more parks or pleasancesses, whether for active or passive recreation, but of providing milieux which can function in many different ways - the social action pattern at 7 am is not the same as the pattern at midday, the occupants vary within the milieux or in different parts of it, there is a flux of activities ranging from the individual to group, across the spectrum of interaction categories and throughout the day and night. What is planned as a shopping centre may become a place for meeting, contain an outdoor art show or the focus for public ceremony - its carefully planned flow patterns of pedestrian movement may be disrupted easily by newly emergent action patterns for

which there is no previous precedent. To the tidy-minded these are aberrations which must be fixed by one or another form of coercive action, actually they are a normal part of the stream of social behaviour - they disrupt only because the milieu assemblage is not permissive, allows no elbow room and is too tightly controlled for the exigencies of cultural development and change to express themselves.

The conversion of milieu analysis into plans, that is the natural into the artificial has of course to work within the constraints of legal requirements and physical necessities, the former are compiled to ensure that inferior habitats are not built, (they are built nevertheless - of better materials which make them last longer than formerly), and the latter set limitations which relate to other systems such as those of public funds and the balance between public and private sector finance. Largely in New Zealand this means that the higher the contribution from the private sector, the more amenities of a roughly aesthetic kind will be provided. A very crude meaning structure, namely that of socio-economic stratification is reinforced by the very processes which are supposed to redress the inequalities brought about by superior wealth. However, even such relatively blessed areas as the suburbs of high cost often show a poverty of ecological variety which reflects the extent to which social life is lived either within the home or in places fairly remote from it. This suggests that the comparative aspect of the sociology of place may be instructive in considering planning which aims to concentrate the ecological pattern, and to create a richer and more diverse pattern than that which has emerged in systems where social stratification is the dominant theme.

The sociology of place then provides a basis in principle for

planning - it has the virtue that it helps to reduce the degree of dependence upon intuition but it does not necessarily mean that the qualities of judgement and creativity which are necessary to make good town plans are replaced by simple formulae. The problem underlying those of functionality and of the socio-cultural complexities which complicate the apparent rationality of the plan is that social arrangements are retrospective like nests of certain kinds of seabird which stand on pillars of their own dung, they look toward nothing but their own replication. Yet this is unrealisable, all changes cumulate and produce results which have repercussions into the future; the contribution of the sociology of place can be only an account of place as it is now and not of what it might become.

It is a prevailing theme in the literature that planning exists to make life better¹⁸. Yet if the very disciplines which claim to give a scientific basis to planning are not able to predict with any great degree of power the consequences of planning action, it might seem that the most that can be done is to carry on from one microscopic problem to the next. The fact is that planning crosses over the boundary of science or social science into the area of subjective creativity, it is inescapable that what the planner plans will ultimately embody a conceptualisation of what constitutes the good life, a world view that is usually neither articulated nor recorded except in the plan itself. It is here that sociological models no longer apply and sociology, or rather the perspective of the sociologist, becomes a critical analysis. The problem has shifted from being one of the practical engineering of place, to a valuational and in the end, aesthetic, one. The solutions of applied sociology, or applied anything, to these problems do not exist because the problems are of

a different order. Some speculations on this question are offered in the final chapter.

The problem of persistence and change mentioned in the previous section constitutes a special problem for applications of the sociology of place. It has already been suggested that change is irresistible and it has also been shown that place is an effective maintainer of persistent social meanings. Yet, of course, place does not of itself conserve or change ideas, it is simply the focus or symbolic representation of valued activities and beliefs. The problem of whether something will persist then is always tied eventually to the notion of whether it should persist. As we have seen, one way of ensuring that place will persist is to shift it to another part of the system of meaning, or into a new system altogether, from secular to sacred, from functional to historical, from significatory to symbolic, from mundane to aesthetic. Each of these shifts guarantees persistence for a further period, or if not persistence then at least not indifference to change. These are the changes which are greeted with resigned statements of the "Oh well, that's progress" type. "Progress" in Harbourtown at least is greeted with enthusiasm by some of the citizens but with misgiving by others - and perhaps by the majority, new convenience does not invariably compensate for the disruption of the existing pattern of meaning and feeling.

The sociological problem is simply enough stated, it is "why do some things persist and others change?" and, "why those things in particular?". These questions rather than directing us to questions about the mechanisms of change, ask about its meaning. Here again, the enquiry may lead us to the mechanism since in some cases the mechanism is the meaning. Thus the fact that some milieux are changed

by destruction, redevelopment, change of use reflects the ascendancy of a new class and its valuational scheme interacting with the existing social structure and ecological features. The case in Harbourn town, of the Nottingham house, an old galleried store which was demolished and replaced by a bank building is an example. Resistance by conservationists was completely fruitless but in this case the mechanism of change, increase in investment in the town, was the meaning to which the assertion of "progress" was given. "You can't hold up progress . . . the new bank shows confidence in Harbourn town's future . . . the bank is investing in improvement . . . ". These and similar statements restate the significance of mechanism as a part of meaning, where change is what is being interpreted. In the context of planning such information probably is of little help - as a guide perhaps to the support for opposition to change it may have some use but it does not say what the right decision is - whether to conserve or change - in the end it will be a matter of the tastes of an educated person versus those of lumpen townspeople. As the all too frequent rape of old neighbourhoods or elegant buildings shows, the public and the commercial interest are usually thought of as identical - the planner stands sometimes as the sole person capable of exposing this fraud for what it is, and in doing so becomes an advocate for the voiceless and powerless mass who are so easily deprived of their cultural inheritance.

From the point of view of the planner it may be desirable to approach persistence and change from another direction. The persistence or change of milieu always implies persistence or change in social action patterns. In this case the application may consist of fostering particular action patterns by creating milieu for them. For example a great deal of folk art is wasted upon the walls of

buildings where (with the spray can as a modern aid) messages of a political, religious or scatological kind are left for passersby. If it were in a planner's mind to regard this as a legitimate form of action in an illegitimate place, a solution might be to provide a publicly obvious and useful wall for people to write on. While this might remove some of the excitement of spray canning at midnight, it might do something to encourage public debate and self expression and have the latent function of producing a higher degree of political and social participation than might have occurred previously. In an earlier section it was suggested that the creation of multi-purpose milieux would have consequences for the change of existing action patterns - the present suggestion is to encourage by milieu provision, action patterns which are those open or without scope in order to encourage cultural diversity.

A last word may be added to this section. Throughout we have considered the role of the sociologist of place as an assistant to the planner. Apart from a discussion in general terms of advocacy it has been assumed that the responsibility for planning is primarily directed from the "top" down. In fact most modern legislation encourages participation by the public through the processes of drafting, surveys, objection and so on. The question of the degree to which such consultation with "the public" is effective is a matter for empirical research in public administration; the first hand accounts of sociology graduates working in town planning departments suggest that such consultation does not work particularly well at least so far as the public meeting goes. Comments tended to suggest that there were few advantages gained from the meetings as few people had much conception of the intricacies of planning.

To what conclusions may we come as a result of these observations? Is it that there can be no planning which is not consultative or is it that planning is an attempt to fly in the face of social forces which cannot be controlled. A "conservative" view would be that planning restrains the excesses of those with wealth or inclination to change the status quo, protecting in the meantime the interests of those social classes who have demonstrated their capacity to act responsible "in the interests of the nation". The conservative orthodoxy thus sees the interests of a class as equivalent to national interest. A liberal position is that conflicting interests must be balanced to produce the greatest advantage, "happiness" for all. In planning this generally means that the solution tends to favour the middle. A liberal view urgently pressed could mean that the public interest could be regarded as the sum of the compensated interests of all individuals. Such a Benthamite calculus is clearly impossible and in the long run comes down to a favouring of the middle classes and their egalitarian image of the world. The radical view is the mirror image of the conservative view, namely that the interests of the under-class are the salient ones and cannot be long denied. Whereas the conservative view sees the upper bourgeoisie as the proper trustees of society, the radical view sees it as no more than the last hold out against historical forces which will sweep it into the past. The "radical expectancy" as Glazer and Moynihan¹⁹ call it is that all matters will resolve themselves into the reality of the opposition of classes, so that there can be no piecemeal change.

Simplified though this spectrum may be - I have made no mention of the radical right, the "libertarians", whose philosophy has been most recently expressed in Robert Nozick's critique of John Rawls²⁰,

nor of the utopian socialists, and anarchists such as Herbert Read or Paul Goodman - it serves to highlight the ideological forces which may come to bear upon the planner. By and large planning in New Zealand has taken the liberal stance, it is neither the state centralist and bureaucratic monster, taken to task by the populist and Poujadiste objectors, nor is it the lackey of wealthy interests as has been claimed periodically by radical critics. In the main the town planner in New Zealand stands in the position of a negotiator of interests, he is rarely one person, (except in the case of those local authorities that leave planning recommendations up to the borough engineer) and consequently imposes no powerful intellectual mark upon the towns and villages of New Zealand. Attempts to do otherwise such as was the case of the Kennedy plan for Auckland's lower Queen Street redevelopment are usually shelved. More often an inoffensive featurelessness is proposed either by the private developer or the public planner as the solution most likely to get by without controversy.

There is likely to be a presumption that the sociology of place when applied to the problems of town planning will do no more than to provide a rationale for the prevailing type of planning but this need not be the case. As the sociologist of place deals with the socio-cultural dimensions of place he is likely to produce more and more frequently accounts of significant societal differences in place which enrich the conceptual apparatus with which planning problems and research can be tackled. Some allusion has been made to this already. We have seen that in Harbourtown, both by tradition and by ethnocentricity, marae are outside the town and outside the ecosystem of non-Maori Harbourtowners. The same is true largely for New

Zealand towns. To a small extent attempts to solve this problem have developed as Maori people have become increasingly urbanised. Urban marae tend to take the form of community centres but they have not yet found an ecological niche mainly because Maori and non-Maori ecosystems do not overlap at this point. Yet a sociological analysis carried out for the most part in an unsystematic way has provided the basis for the inclusion of marae in town plans. It should be feasible to reach more fully into this kind of problem with a systematic sociology of place, and to use its findings to overcome some of the constraints which are created by ecological clashes and contradictions arising from the incomplete nature of meaning systems.

4. Conclusion

This chapter has been an attempt to raise some of the issues which are involved in applied sociology and to suggest some areas of application for the sociology of place. Though I do not find it easy to put a label upon the position taken here I would place it as one that is critical and anti-ideological. There is no presumption that applied sociology should or could align itself with any socio-political view in particular though if anything, it is likely to be guided by a vague and benign humanism. Its function is to bring clarity to thinking about social action and to seek out the range of consequences likely, probable, or possibly arising. In the absence of a powerful confirming myth, whether it be Marxist, Freudian, or one of the religious orthodoxies, applied sociology must move in piecemeal ways testing the ground delicately in advance and proposing solutions to problems which can be carefully observed for their

capabilities throughout the process of trying them out.

The sociology of place, it has been suggested, is directly relevant to the discipline of town planning and provides a means of reducing the intuitional judgements which town planners must make. It shifts intuition from the area of social analysis to that of aesthetic sensibility where it rightly belongs, but it allows for the interplay of the sensibility of the town planner, with the shape of community life so that the modifications which he sees as desirable according to some well articulated body of planning belief, may be made with sensitive regard to the meaning systems which are basic to the local social system.

I have been at pains to point out that social life always has the dimension of place but it is as well to assert it once again. It is this fact which means that the planner's actions are always locked within a social structure which is carried around in the heads of the people who inhabit the planner's physical structures. This social construction is tough and resistant, but it is not unchangeable, change, however, develops within it, as well as coming from outside it. Planning, whether it is concerned with the location of a carpark or a public lavatory, or with the construction of a new community, is a process of intervention in an ecosystem. To a limited extent the sociology of place may provide a model of that ecosystem from which predictions of the consequences of intervention may be made.

The sociology of place is still in its infancy - no general models of power have yet been developed and little research has been carried out which is directly aimed at exploring its problems. The scale of problems is not yet clearly defined; we can say that given particular contexts, small scale and large scale problems may be

considered as distinct in the forms of application which they imply, but these problems are different from the problems of a sub-discipline, which must be worked out in a process of conjectures which are tested for their capacity to provide keys to the understanding and explanation of social reality.

Analysis of the latter kind involves the deliberate attempt to falsify the theoretical statements, to examine their structure and to create from them statements which have both predictive power and heuristic usefulness. The former types of problem are those for which sociological insight has to be used - that is the imaginative extrapolation of understanding of one phenomenon to another and perhaps superficially dissimilar one.

Some examples that come to mind are those that have to do with the problems of planning which arise in relation to schools, hospitals, universities and similar institutions on the small scale, and on the larger, the planning of development in new communities, suburbs and in regional and national development. While these are all of the more obvious "artefact to society" level of consequential inference, the other end of the process may also enter into the programme. A problem which has no apparent spatial dimension such as the stimulus to be given to the arts, may turn out to have important "place" dimensions which have gone more or less unsuspected. Such a case has arisen already with the resistance in farming districts to the ideas of the establishment of communal farms, where government policies of assistance had only a little to do with an agricultural policy as such, and where the ecosystem problems arose because, once more, of failure to perceive the need for taking into account the interactive nature of social constructs, action and milieu.

These terms, imagination, insight, understanding, seem to contradict the notion of sociology as having a scientific mode of thought. The proposal that insight be employed is, after all, not far from Wright Mills' specifications for the "sociological imagination" but these approaches are not nevertheless anti-scientific. They merely propose that, in the absence of extensive or intensive research, in the historical moment in which sociology exists, there has to be a means of making good guesses. To deny the possibility of science in sociology is anti-intellectualism of a crude kind, to deny the functions of imagination and of "soft" technique is equally anti-intellectual for it is in the mind alone that science is made. In particular sociology, as Merton noted as long ago as 1940²¹, is confronted by demands for which the scientific apparatus does not yet exist, in such situations the act of interpretation has to be made in terms of what sociological common sense dictates.

Because the matter is central to the problem of applications of the sociology of place, it must be given a few sentences more. "Common sense" is usually taken to be good judgement in the terms of the culture of which we are members. It is common sense in our own culture to seek materialist explanations for unexplained phenomena. No, or few people, believe that a stubborn engine will start in response to prayer, and no-one believes that the engine has an indwelling spirit. Getting it to work is a question of detecting the source of failure, (damp points, water in the fuel line, a short circuit) correcting it and trying again. Yet in any number of cultures it would be only common sense to placate the indwelling spirit of the motor. In the houses of well to do Balinese, a flower is placed in a bowl beside the telephone as an offering to the spirit that can bring wrong numbers and

cut offs - it is common sense in Balinese culture to take this elementary precaution.

Sociological common sense differs from the kind of culture bound conceptions which have been outlined above. The sociologist should be largely rid of the misconceptions of single cultural perception, but he is held within a culture nevertheless; it is the culture of scientific rationalism. It is this culture with its stress upon the objective nature of evidence, the statisticisation of data, and the mathematisation of concepts, with the ethic of disinterestedness, and of institutional accountability that is the framework within which sociological common sense operates. Thus when the data are incomplete, the evidence ambiguous, disconfirming cases absent, sociological common sense comes into play. It is the intelligent assessment of trends even when these are only slightly present, it is the weighing of whatever evidence exists, and finally of thinking over the possible flaws in an hypothesis having regard to what is known that leads to the formation of an opinion. Applications of the sociology of place then consist of exercises in common sense at the present or of testing ideas against common sense in giving explanations.

In the foregoing discussion it may seem that what has been affirmed is the Romantic position described by Alvin Gouldner²². The core of this position is its dependence on "the extra technical or social sources of theory and knowledge" and Gouldner might have added, or "feeling", the "sense of truth". The position taken attempts to balance this by saying that the dependence upon "common sense" is actually different and is non-intuitional. The state of sociology is still so highly exploratory that there can be little hope that a confirmed body of theory will be built up soon - the practical

necessities of thinking sociologically about solutions to problems which have social dimensions require that a hard-eyed judgement be used, not merely to answer existing questions, but to criticise existing answers.

Notes and References

CHAPTER IX

1. Durkheim 1952, 1964. Wolff 1960.
2. Nisbet 1970, 20.
3. Glass and Staude 1972, 176.
4. Glass, in Glass and Staude 1972, 8.
5. Deutsch and Howard 1970.
6. "Levels" are, of course, relative to the order of unit under study.
7. Rawls 1971, 11-17.
8. I am aware that this view contradicts that of the majority of radical sociologists and is, perhaps, that very "despairing cynicism" criticised elsewhere. Certainly the writers in Blackburn 1972 have no hesitation in affirming the Marxist position as that which is the touchstone for all matters of social analysis. This is most clearly put by Colletti when he asserts that Marxism is science, that it is based in reality (the analysis of capital) and that consequently its revolutionary ideology is the perception of that reality seen from the standpoint of the working class constituted through its own consciousness. (Blackburn 1972, 376-7). Nevertheless this seems to be not more than an arbitrarily and intuitively selected principle which does not weather the above criticism.
9. Coe 1970.
10. Some cases in point may be mentioned. In the first, research into marijuana use sponsored by the Medical Research Council of New Zealand, took a deliberately "low key" stance. The outcome was that there was a negligible degree of public or professional attention to the research results. (McFerran 1973.) The second, an analysis of research possibilities into death by road accident, was received with outrage because of its criticism of existing levels of research and data collection in New Zealand. (Klein 1973.)
11. A promising direction, not discussed here, was the "action anthropology" which Sol Tax initiated in respect of the Fox Indian Project. I am unable to trace further information on this. I was informed by Tax (1968) that he had discontinued the project as a result of other work pressures.

12. Arensberg and Kimball 1965.
13. Wilmott and Young. 1957
14. Morrison 1896.
15. Department of the Environment (UK) 1972 : 31.
16. Ibid., 20.
17. Bell and Bell 1969.
18. Ewart Parkinson in his Presidential address to the Royal Town Planning Institute, "A Sense of Direction", (October 1975) says:

"We chose our profession because we believe that the quality of urban and rural life can be improved. Planners want to serve society in its management of urban and rural change to improve that quality."
19. Glazer and Moynihan 1974.
20. Nozick 1975.
21. Merton 1958.
22. Gouldner 1973, 323-363 and cf. Hoggart 1970, II, 244-257.

CHAPTER X

In Conclusion : Towards a Social Aesthetics

1. Introduction

Throughout this essay I have been engaged in the task of attempting to understand some common features of everyday life. Both explicitly and implicitly I have been defining rules for the interpretation of what it means to be a dweller in a small New Zealand community.

The problem has been approached by a double act, not always defined as such, in which I have tried to record and understand the ideas which people have about the place they live in and to use these as the basis for a model which is specifically sociological. This model is that which I have called the sociology of place and is an attempt to move from the specifics of a small cluster of families, farms and businesses, to a way of interpreting localised social life wherever it occurs.

Place I have argued is the key concept, not for understanding every aspect of social life, such a claim would be preposterous, but for interpreting a central fact of human experience, namely that one lives, acts and thinks somewhere and that that "where" is not merely a background to social life, it is part of that very life and indeed is created by it. The most elevated, as well as the most debased, ideas and actions are not disembodied from place or outside time; whether we are concerned with the plays of Aeschylus or the horrors of Auschwitz, the modular structure of time, place and social action,

born upon a particular stream of history is the social reality with which we deal.

Prime among the "rules for interpretation" then is that which states that "place" is the social construct which emerges from the necessity that human beings come to terms with the physical dimensions of their environment, as social structure is the consequence of their coming to terms with each other and "history" (in the local or parochial sense) their coming to terms with time. In order to interpret this fundamental feature of human existence it is necessary to understand it, and in order to understand we are paradoxically forced to formulate statements about what it is that is to be understood. Thus the sociologist starts not with the raw and unmediated data of social experience but with ideas. Among these ideas is the conception that there is a real existant present for his inspection or recording, a dimensionable and cognisable reality to which, if he can not give it a name himself, the people who live in it and have it as a condition of their being can do so - and do so without embarrassment.

We deal then with the idea of a community, made manifest so far as ordinary people confined to the natural attitude are concerned, by the physical structures among which they live. These are not the community alone but they are powerful indicators of it and are indeed part of it. The "lack of community" so often complained of in cities is the absence with this of a will to put group goals ahead of personal ones and so on. On the one hand it is a complaint about the lack of local social integration; on the other the negative statement (people are selfish and materialistic) of a positive moral commandment (people should put the interests of their community first). Of "communitarianism", if one can so designate the movement to form "intentional" comm-

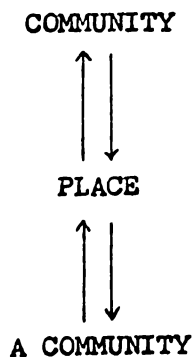
unities, "total way of life" groups, one can say only that they constitute a radical critique of the common model, an insistence that the moral norm cannot be realised without structural change which in turn involves change in the physical environment (habitat) in which people live.

The previous paragraph points out the reality with which we are concerned as having (at least) two "levels", first there is the concrete community recognised by people in their day to day lives and second, there is the conceptual scheme which people have of their community, not fully distinguished from the purely normative notions of what a community ought to be. The first level then is an ecological reality, that is, from the standpoint of the natural attitude, it is a recognisable habitat consisting of people living within a loosely related assemblage of milieux. The second "level", only distinguishable conceptually but in actuality always in interaction with the first, simultaneously carries in it conceptions of the community and conceptions about community generally. Our second "rule of interpretation" then is to recognise that the community is a social construct with ecological reality. It is a "place" in relation to other "places" and its physical structure is culturally given, but it is also to be seen as primarily a socially held idea - a "form" if one is prepared to use that word rather loosely ¹, which is given content by the processes of social structuring, that is by the interaction of people in pursuit of their life goals.

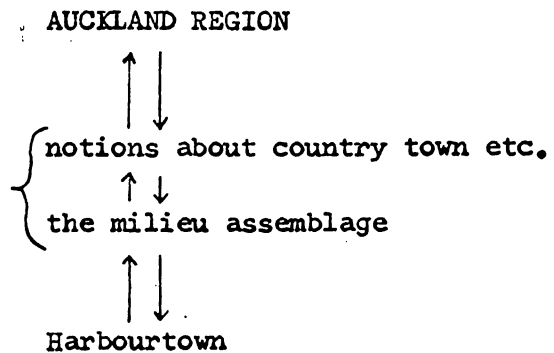
The community, the specific entity, is linked to more generalised notions of community by the concept of place. Of course, place is not articulated in the sense in which it has been discussed earlier but it is nevertheless conceptually separated and designated in such

terms as "locality", "neighbourhood", "district", and by such notions as going "out", "over" or "up" to, when designating it as a place in relation to others. Places in this sense link to the general notion of community by pointing to its territorial existence. Thus while it would be difficult to find what assemblage of parts constitutes a community as a demonstrable physical entity, it is the concept of place which is intermediate between a community such as Harbourtown and the concept of community at large. It is not, or probably not, the only intermediate concept, kinship for example, or friendship or some political or other ideas may very well act in the same way, but, I argue it is a primary concept in the sense of being one to which an easy and early reference may be made. Dozens of day to day statements by Harbourtowners suggest this and indeed, it might be argued that without such an intermediate concept any ordinary discussion of social matters would soon lapse into incoherence.

The structure of ideas about community I suggest has its primary form as one which moves from concrete to abstract via a concept which is dual and intermediate in nature, "place" - it may be designated as follows:



A



B

In the diagram I have done no more than transfer the specific places into general categories, but it is my contention, admittedly one for which the evidence is slight, that such a structure is generalisable and that it can in all probability be "transformed" by substituting other terms or other relationships within the structure. Is it too far fetched to suggest, for example, that the relationship can be stated as holding between Harbourtown and New Zealand, between New Zealand and other countries and so on. Even so such a statement is somewhat trite; the real tests of the assertion that this is a common way in which people conceptualise their relationship to others comes about in those cases where the relationships are held either to be non-reciprocal or inapplicable. Harbourtown may be New Zealand to Harbourtowners, as Jonesville is the USA (in a sense different from that intended by Warner) but is New Zealand part of the same world as, say, Zaire, or Ecuador? The question prompts the speculation that a true macroscopic sociology of place might be a possibility.

The model outlined above is that which I suggest represents the way in which the link between the particular and the general in social life is constructed. The links here are presumed to be reciprocal - reciprocity being necessary to account for those similarities between communities which are not exhausted by a theory of functional necessity - and suggest that culture in the broadest sense of the term is reflexively affected by the concept of place. Thus the cultural tradition affects place and the concept of place, by its own shifts and changes, affects the tradition, gradually reconstituting it. The comparison between Harbourtown and a British village of equivalent size, any one of the dozens that can be reached

in an hour or so from London, say Sevenoaks or Weybridge or Chalfont St Giles shows that though some aspects of the British small town were imported in the cultural tradition of the Harbourtown's first settlers, these have been displaced or changed by other features which arose indigenously. Such changes occur it would seem, not merely as responses to the functional necessities of putting up houses and shops and building roads but to other features, in particular to normative concepts. The change in the pattern is thus a result of reflexivity throughout the system. Such changes are changes in meaning.

Place then is not just the intermediate concept by means of which people transform ideas of a general nature to the particulars of their own community and vice versa, it is, as diagram B suggests, a problem area in the way in which people think about the particular-to-general relationship. In the diagram the reflexive relationship is shown as holding between notions about place categories and the actually existing milieu assemblage, but this reflexivity should not conceal the fact that such areas are those often of controversy, conflict, discussion, turbulence and uncertainty. A small example from Harbourtown's recent history serves to make this clear. Within the last two years a site has been developed as a car park adjacent to the town's only hotel. The council decided that it would be desirable to include a public lavatory block in the car park and accordingly did so locating it (having regard to existing sanitation services) against the boundary of the car park adjacent to Harbourtown's main street and in full view of all passersby. Rather than praising the foresight and good sense of the council the citizens of Harbourtown in a *Clochermerle-in-reverse*, reacted with outrage, a petition was taken up and work on the lavatories stopped. This situation lasted for some

months and eventually the council decided to demolish the block, only saving its face by treating with absolute seriousness a recommendation by a local service club that the unfinished block be left "as a monument to the citizens of Harbourtown". Small though the incident may be it indicates that changes to the milieu assemblage which are not in accord with notions about the proper construction of the assemblage generate controversy not only as part of the concept of place but also with reflexive effects so far as the townspeople are concerned on the town and on what outsiders think of it.

From the standpoint of Harbourtowners the diagrams given above are an extrapolation from processes which they do not split up in this way - in the natural attitude the community as taken for granted reality includes these ways of thinking and their correlates in action as an undifferentiated habitat concretely located in Harbourtown and its environs and in the comings and goings, the interactions both in the present and in the immediate and more remote past, of the citizens. It is not necessary for Harbourtowners, or people in any self-regarding community naturally occurring, to think in these terms, they simply live their lives, enacting in the contingencies of day to day life those principles of structure which they take for granted.

2. The Community as Sociological Model

The interests of the previous section suggest that the extrapolation which puts "place" in the intermediate conceptual position between community and the community, and suggests that this is a prime means by which the one is conceptualised in terms of the

other bespeaks another and more distinctly sociological model. The interpretation so far enunciated; first that place is to be thought of as a social construct and second that the community is to be thought of as a social construction with ecological reality, must be added a third, that the community is to be thought of as a transformation of a more general cultural tradition "community" which it reflexively affected. Without tediously repeating what has gone before we may say that the community is an intersection of time, place and social action which has historical continuity. Place here is held to be an assemblage of "places" (milieux) which have meanings of kinds which have been exemplified in earlier chapters.

The ethnographic account of particular communities, it has been suggested here, consists of describing the components of the milieu assemblage and of understanding and interpreting these meanings as they are manifested in the day to day life of citizens. The "objective" dimensions of such study consist of saying how many and what kinds of people use them, for what periods and under what conditions. This is to give an account of the ecological aspects of the community under study and to show it both as a segment of an ecosystem, a nodal point in a network, and as it is related to the rest of the system. What one does, analogously with Lévi-Strauss's description of the method of investigating myths, is to draw a series of arcs from points known to be related to one another, moving outwards as these overlap ².

The account I have just given does not "miss the point" of such studies, it merely shows that ethnographic studies are not sociological studies in spite of the fact that they are closely related to one another. The test of the ethnographic study is its replicability.

Whether the Trobriands, Tikopia, Yankee City or Midwest is the object of ethnographic study it should be possible for another researcher to repeat the study and to come up with substantially similar results, allowing of course, that there may be changes in the intervening time, and that earlier ethnographers may have for one reason or another left out important details.

I have suggested a means for conceptualising an ethnographic task, which in the past has been left to a more intuitional approach. Ethnographers have not been unaware of milieux as Lévi-Strauss's criticism of the Salesian accounts of the Bororo Village, Malinowski's data on the Trobriands, Meyer Fortes' description of Taleng villagers, or Victor Turner's accounts of Ndembu, among many others, make clear. However such ethnographers seldom treat place as a primary and problematic area. Ethnographers' accounts concentrate on social relations per se and it is only when places thrust themselves on the ethnographer's attention that they come to be included in detail. Ethnographic accounts of places do not lead us to think in terms of a more general theory of place or community, they leave us only with the excellent and stimulating accounts of such things as the Trobriands' bwayma or Nuer compound, as epiphenomena of the social system, not as intrinsic parts of it.

From the analysis of the milieu assemblage develop a number of empirical problems. They include such questions as: "What is (given certain constants) a typical assemblage, what are the functional relations within an assemblage," and, in terms of single milieux, "what is their structure", that is, "what are the parts of a milieu and how are they related to one another?". These are ethnographic questions as I have stated, they are as filled with meaning as are

the questions a prehistorian might ask about an assemblage of artefacts and they may be answered in much the same way. The difference between the approaches being that, whereas the prehistorian must infer a good deal in the absence of verbal and observational evidence, the ethnographer has richer resources at hand.

Nevertheless ethnographic accounts, if they are concerned with description and, at the most, discussions of function, do not lead us to a more general theory. We may create endless lists of traits without being able to move beyond more and more refined classifications of these traits. Leach raised the issue in anthropology more than a decade ago ³ but this led in directions which seem arid but may not be so. They are of course the directions of mathematicisation, a move from the qualitative to the symbolic representation of relations - perhaps the direction is a fruitful one if in fact that mathematics is a true mathematics, one which can be used to generate new knowledge, not merely to describe what is already known, as for example the role mathematics which Nadel developed ⁴. However the developments of ethnography, beyond the use of statistics, and to some degree the attempt to create stochastic models in the study of social networks ⁵ have not so far eventuated though this is not to say that they will not or cannot.

Beyond ethnography lies sociology. It is the function of the sociologist to engage in the intellectualisation of the subject matter of social studies, the search for statements at a level of generality, that is superior to the immediate present ⁶. However imperfect such interpretations may be, it remains that they should be plausible and forward looking. Sociology is not bound to the detailed case, it searches for the general in the particular and for

the means by which the particular may be understood in terms of the general and vice versa. For this reason adding the dimension of meaning to the analysis of milieux leads in a quite different direction. Rather than being an orderly account of the dimensionable ecological reality it looks behind that reality for the ideas which construct it. It may be that such an attempt is shallow - should we not ask what these meanings mean as indicators of the structure of human thought? - but at this point the questions become those of a philosophical anthropology and hence of a different order ⁷.

The analysis of meaning if it is not to be, in this case, confined within ethnographic limits, must give rise surely to the sociological specialism referred to in this essay as the sociology of place. Its questions are specifically sociological and it regards place as a total social fact. What the sociology of place gives us, as opposed to an ethnography of places, is the means of interpreting that ethnography and indeed of doing it in the first place. The double act of interpretation implied in the previous sentence ^{is} that of discovering the relational ideas underlying a given ecological system, and, given adequate data, the relationships between these relationships. Thus it seems not impossible having discovered, say, that in Harbourtown the sacred past and the secular past are transformable into each other, to use this insight to interrogate other cases, to discover whether between the stated relationship of secular and sacred there is not another corresponding relationship which correlates with the former one either negatively or positively, directly or inversely. Another example may be cited. In Harbourtown it seemed that place was divided between natural and cultural categorisations and that there

was an intermediate category of places which meant "quasi-nature". The principle which seemed to underly this was that of 'danger' which provided a rationale for declaring places appropriate or inappropriate for certain activities. Nature we might infer equals purity, in the sense of being undefiled by human action, purity equals uncontrollability because it is outside the human sphere, and uncontrollability equals danger. If purity and danger are meanings of "nature" we might expect such a set of relationships to appear elsewhere, in one of the permutations suggested above ⁸.

Bearing the foregoing considerations in mind the formulation of a sociological model of community requires that it meet the requirement of generalisability and be capable of extension to other problems. The traditional course in community studies has concentrated on social relationships in a small scale context - this is what emerges from the literature beginning it where we will, in America with Middletown and Cornerville or in England with Gosforth ⁹. To shift the focus to 'place' may seem thus a whimsical attempt to break with tradition well established in such studies, rather it is to be true to a tradition which goes to the beginnings of community studies; it is Tonnies who recognises the significance of place in community. He makes it a primary feature of gemeinschaft.

The introduction of place as one of the ways in which meaning is sustained in the community stresses the symbolic integration of the community, an idea which is at the heart of community as a popular concept. Of course in actuality, there may be many kinds of conflict within local social systems but a continually reiterated theme is that the community is more important than the schisms that

occur within it. The assemblage of milieux, it has been maintained here, is an important feature in stating the continuity and integrity of the community and it is for this reason that it is maintained, developed and changed in ways that seem not to be functionally necessary and may even occasionally be dysfunctional. Individual milieu then embody to the citizens of a community not only the particular functions which they stand for, but the valuational scheme which maintains the community in existence. It is this process, that of acquiring a patina of meaning that gives community places their power to control behaviour - they stand for the community as a social system ideally conceived, and no community life is imaginable without them.

Is the analysis of community identical with the sociology of place? Although the sociology of place has emerged in the context of community studies from their inception the sociology of place is not limited to studies of community. Community constitutes a problematic area for sociology as the host of studies dealing with the diversity of problems in the areas of social organisation, economy, political theory and so on evidence. It is the sociology of place that uniquely concentrates upon the community as an object, but in doing so it is as well to recall that it is the social dimensions which are central to the study. Whereas the community is investigated by many different social sciences, the object status of the community is investigated only by the sociology of place.

But, the question may be asked, does the model advanced under the general concerns of the sociology of place exhaust the investigation of community? By subdividing the field as spatial, temporal

and organisational the model proposed here attempts to avoid the earlier distortion of too exclusive a concern with social relations, and by focussing upon meaning I attempt to avoid a purely artefactual analysis. If it is accepted that each of the three features of the model is related to the other two, then it follows that the sociology of community can be attacked at any point with the certainty that such other problems as occur must be dealt with in their turn.

Yet even with this credo written there is an unease about the extent to which the community is really comprehended under these categories. The search for meaning in the community invariably lead some to ask what is the meaning of the community. We can only speculate, though the speculation is not without some basis, that the community is a moral and ethical reality. Community implies a rather specific form of morality, one in which the individual should give priority to communal values, and which maintains him in a stable and unchanging set of relations.

It is a prevailing theme in sociology that community (as distinct from the community) stands in opposition to individuality for in individuality, or at least in the doctrines of individualism lie the roots of egoism and anomie. Durkheim in the conclusion to Suicide ¹⁰ attempts to resolve the problem through guild socialism which however stops far short of the anarcho-syndicalism which had been part of French socialist thought since the first International. Well might he have done so the Paris Commune was still a lively memory and Durkheim was no friend to the communists whether Bakuninist or Marxist. The theme recurs again, more explicitly ["]Tonniesian in form in McIver ¹¹ who sees community converted from the confines of special groups to the whole of mankind, the individual occupying

a broad set of ethical communities unified in the personality of the individual. Kropotkin in the tradition of anarchism asserts the natural status of communal cooperation and opposes it to competition as a superior form of survival behaviour ¹². The list runs on in a general stream of moral-social theory which numbers writers and thinkers as diverse as the founders of the Kibbutzim in Israel ¹³ to speculative architects such as the Paul and Percival Goodman ¹⁴. Whether it is utopian, anarchist, socialist or sociological, the recognition of community as a moral structure and as an alternative to the anomia of a society lacking such integration is the key theme.

The sociology of place can say nothing about macro-theories of community of this kind. That there is a morality immanent in communitarian notions is indisputable, but the further claim, that this morality arises from the structure of community social relations seems no more than ideology; rather than being science it is poetry, it is a chosen form of datum to which can be opposed any number of well documented historical cases of communities which negated all the moral values that are alleged to be the result of intimate feelings of relationship. One might cite for example the community of Loudun, a religious convent which in the fifteenth century went through an epidemic of demonic possession ¹⁵ or that Salem, a puritan community in which the persecution of witches became a byword, less dramatically we encounter the cases of feuds, schisms, bigotry and exclusivism which mark communities as diverse as those of the Southern USA (Dollard), Wales (Frankenberg), Chicago (Seeley), Poland (Kosinsky) and the East End of London (Morrison). The numbers could be multiplied ¹⁶.

As usual in discussions of community the level of abstraction shifts between "community", an abstract moral good, and the community, the localised and intimate group of coresidents, which is thought to embody this good. It may be that this is a mere semantic trap yet it seems that the confusion may be more than that in its consequences. People living in communities expect them to embody the communitarian morality, it is continually reiterated in statements about community pride, community development and the law abiding, friendly decent people who live there. It takes no citation of W. I. Thomas to suggest that such expectations may have much to do with producing the state of affairs which people in small communities value. Grover's Corners is a moral model.

The community then, is a moral entity in the sense in which sociologists think about morality, that is, it embodies a valuational scheme which is manifested in social relations. It is the contention of this thesis that the valuational scheme is apparent also in community places and in the ideas of place. There is another sense, however, to the notion of a community morality - it is that of "community" as a positive good. It is this which is present as an item of ideology. It affects the ways in which small communities conceive themselves and are conceived of by others and it is apt to infiltrate even careful sociological analyses. The problem is raised only at this late stage and cannot be explored but it is an aspect which, apart from the conceptual schemes such as those of Tonnies, Durkheim and McIver, is little touched upon in the literature and deserves greater attention.

3. Community and feeling

A problem which has underlain the discussion throughout this thesis and more particularly this chapter is the place of sentiment in the community. In the previous section it has been suggested that moral sentiment, as distinct from the valuational scheme which affects the structure of the community, sustains the residents in a sense of the absolute worth of their way of life and the place in which they live, but it is something other than this sentiment with which we are concerned. It is the sense of the wholeness (not the unity) of the community which is met with in the ordinary speech and discussion of Harbourtowners when they discuss their town and its people which tempts one to try to formulate the idea and to speculate upon its possibilities.

When Harbourtowners talk of the place they live in they express criticisms of it and of some of the institutions within it, they bolster their accounts with anecdotes and evaluative statements about personalities, and they talk about historical family and kinship relationships. They continually shift these discussions from statements about external realities, a controversy over the building of the town hall, to internal commentary about relationships, and lace these with elements of humour, disapproval and approbation. To use a not altogether inappropriate simile, facts, evaluations, actions, memories and emotions are woven into a complex whole which is like music - statements are like chords composed not merely of notes in particular relations but having reference to the past and effects in the future; there are harmonies and disharmonies which produce sympathetic vibrations, and a sense of structure which

is anticipated in the mind of the hearer satisfying him when his anticipation is fulfilled and surprising him when some new or different resolution is found.

The simile should not be pressed too far, of course, but it seems not unreasonable to assert that the means by which community life is described and understood in sociology does not deal with this kind of phenomenon. If the people who live in Harbourtown are making music together and furthermore have a sense of doing so then the ordinary tools and concepts of sociology can hardly detect this, it remains in the sensibility of the investigator and of the people themselves, and it is so subtle that people are only conscious of it as an activity when an audience reflects it back to them. It is perhaps similar to what is felt by the members of a quartet playing together. They make their music whether there is an audience present or not, they have a particular sense of felicity in a well played movement and a simultaneous sense of complete absorption in the bar to bar playing of it, as well as the elation of surmounting a difficult passage without loss of tempo, expression or wrong notes. The reaction of the audience is that of confirmation, perhaps even surprise, that the piece has been what the players have thought it to be.

Music is remarkable among the arts because it, more than any other, "means" only itself. There is to be sure programme music in which musical sounds are intended to represent or suggest literally the sounds of actual or natural occurrences, the first movement of Rimsky-Korsakoff's Scheherezade is entitled "The Sea and Sindbad's Ship" and the long swelling first theme is supposed to suggest the rising waves, in Elgar's tone poem, Falstaff, we hear the tubas take

up the sound of Falstaff's snores, in Berlioz' Symphonie Fantastique the steps of the condemned man are heard ascending the scaffold and in one of Charles Ives' symphonies, the literal music of the Fourth of July parade is brought in, not as quotation, but as a musical element to carry the listener's attention simultaneously into the musical structure and out of it again - rather as the piece of newspaper with a recognisable word on it is stuck into the middle of a Dada collage. These devices, however, do not constitute a change from the language and logic of music to the representation of everyday life. As Suzanne Langer observes:

Art has a logic of its own (and by logic I mean a relational structure) which is very complex; it is largely by virtue of its complexity that it can present us with images of even more complex activity". 17

Music then, has a logic in itself which creates responses in the imagination of the listener, but it is not the response to particular notes or intervals, harmonies, or dissonances, that does the trick, one does not think "that is a chord in C Sharp Minor" or "that is a diminished seventh", or even "it is the transition from the major to the minor that makes me feel sad", it is the recognition of a total sequence of notes, phrases, melodies and harmonies which draws the attention onward inexorably until the time that is described from silence to silence is over. The act of musical apprehension like that of musical expression is based upon a sensibility which is trained but which also responds sensately to the music, yet it is not locked in sensation; the sensibility which is responsible to art, is aesthetic, sensate but not only sensate. The matter can be taken a step further by imagining that a lover of chamber music and a lover of rock'n roll had received tickets to one another's concerts and had by some means managed to find themselves in the hall and unable

to escape. Though each could, if sufficiently open minded, make sense of the musical language of the other, neither would greatly enjoy the occasion, a basic reason being not the musical structures involved, but the differences in aesthetic sensibility.

This digression into music has its point. The conclusion is that aesthetic sensibility is only in part (if at all) given in the physiological characteristics of normal individuals and that it arises as Bernard Shaw notes in a famous essay from the exposure of the individual to a large range of aesthetic stimuli ¹⁸. The capacity to respond to qualities of feeling in art is not due solely to an intimate knowledge of technical matters, but also to the internalised recognition of cumulative and subtle variations which transcend the order of the technical art. A Bach Partita played by Edwin Fischer is not the same as a pianola roll playing Bach, or a programmed computer emitting the same music via an electronic synthesiser, nor is it the same as the same Partita played by Glenn Gould, or Wanda Landowska, the aesthetic sensibility is discrimination. Aesthetic sensibility it follows, is socially acquired. We feel about things as aesthetic because they have been socially defined as aesthetic, aesthetic sensibility is touched by objects and actions defined as aesthetic in terms of our culture. Until we are trained to respond to it Thai music sounds thin and boring; it has taken more than half a century for African sculpture to be recognised as art in the West and it is significant that the finest works of Pacific art stand in New Zealand ethnographic museums and have never been exhibited in the nation's art galleries.

Aesthetic sensibility, the nature of which has been briefly outlined in the previous paragraphs, develops in individuals as a matter of socialisation, that is to say, through learning in the

company of others the vocabulary of aesthetic judgement. It is the capacity to feel and to respond to feeling, to recognise it and give it intellectual status. The nature of the aesthetic is of course defined in society and is thus culturally specific as I have suggested, but sensibility, that capacity to respond within the dimensions set by the aesthetic of a given period, is no more natural than the aesthetic itself. In spite of the tales of savages who prefer Bach to boogy, there is no innate aesthetic sense as the practically continuous presence of bad taste throughout human history clearly proves. Aesthetic sense must be acquired and developed in a particular way. Qualities which are referred to as "beauty", "harmony", "satisfaction" and are attributed to art objects are in fact responses to an object which is designated as appropriate for aesthetic response. It is appropriate to speak of music, poetry, sculpture, of persons or of paintings as being "beautiful", meaning that they evoke feelings which are peculiarly "aesthetic", but it is inappropriate to speak of sanitary hardware or sides of beef as "beautiful" except in some highly figurative sense. Evidently only certain things can be the subject of aesthetic response and valuation and these things are the ones which have cultural status and societal validation. Familiar among examples of the disjunction which can occur between these two is the case of Epstein's "Rimmer", the sculpture for the Kensington Gardens bird sanctuary, culturally valid but societally invalid, and the works of the Dada movement which were neither culturally nor societally validated and set out to prove this point, and the work of the vorticists which set out (in England) to create a new validation for works of art¹⁹.

If aesthetic sensibility is individual, the aesthetic is social; aesthetic sensibility is the interaction of individual consciousness with a social categorisation mediated by a valuational scheme, "the aesthetic". Of course pluralistic societies exhibit a plurality of aesthetic schemes - probably only in societies in which structural differentiation is low is there a continuity in the aesthetic over any lengthy period. The case of Maori art for example is that of an aesthetic which predominated for at any rate the whole of classic Maori culture. There were regional styles and individual styles no doubt, though there is little analysis of Maori art which is not fundamentally ethnographic and therefore unconcerned with the aesthetic which predominated and gave to Maori art such a precise form. In pluralistic societies however, in spite of the plurality of aesthetic valuations, styles become predominant - art nouveau influenced not only painting in Europe at the turn of the century but in the form of "Liberty Style" and "Jugendstil" penetrated graphics, commercial art, dress design, fabrics, architecture, jewellery, furniture and many other areas. Yet this was the period in which the predominant styles of contemporary European art, and one might suggest of world art, were being developed simultaneously in Germany, France, Russia and Britain.

The foregoing discussion has been written in order to lead the reader's mind to an extension of the idea of the aesthetic. Though for the words and ideas of aesthetic discussion to have any coherence at all they must be defined as referring to whatever it is that is considered to be "art" in a particular social and cultural context whether that be the traditional "seven arts" of European culture or some other definition such as might be found elsewhere, there is the phenomenon familiar from everyday experience, that the category

of the aesthetic is extended to areas not recognised as being in any sense qualitatively similar. Unless we are to deny that aesthetic sensibility can seek as its object anything at all, it must be accepted that aesthetic judgements affect a far wider range of societal objects and experiences than those encompassed in consciously made works of art. To clear the ground we may assert that aesthetic sensibility is universal (in degree), ubiquitous, and creative of new aesthetic categories continuously. The products of aesthetic sensibility, the autogenetic aspects, when they are communicated and accepted, as it were, as part of the canon of the aesthetic become a self reproducing social characteristic - in other words like morality they become coercive and constraining upon individuals. In art, it is the achievement of the avant-garde that the sanctions accompanying aesthetic deviation are no longer (except in the Soviet Union and other totalitarian societies) as severe as they once were but in other areas to which I suggest aesthetic conceptions apply there is still a lesser degree of permission in regard to deviant acts.

To leave art as the focus of the aesthetic it is necessary to note and briefly discuss some of the other areas to which aesthetic ideas apply. If in the first case we take adjectives such as "beautiful" and "elegant" to be indicators of an aesthetic judgement (it has been noted that they may be used figuratively) then a number of areas emerge as having aesthetic connotations in New Zealand, which are not so obviously within the aesthetic "nature" by which is meant the landscape, native forest, streams and so on is usually regarded as "beautiful", accounts of "ugly" landscapes do not seem common, nor are there references to landscapes which are boring, dull or undistinguished though of course, New Zealand abounds in lumpy hills and drab

tracts of paddock and farmland. A key view in the popular aesthetic canon is that New Zealand is "beautiful" from end to end. If "nature" is regarded as "beautiful", the natural is less highly to be commended, public nudity among humans, even children is regarded as immodest and must be transferred to objects of art. In the familiar Victorian transformation nude statuary providing it is not too sexually explicit is regarded as acceptable in themes of pathos, heroism or devotion. Native nudity is not regarded as inflammatory except among civilised former savages²⁰.

In artefacts and human activities a number are accorded a high level of aesthetic worth, in particular yachts have an aesthetic which is not strictly related to function - some old yachts are regarded as "beautiful" in spite of the fact that they could be outsailed by modern designs, it is probably true to say that yachting itself is pursued mainly for its content of feeling rather than for any other reason. Many other sports activities are regarded as things in themselves which satisfy aesthetic criteria - in Rugby football a "beautiful" try retains its beauty whether or not it wins the match and the same may be said of play that reaches beyond mere excellence, racehorses are thought of as beautiful (there is a disturbing tendency to link both racehorses and yachts to images of feminine beauty) and performances in athletics are thought "beautiful" though usually this is not a value to be separated from winning. A beautiful performance, however, may be one which falls just short of success, but succeeds nevertheless in its own terms.

It is not the purpose of this essay to analyse popular aesthetic values in detail - but enough has been advanced to show that aesthetic notions, that is to say ideas about what constitutes feeling that is qualitatively similar to the feelings evoked by both artistic activity

or by the witnessing of art, may be extended to areas which are not conventionally recognised as being art. The list of such aesthetic or quasi-aesthetic activities, attitudes and values could, without difficulty be extended considerably. The next issue however is the extension of the idea of the aesthetic to society itself. In earlier sections it has been suggested that social formations such as the community are seen to have functional and moral aspects. A community is a need fulfilling collectivity of greater or less efficiency, whether or not one takes a Malinowskian position the fulfilment of needs corresponds with a fair degree of accuracy to the way in which most Harbourtowners see their community in its functional aspect. They may debate the wisdom of building a new reservoir or sewerage system on the basis of the amount of public utility served by it, and they are also critical of the inability of some aspects of Harbourtown to satisfy some other kinds of needs, for variety in shopping for example, or for recreation for young people. The functional aspect of the community was lodged in its parts and specifically in milieux which were identified by the functions which their action patterns served.

The argument was, however, that it was simplistic to say that function was identical with meaning and examples were adduced to show that milieux "meant" more than their functions, that they stood for or pointed to social and historical connections. Meaning referred not only to actions but ideas which were pervasive in the community - the ecosystem was only the material aspect of ^d social construct, the community itself. Beyond meaning in this sense was another layer, the community as a moral entity embodying valuations about good and bad, appropriate and inappropriate action. This level

of meaning was also given in the norms' and valuations related to the milieu and the social structure which it implied and often symbolised. To this now one final layer is added, the concept of the community as an aesthetic entity.

In what has gone before, synoptic of other ideas and possibilities in discourse as it has been, the theme of an interaction between the consciousness of individuals and general societal and cultural notions has been the continuing theme. The concept of a "general societal notion" is derived from the idea of a "collective representation" in Durkheim's terminology and is of course particularly fraught with controversy over its epistemological and ontological status. It is all too easy to reify such notions and to give them an existence in some undimensionable metaphysical continuum but we are aware nevertheless that they are the product of social interaction and come, through the capacity of symbolic systems to preserve and contain such ideas, to act as constraints upon interaction. If this is true of norms, mores and valuational schemes which affect the actions of people toward one another then it is no less true of the ideas which they hold about the nature of social reality, or for that matter, of other things that are 'real' in the natural attitude, what to eat, where and how to eat it, with what other foods to combine it, and with whom to eat it is no less a reality conditional upon tradition, evaluation and other matters, than is belief in a personal saviour or respect for the law.

Aesthetic ideas thus are pervasive in a similar way when we take as their subject the objects generally classified as being to do with art, but we have seen also that aesthetic ideas can be held about other kinds of things and judgements made about them. What

aesthetic judgements are about is the quality of feeling embodied in the objects, actions or ideas involved, they evoke feeling (as distinct from sensation) and they are valued according to their capacity to do so. These feelings are not necessarily pleasurable, they can be those of horror, as when we watch King Oedipus, delight, as in looking at a Poussin painting, amusement, dismay, compassion and so on. This capacity to produce emotional response as a quality of art, i.e. the incorporation of feeling into art comes about not only because of the social and cultural capacity to express and understand feeling (the aesthetic) but because of the "quality of performance" which as we noted about the "beautiful try" in Rugby, gives rise to satisfactions of aesthetic sensibility.

It is, it seems, a fairly long step from the aesthetic satisfactions just mentioned to a social aesthetic, but the position taken here is that the response to community is of the aesthetic order and not merely that of functional or moral satisfactions. It is continually, after all, what is asserted about community and about particular communities that they satisfy feeling, cravings for eunomia, harmony, balance, continuity, loving kindness, cooperativeness and so on. What are these if they are not the counterparts of those emotions which are brought forth by the experience of art? The comment of Suzanne Langer is relevant:

Art is the objectification of feeling; and in developing our intuition, teaching eye and ear to perceive expressive form, it makes form expressive for us wherever we confront it, in actuality as well as in art. Natural forms become articulate and seem like projections of the "inner forms" of feeling, as people influenced (whether consciously or not) by all the art that surrounds them develop something of the artist's vision.

There is no "artist of society" to teach us to perceive expressive form in social arrangements, but there are nevertheless conceptions of ideal states of human relations which may be projected upon social arrangements. For example Christian concepts of the holy family, as R. O. Piddington would point out in regard to French Canada, constituted models for the family and its relationships for Catholic French Canadians, in ways that were different from the models adopted by English speaking Canadians, or at least were thought to be so by the French. The aesthetic of social forms however is more often self-generated, (different from a work of art which is first conceived by an individual) than it is created by an individual or institution, though of course, one cannot deny the significance of religious sects, of the state, and perhaps of literature and art to some extent, as the creators of such keys to perception of societal form. It might be argued that it is the sociologist and social anthropologist who in the end may best be able to elucidate the aesthetic of social forms.

The existence of a social aesthetic however is a matter for which at least some evidence exists. In fact judgements of the community tend to be more often aesthetic than they are moral, or one might say, moral judgements are assimilated to aesthetic valuations and the latter reaffirmed as moral. There was nothing moral for example in the Harbourtowners' rejection of the council's public lavatory plan, the objections were based on inappropriateness; the prominence of a milieu having a defecatory function as well as the drably utilitarian architecture of the building and its position in the town were direct challenges to aesthetic norms which provide for the location of latrines in more or less inconspicuous parts of the house or in unsewered areas, away from it altogether. There were

no hygienic reasons for the objection.

Aesthetic valuation of milieux is not in itself remarkable; it is hardly surprising that particular milieux should have an aesthetic valuation distinct from other elements or features they might have; the architecture of some houses and public buildings, gardens, parks, waterways, trees for example, gives them high esteem for aesthetic reasons and not, apparently, for others. There is no evidence of any very concrete kind to advance for Harbourn town but some impressions suggest that the highest esteem coincides with the highest stratum. The admiration for Victorian houses, furniture and sundry kinds of nineteenth century folk art has to do with the more general admiration for this period as an example of settler culture and a stake in the past. It is probably not possible to divorce the popular aesthetic from class but the relationship is probably a good deal more subtle than it appears. However the fact that milieu may be individually valued is not directly an indication of a social aesthetic, it is rather the relationship of the milieu to others and to the social structure which is constitutive of the social aesthetic. Its concerns are with the order, harmony and continuity of the community and the significance of milieux in this aesthetic is only insofar as they exemplify or symbolise elements of social stability and so on.

Aesthetic sensibility in the social sense does not have direct analogies with the sensibility which responds to works of art, yet it is unimaginable that there can be an aesthetic sense which is not deeply felt. Langer, quoting Campbell-Fisher notes that:

. . . (1) that the import of a work, if it is emotional (art can express other feelings than emotion) does not consist of ordinary emotion as we actually experience it and (2) that many forms of feeling expressible in art have no names but

are nonetheless made perceptible and comprehensible through the "intrinsic expressiveness" of the work. 22

An almost exact parallel to this statement can be found in an elderly Harbourtown woman's statement "I was born in the district and I have lived in Harbourtown for fifty years. To me it is still paradise". It is true that the intrinsic expressiveness of Harbourtown may not be as easily perceptible to many people as it was to this lady, and if it were they might have difficulty in expressing it so succinctly, but it can hardly be denied that her response to the town was an aesthetic one. The emotions also are not precisely those of loyalty or others that were proposed earlier, but subsequent conversations with her indicated that she wanted no more than to finish out her life in the town where she had deep rooted family associations and to be buried in the town cemetery in the family plot. Hers was a response like Dylan Thomas' to Laugharne, the "lulled and dumbfound town" sleeping under Milk Wood.

Have the foregoing sentences said more than that some people love the places they are born and brought up in? If it were only this it could be dismissed as a mere truism, as Under Milk Wood can be dismissed as "mere poetry". Defensively I contend that social aesthetic sensibility is only a particular aspect of aesthetic sensibility at large. The detection and capacity to respond to aesthetic stimuli from social forms is like the response to art, in the respect that it is a sensitivity to and awareness of feeling, but different in that the objects responded to are not created with the aim of producing feeling, but carry it as an epiphenomenon. Actions, places, relationships are adjudged according to their conformability with the aesthetic expectations in regard to society and are condemned or deplored when they fail to do so.

It is not the working of parts of the community to which the response takes place but toward the community as a whole, working out the destinies and purposes of its members as a complex interacting whole which existed before the time of its members and will persist after they have died and have been transformed into part of the community inheritance.

. . .

These notes toward a theory of a social aesthetic lead us to a reconsideration of place as a fundamental part of social facticity. We have noted earlier that place has functional and moral aspects as well as interactional relations with time and social action. When we add to place an aesthetic dimension it gains the semblance of a total social fact. The concrete manifestation of "place" is milieu, but as we have seen a thoroughgoing ecological approach such as the Lewin-Barker definition results in a purely conventional organisation of milieu such that a measure of interdependence (K) is sufficient to determine what shall be called an independent unit. Sufficient has been said in this essay to show that an approach of this kind, while not being invalid, excludes other than an ex post facto explanation of the ecosystem, it is insensitive to the sociological analysis of meaning, by making behaviour the irreducible fact with which it deals Barker excludes mind and its products feeling, memory, sympathy, introspection and imagination. As Langer in her critique of behaviour suggests, the saliency of behaviour is the result of the application of the physical science model to social data:

All the "social sciences" from psychology to history have been dubbed "behavioural sciences" as though their only possible formulation depended on this somewhat vague concept. 23

A decade later we have Jurgen Habermas:

Confronted with the objectivism of strictly behavioural sciences, critical sociology guards itself against a reduction of intentional action to behaviour. When the object domain consists of symbolically structured formations which are generated according to underlying rule systems, then the categorical framework cannot remain indifferent toward that which is specific to ordinary language communication. Access to the data via understanding of meanings must be permitted. 24

The claim is, then, that the aesthetic advances the dimension of meaning beyond those of function, social situation and morality to take in the realm of feeling. The implications of this perspective are somewhat different from those of Habermas's "symbolically structured formations which are generated according to underlying rule systems" since this postulates characteristics of mind which are universal and ahistorical like Lévi-Straussian "deep structures". On the contrary the position which seems to press for recognition is that contingency shapes social traditions, that such traditions (culture) are in flux with the present, modifying and being modified in a continual but piecemeal exchange. The frontiers of this conflict shift, they may be in the area of technology as they are in developing countries, in ideology almost everywhere, in law and in expressive life, in Western societies (and perhaps more intensely though less openly in Eastern Europe), and in many areas of intellectual life, but not least, in the social sciences. The place where this conflict is least explicitly expressed, at least in New Zealand, is in places like Harbourtown, but even there it will not be silenced.

In the consideration of the social aesthetic the form of discussion only superficially resembles the aesthetics of which art is the subject. What we are trying to do is to pin down by means of concepts which relate to feeling an extremely elusive aspect of the social context. It has been stressed that the aesthetic is concerned with the whole of the social context, that it overlaps and is related to moral concerns, that it finds its focus in special aspects such as the disturbance of social relations, and the altered ecological relationships of milieux, and perhaps, in evidences of deviance. The aesthetic is as it were immanent, but not manifest except in conditions of shock. It is these conditions which bring out the principles of the aesthetic (defecation is out of sight, the natural is beautiful but remote, the cultural is ugly except when it is old) and lead to the reassertion of them. Change in the aesthetic comes about through change in the society which validates it. Or is it the other way about? Is it the origination of new aesthetic concepts which brings about change in society?

Where do concrete milieux appear in this scheme and how do they enter into the total social facticity postulated for place? As we have seen milieux are both part of and surrogates for social action, but milieux are only conceptually things in themselves, they are part of a system of milieux which, we have seen, can be described ecologically. The systematic aspects however come not only from functional interrelations (which are real enough) but from concepts of the wholeness of the ecosystem and its members' responsiveness to multiple meanings embodied in them. This sense of the whole is what the social aesthetic is about, and the whole which it comprehends

is the community, not mere parts of it. The aesthetic deals with the feelings implicit in and held towards the community - and the community is all its parts in interaction, its history, its milieu, its multifarious activities, its people.

EPILOGUE

The epigraph which stands at the beginning of this study is taken from the introduction to The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, there as again throughout this book, Durkheim stresses his view that the source of the categories of the understanding can only be found in society and thus, that society pervades and encompasses all human life, thought and action.

The present study is a refraction of this view. In studying a place, place itself began to disclose itself as a category of the experienced world which is continuous with the life, actions, thoughts and history of human groups. The community is place as well as being other things, and the sociological analysis of it is aspective; we approach the community, however defined, recognising it to be like a many faceted prism, which, from one angle gives us the colours of the spectrum, from another a distorted image of something else, from a third, a reflection. The community is not compassed by a description of any one of these properties, it is a whole; an unquestioned part of social life for its members. Like the beam of light hitting the prism, the requirement that human beings associate with one another to survive - as a condition of their being human - is refracted through the associative form which, though its idiom changes across cultures, at different times in the same culture, and in response to differences in social, economic and political organisation, recurs constantly as a universal manifestation of social life.

In this study I have been concerned with a narrow manifestation of community, and indeed, with only a single aspect of the particular town which has been under study. Born out of the attempt to understand the life of a New Zealand rural village has come, not detailed understanding of Harbourtown in its historical particularity - other more meticulous ethnographers must do that - but understanding that there existed a fundamental sociological problem, as yet inadequately explored.

This epilogue therefore, does not assert a final theoretical position in the matter of the study of community except to say that within the study of communities lies the possibility of discovery, or, if that word is too grand, the exploration of fundamental aspects of the human condition. That place is such an aspect, that it is made by man, and then makes him as a thing of his mind no less than of his hands, has been the thesis advanced here, and that the mind of man taken in his collective aspect, specifically located in society and culture, is always filled with potentiality as well as actuality, that its dimensions of feeling which find no articulate rational response to our questions must be taken into account, is a position about Man, which is properly the subject of another, and different, study.

R.S. Oppenheim

Auckland, 1976.

Notes and References

CHAPTER X

1. This use of "form" is similar to that of Georg Simmel.
e.g. "...the concept of form...makes the object of his (Simmel's) inquiry something that must be abstracted from any given phenomenon or situation..." Levine, in Wolff 1959, 24.

and

"It" (the analysis of things into content and form) " is one of the organisers and flexible instruments with which the mind gives structure to the mass of all that is, a mass which in its immediate unity, is structureless." Simmel, in Wolff 1959, 288.
2. Lévi-Strauss 1969, Ch I.
3. Leach 1961.
4. Nadel 1957.
5. Mitchell 1969; Boissevain 1974.
6. cf Lévi-Strauss 1963, Ch XV.
7. cf Buber 1947, 192.(1961)
8. In fact such a relationship appears in classic Maori culture where, excrement = nature = danger, and the place, the latrine, has the duality of strengthening (the human side of the latrine bar) and black magic (the excremental side of the bar).
cf Oppenheim 1973.
9. Lynd and Lynd 1929; Whyte 1955; Williams 1956.
10. Durkheim 1952, 382 et seq.
11. McIver 1917, cf III (v).
12. Kropotkin 1904.
13. Hertzberg 1959
14. e.g. Goodman and Goodman 1947.

15. Huxley 1952.
16. Dollard 19⁶⁷; Frankenberg 1957; Seeley, Sim and Looseley 1956; Kosinsky 1965; Morrison 1896 (1969)
17. Langer 1967, 84.
18. Shaw 1932.
19. Blast will be popular essentially. It will not appeal to any particular class, but to the fundamental and popular instincts in every class and distinction of people, TO THE INDIVIDUAL. The moment a man feels himself as an artist, he ceases to belong to any milieu or time. - from Long Live the Vortex Blast No. 1. Michel and Fox 1968.
20. Gross Richard O. "The Athlete" Auckland Domain gates;"Peace" Albert Park, Auckland, (anon.);"Pania of the Reef", The Esplanade, Napier. The last named has the distinction of having the the semi-nude body sculptured in New Zealand and the head, in Italy.
21. Langer 1967, 87.
22. *ibid.*, 88.
23. *ibid.*, 15.
24. Habermas 1973, 10-11. and cf Habermas 1971.

A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX I

Milieu Inventory

- 01 Government and Administration: National.
- .1 Forestry Department Office
 - .2 Police station
 - .3 Post Office
 - .4 Public Trust Office
 - .5 Transport Department
- 02 Government and Administration: Local.
- .1 Borough Council Chambers
 - .2 Borough Foreman's office
 - .3 Yard
- 03 Religious and Ceremonial
- .1 Anglican Church
 - .2 Anglican Hall
 - .3 Anglican Vicarage
 - .4 Catholic Church
 - .5 Catholic Hall
 - .6 Catholic Presbytery
 - .7 Cemetery
 - .8 Ex-Servicemens' plot: Cemetery
 - .9 Gospel Hall
 - .10 College ex-Pupils War Memorial
 - .11 Methodist Church
 - .12 Methodist Hall (Wesley)
 - .13 Methodist Parsonage
 - .14 Orua Church
 - .15 Presbyterian Church
 - .16 Presbyterian Hall
 - .17 Presbyterian Manse
 - .18 War Memorial Cenotaph
 - .19 Monument, First Settlers landing

03 (contd)

- .20 Monument, site of Maori landing
- .21 Site of Settlers blockhouse

04

Economic

041 Distribution

- .1 Barbara's Cake Shop and Dining Room
- .2 Billington and Mitchell: Hardware
- .3 Campbell Distributors: Concrete and Timber products.
- .4 Dalgety Loan: Stock and Station Agents
- .5 Deluxe Caterers
- .6 Donegal's Grocery
- .7 Donegal's Hardware and Gifts
- .8 Duncan's Drapery
- .9 Evans and Scott: Butchers
- .10 Farmers Trading Co.
- .11 Frederika's Boutique
- .12 Furniture Craftsmen
- .13 Geo. Carstairs Drapery and Furnishings
- .14 Harbourtown Fisheries
- .15 Harbourtown Fruit Supply
- .16 Junior Dresses and Childrenswear
- .17 Johnson's Stationery
- .18 King's Arms Hotel
- .19 Lawson's Four Square Grocery
- .20 Lessings Butchery
- .21 Mariner's Restaurant
- .22 McDonald's Jewellers
- .23 Nelson's Delicatessen
- .24 Regal Milkbar
- .25 Rowland's Jewellery
- .26 Saleyard
- .27 Sewing Centre
- .28 Sew Well Services
- .29 Smith's Plant Shop
- .30 Stanley and Jenkins Household Appliances
- .31 Somerset and Maybury: Agricultural Fertilisers
- .32 Summers' Clothing Store

041 (contd)

- .33 Town and Country Store - grocery
- .34 "The Studio" - arts and crafts
- .35 Thrift Store - books and toys
- .36 Walter's Supplies - grocery
- .37 Woolcraft Shop
- .38 Wine Supplies
- .39 Wilton and Parsons Shoes
- .40 Wright Stephenson: Stock and Station Agents

042 Production

- .1 County Clothing Co.
- .2 Harbourtown Concrete
- .3 Howse's Concrete Products
- .4 Hurley Bendon Ltd
- .5 Mathieson's Farm
- .6 Miller's Farm
- .7 Moriarty's Gardens
- .8 O'Connor's Farm
- .9 Printing Works
- .10 R.F.Stone Ltd

043 Banks

- .1 Auckland Savings Bank
- .2 Bank of New Zealand
- .3 National Bank
- .4 Post Office Savings Bank

05 Educational

- .1 Harbourtown Primary School
- .2 Harbourtown College
- .3 Harbourtown Kindergarten
- .4 Holmes and King: Teenage Driving Contest
- .5 Museum
- .6 Orua Primary
- .7 Playcentre
- .8 West End Primary
- .9 West Coast Primary

06

Recreational

- .1 Bowling Club Pavilion and greens
- .2 Basketball Pavilion and courts
- .3 Band Rooms
- .4 Clothiers Farm
- .5 Golf Club
- .6 Green Creek Hall
- .7 Hastings Hall
- .8 Hastings Council Reserve
- .9 Massey Park
- .10 Metropolitan Club
- .11 Orua Hall
- .12 Paa Hill Hall
- .13 Rata Reserve
- .14 Regal Theatre
- .15 the reclamation
- .16 R.S.A. Clubrooms
- .17 Ruarangi Beach
- .18 Rugby Hall
- .19 Rugby Park
- .20 Scout and Guide Hall
- .21 Soccer Clubrooms
- .22 Social Hall
- .23 Swimming Clubhouse
- .24 Swimming pool
- .25 Tennis Club Courts
- .26 Te Pahi wharf
- .27 Town Hall
- .28 West Coast Beach
- .29 West End Reserve
- .30 West End bay
- .31 Yacht Club rooms

07

Health and Welfare

- .1 County Hospital
- .2 Dr East's surgery
- .3 Dr Hutton's surgery
- .4 Dr Wilcox's surgery
- .5 Fire Brigade station
- .6 Men's lavatories
- .7 Plunket Rooms
- .8 St John's Ambulance station
- .9 Women's rest room
- .10 Dental surgery
- .11 Optician's rooms

08

Professional Services

- .1 AMP Insurance representative (res)
- .2 Beech and Abel, surveyors
- .3 Best Estate Agency
- .4 Beal's Pharmacy
- .5 Hale, V. accountant
- .6 King Farm Consultants
- .7 Jonathan Lamb Insurance Agent (res)
- .8 Mack Miller and Brown, solicitors
- .9 Mark Pharmacy
- .10 Mountain Real Estate
- .11 National Insurance Agency
- .12 Roberts and Williams, accountants
- .13 Robertson Estate Agency
- .14 Simpson Estate Agency
- .15 Summers Estate Agency
- .16 State Insurance Agency
- .17 Thompson and partners, surveyors
- .18 Vanbrugh Rendall and Hulse, solicitors
- .19 Veterinary surgery

09

Communication and Transport

- .1 King and Dixon Depot, cartage
- .2 Road Service bus depot
- .3 West St Taxi Rank
- .4 Post and Telegraph office

10.

Trade and Personal Services

- .1 Barns - wells and pumps
- .2 Barbershop - Harry White
- .3 Barker's plumbers yard
- .4 Coser and Lewis, builders
- .5 Cleenezi Dry Cleaners
- .6 Delikat Caterers
- .7 Dearborn Radio and TV repairs
- .8 Easton Engineering
- .9 Finlay - wells and pumps
- .10 Focus carpainters
- .11 Halliday and Scotsman, motor engineers
- .12 Kitt, Electrician
- .13 La Chic Beauty Shoppe
- .14 Makepeace Builders
- .15 Marston - plumber
- .16 Michael and Swinton, panelbeaters
- .18 Philippe Hairstyles (mens)
- .19 Perma-wave Beauty Shoppe
- .20 Salon Greta Beauty Parlour
- .21 Tyllott, panelbeater
- .22 TV and Radio Services
- .23 Harbourtown Builders
- .24 Harbourtown Service Station
- .25 Harbourtown Auto Electric
- .26 Harbourtown Dry Cleaners
- .27 Wilton's Electric
- .28 West Motors

11

Social interaction: (non-specific)

1. Victoria Street

- .1 Soccer Club stall
- .2 Market Day
- .3 Trolley Derby
- .4 Junior Band Street stall
- .5 Christmas Parade
- .6 Kindergarten stalls (3 Occasions)
- .7 Accordion Band stall
- .8 'Second Kindergarten Committee' stall
- .9 Presbyterian stall
- .10 Methodist Carol Service
- .11 Plunket collection
- .12 Anglican Ladies' Guild stall

2. Streets various

- .1 Scout and Guide Appeal
- .2 Girl Guides Basket Bring and Buy
- .3 Lions Braille week collection
- .4 Arbor Day tree-planting ceremonies

3. Reserves

- .1 Fire station reserve
- .2 Norway St
- .3 Ruarangi reserve
- .4 West End reserve
- .5 Old Wharf reserve

4. Town Square

- .1 Send-off to Games representatives
- .2 Talent quest
- .3 Miss Harbourtown parade

12 Ethnic

 nil

13 Other

- .1 Mrs East's residence
- .2 Brice Miller's residence
- .3 Mrs Pope's residence
- .4 Mrs Black's residence
- .5 River Bank
- .6 Mrs Swinton's residence
- .7 East Bank track
- .8 Rifle Range Road.

APPENDIX II

Harbourtown Census Data

The following tables are compiled from data published in the New Zealand Censuses of population for 1961, 1966 and 1971.

Because of changes in the method of compiling the census results it is not possible to give comparative figures in all tables.

No figures were available from the 1976 census at the time of writing.

The period of field work on which the study is based extended from 1968 to 1971, with the main period of residence being in 1968 - 9, and shorter periods in 1970.

Table 1. Population of Harbourtown by Sex and Ethnicity 1961 - 1971

	Total			Maori		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
1961	757	855	1,612	31	37	68
1966	829	930	1,759	73	66	139
1971	1,438	1,441	2,879	144	143	287

Increases:

	Total		Maori	
	No	%	No	%
61-66	147	8.3	71	51.0
66-71	1120	63.7	148	106.6

Notes to Table 1:

In 1961-66 just over half the intercensal increase in population was contributed by Maoris; when the Maori population is deducted, the non-Maori population can be seen to have increased by 4.1% as against 10.5% intercensally for the national population. This was a common feature of North Island small towns.

The change in pattern in 1966-71 when, although the Maori population doubled it contributed only about 15% to the total, is the result of the creation of mass housing in 1970-1 for the industrial workforce. The Maori population in 1971 closely approximated the Maori proportion of the national population. Harbourtown's increase in population was exceeded by one other place, Glenfield, an Auckland suburb.

The population became more diverse by ethnicity in 1971. In the intercensal period 16 Polynesians of other than Maori origin, 10 Fijians, 11 Chinese, and 24 Indians were added to the population. Of these only Indians had previously been resident in Harbourtown.

Table 2. Harbourtown, Age by Sex, total population 1966 and 1971.

	1966		1971	
	M	F	M	F
0-4	89	102 (10.5)	226	177 (14.0)
5-14	184	185 (19.4)	294	326 (21.3)
15-19	72	85 (9.5)	100	112 (7.2)
20-64	359	427 (46.0)	727	695 (48.3)
65 and over	105	129 (14.4)	91	131 (7.5)

Notes to Table 2: (The figures given in brackets are percentages taking both sexes together).

Harbourtown is somewhat underweighted in the people of

young middle age on 1966 figures, and overweighted in the older groups. Some of this is accounted for by the tendency of farmers to use Harbourtown as a retirement centre - the number of women in the 65 and over group in addition outweighs the number of men, a feature of the national population figures.

Some further analysis of the younger age groups shows that in the 20-24 group the proportion of non-Maoris is rather low (6.2:7.1%) and that this recurs in the 25-34 group. However the proportion climbs above the national norm and stays above it for all senior groups.

It is evident on these figures that in 1966 Harbourtown was dominated by its older groups, predominantly those who were not dependent on wage labour for their livelihood, and that it tended to lose the younger population of working age to other areas. This was more noticeable for young men at the 16-19 age level, in this group women outnumbered men by 69 to 54 and at the 20-24 age level by 81 to 68. Above these ages the sex ratio remained more even until old age was reached and female dominance recurred. This pattern was not unlike that of other small towns.

By 1971 the age structure had changed due to the influx of migrants. The increases in the 0-4 and 5-14 groups is indicative of the younger age structure, but loss in the 15-19 group increased. The aged formed a smaller proportion, and their absolute numbers increased only slightly. I am unable to explain the discrepancy in male/female numbers in the 0-4 group, it looks rather like a census enumerator's error.

Table 3. Harbourtown: Marital status.

	1966		1971	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Never Married	124	127	185	133
Married	385	396	665	670
Legally separated	3	6	7	5
Widowed			25	102
Divorced	26	96	9	5
Total (including 'not specified')	538	625	892	915

Notes to Table 3:

The marital status of Harbourtowners in 1966 follows, as might be expected, a similar pattern to that given above. Of the 36 men between the ages of 21-24 fourteen were married and of the 49 women, thirty. In the 25-34 group 72 out of 79 men were married and 81 out of 89 women. The 1966 Census did not discriminate between the widowed and divorced, but the latter as indicated by the legally separated figures were probably few. Widow and widowerhood increased as might be expected, with age, however, widows considerably exceeded widowers in number. In the 55-64 group 12 out of 71 women were widows, over the age of 65, 73 out of 123 were widows, whereas in these age groups three out of 59 and eighteen out of 78 men were widowers. Harbourtowners say that the men, particularly farmers, who retire in the town, "die within a year" once they become inactive. Nationally however, women survive men by five years or so.

In Harbourtown the problem is perhaps exacerbated by the fact that working farmers change from taxing physical work to relative inactivity, and unless, as some do, they find employment, they seem apt to die relatively soon. As one Harbourtownerman remarked, pointing out an unfinished four-square brick house — "Didn't even wait till they got the roof on, bored to death just at the thought of retiring!"

Table 4. Harbourtown: Religious profession

	1966	1971
Anglican	570	873
Presbyterian	386	577
Roman Catholic	242	403
Methodist	288	366
Baptist	7	25
Ratana	4	32
Latter Day Saints	5	21
Other	83	169
Total (includes 'nil' and 'object to state')	<u>1759</u>	<u>2879</u>

Notes to Table 4.

The ranking of religious professions in Harbourtown follows the national pattern.

Table 5. Harbourtown: Occupational Status

	Male	Female
Employer	61	4
Own account	30	7
Wages or salary	670	236
Unemployed	12	5
Total actively engaged	<u>775</u>	<u>254</u>
Married women in employment		<u>439</u>

Notes Table 5.

Previous censuses have not published these data. Before 1970 however, there was almost no work available for women in the town.

Table 6. Harbourtown: Employment by Industry.*

	Male	Female
Agriculture	30	-
Mining, quarrying	4	-
Manufacture	388	91
Electricity etc.	5	-
Construction	67	1
Commerce	98	75
Transport	68	18
Services		
Finance	29	11
Community, personal & social	76	53
Total	<u>775</u>	<u>254</u>

*Not published before 1971

Table 7. Harbourtown: Occupations by major group

	Males	Females
Professional & technical	80	31
Administrative & managerial	15	-
Clerical	67	66
Sales	67	40
Services	32	41
Farmers	36	1
Production workers	467	71
Total	<u>775</u>	<u>254</u>

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