

## CONFLICTS AND CONTRASTS OF IDENTITY IN A CHANGING CORNISH VILLAGE

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### *Introduction*

In this paper I seek to illustrate and exemplify the multiple changes which have been wrought by the flow of residents born elsewhere in the United Kingdom into a small rural Cornish<sup>1</sup> village. With the decline of the agricultural economy, increased mechanization and the seemingly concomitant rise in the desirability of the countryside as a place of residence for those born outside it, the composition and character of such villages have greatly changed recently.

The ethnographic material for this article was collected while I was working as a veterinary assistant in a rural Cornish veterinary practice. Being explicitly part of the local daily life of the village, I was able to get to grips with the distinctions between local and non-local without the problem of attempting to highlight my 'Cornishness'. In spite of my predominantly non-Cornish accent, I was able to avoid having to define my Cornishness because I was in the company of a professional person (the veterinary surgeon). We were evaluated not in purely local terms, but rather in terms of a complicated matrix made up of valuations of professional ability, courtesy, showing appropriate respect to the farmer and the outcome of farm visits in terms of both the health of the animal(s) concerned and the monthly invoice.

1. Cornwall is the most south-western county of the United Kingdom, sometimes known as the 'toe of Britain'.

In this paper, I do not deal with qualitative niceties such as the non-existence of the 'rural' as a result of the predominance of telecommunications, private cars, urban migration and so on (cf. Strathern 1982). Rather, I take the existence of the rural as read because of its role in action. In other words, if my informants *say* that Penberthy is rural, it is ethically dubious to insist otherwise. Through the discourse of one local informant in particular, I attempt to apply Rapport's notion of 'loops' of discourse (1993) in order to draw out the contrasts and conflicts between local and incomer identities.

Penberthy is a small Cornish village near Truro on the Roseland Peninsula, several miles from the main trunk-road which carries most road traffic into and out of the Duchy of Cornwall.<sup>2</sup> The main street of the village is on one side of a leafy valley. Some one hundred and fifty people live in the village, most of whom are not locally recognized as 'belonging' to Penberthy. Locals and incomers can meet in the post office-cum-village shop, in either of two pubs, at church or at the cricket club.

Having secured work for myself as a veterinary assistant in Penberthy, I decided not to live in the village itself because this would have irrevocably placed me within the 'camp' of the non-locals. I therefore confined my interactions with locals to a more professional level. I worked with and for the veterinary surgeon and was thus in an instantly recognizable and classifiable situation. Some villagers whom I grew to know better than others learnt from me that I was a student taking time out to pay my way through university. This was locally modelled as a 'good thing', an appropriate kind of action, avoiding 'sponging off of the state' or depending on parental contributions. The villagers and I were both victims of the economic situation of the country: they, as farmers, were over-taxed and at the mercy of bureaucrats, while I was short of money and a deserving case, in contrast to the undeserving, those who actively shirked work and were getting, I was told, vast amounts of money from the state. My position as a stranger to the area, being neither non-local or local, meant that I could manipulate this situation to my insightful advantage. As Rapport writes (1993: 123):

only the stranger, socially dislocated and placing habit in question (and, more precisely, annotating conversations and then juxtaposing these records in alien ways), would possibly have to deal with what Schutz has described as the incoherence, partiality and contradictoriness inherent in the assumptions of people's everyday commonsensical knowledge.

From my vantage-point as a veterinary assistant, visiting farms and carrying instruments and medicines for a local veterinary surgeon, I was able to meet farmers and other rural folk in what I label 'situations of similarity', in that all were united in sharing concern about, for example, a cow's distress. The circle of mutual interest centred around the task in hand, from which I was able to manipu-

2. The names of both village and villagers have been altered.

late my questioning and, more particularly, my listening in order to ascertain both farmers' identities and their means of expressing and making them explicit. These identities were always expressed in contrast to those of the incomers, the folk from 'up-country'. This is how the locals gloss those who have 'left the rat race', as the incomers themselves portray their entry into their rural idyll. Of course, this 'rural idyll' is the farmer's factory, as well as a landscape that is creatively deployed to define those who belong and those who do not.

In this paper, I would like present a selection of the individuals concerned and the situations in which their identities are made both explicit and, most importantly, contrasting. Present-day anthropology is largely concerned with the confused, often contradictory multiplicity of statuses, opinions, beliefs and stances which are contained within each individual human being as an actor. It may even be that such a jumble characterizes, even defines, what it is to be human. As Walt Whitman observed: 'Do I contradict myself? Very well then...I contradict myself. I am large...I contain multitudes' (cited in Wolf 1993: 119). Dissecting out these multiple identities has been pioneered by Rapport, in *Diverse World-Views* (1993), where he proposes the term 'loop' to describe the cyclical discourses which each sub-persona uses to 'speak through' the individual in question: 'each loop seemed to represent a whole world, a world replete with relevant people and events, manners and mores, institutions and relations, evaluations and expectations' (1993: 122). As a veterinary assistant helping out on a farm, gossiping in the pub at lunchtime or chatting in the post office queue, I came to hear some of these loops.

The loops of thought presented in farmers' discourse show that they value an entirely different set of priorities and icons than do those who have recently moved into the area. Farmers, it is true to say, do not find much of the heralded 'peace and tranquillity' in the countryside—indeed, it is more like a factory that they are unable to leave, condemned as they are to work long, lonely hours and negotiate ever more complex bodies of law relating to the correct employment of chemicals, and so on. Consequently, farmers suffer one of the highest suicide and alcoholism rates of all occupational groups. In this paper, I focus on the discourse of one informant in particular.

### *Local Identity*

'The English village,' writes Thomas Sharp, 'is, I believe, among the pleasantest and most warmly human places that men have ever built to live in' (cited in Sprott 1964: 89).

The picture-postcard view of the rural Cornish village is of a clump of thatched cottages grouped around a small square, with a church and a couple of public houses, not so very different, in fact, to the classic English village scene. However, due to the massive increase in both tourism and people relocating to retire

because of the 'slower pace of life', the 'peace and quiet of the countryside', the village is not what it once was. In fact, it is no longer what the locals want. In the space of a lifetime the village has changed from being the centre of locals' activities—with bring-and-buy sales, Methodist Chapel 'tea-treats' (where all the children have a day-trip and traditionally were given a saffron cake, tea and some pocket money), and so on—to being on the periphery of locals' priorities. Today, all the cottages in this village—and most villages nearby are also like this—are either inhabited by those moving into the area or left empty for most of the year, only being used as holiday homes in the high season. There is thus some tension between locals and tourists, as it is often local women who are employed to 'skivvy 'round', as they sometimes put it, cleaning the houses ready for the tourists' arrival.

While actual physical violence between locals and incomers does exist, mainly in the pubs and clubs of holiday resorts such as Newquay (where, for example, local youths take exception to holiday-makers going out with local girls), there is certainly *symbolic* violence in rural villages. The popular, pervasive and persuasive urban myth of the harmonious village community is much misplaced. There are bitter feuds in many villages, even where the demographic balance between local and non-local has not altered significantly. The symbolic violence is usually made manifest in terms of ostracism and the imposition of social distance. This is underlined and emphasized by the fact that, unsurprisingly, non-locals never attend, show interest in or have the knowledge to be able to participate in any of the recognized groups which confer and confirm local identity, such as the Young Farmers' Club or local meetings of the National Farmers Union. Similarly, the farmers and other locals have no time for meetings of the (urban) Round Table or of conservation groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England.<sup>3</sup> Often, it seemed to me, the only thing which united these disparate groups of people was the actual countryside itself as an object. The only contact between the two sides was a cursory wave from car to tractor as one passed the other on the lane between the village and the nearby headland which leads to the local spur road that eventually joins up with the Falmouth–Truro road. At the same moment that the countryside united everyone, at least spatially, it simultaneously threw them apart because of the polar opposition between landscape as workplace (for farmers and farm workers) and landscape as an unchanged and unchangeable source of tranquillity and country walks (for the incomers).

3. Not least because many Cornish people feel themselves as distinct from England and from English ethnicity.

*Ross Tremayne*

Ross Tremayne,<sup>4</sup> a farmer in his early fifties, is a very thoughtful and phlegmatic man. One of his favourite farm occupations is ploughing, because it allows him both time and space to 'think long an' hard about things, and fit them in perspective, like'. He has been very active in village affairs, having served on the Parish Council for many years, and is also a stalwart of the local Conservative Party Association. His ponderings while ploughing have led him to conclude that the future of the village is very bleak. He is frustrated almost daily by the incomers, who either leave gates open and allow stock to get mixed up in the fields, which he has to sort out, or else allow their or their friends' cars to block farm gates and entrances. At other times 'they're on the blower, telling my wife to get me to shut up the cocks from crowin', or the cows from lowin' or summat stupid. I says to them, if you don't like it, get out! Me and my family've been here for years, and they got no right interferin' with things now.' Indeed, Ross's brother once traced the family tree back over five hundred years before calling it a day.

Ross misses the old times in the village, when everyone knew everyone else, and where everyone knew their place in the scheme of things. It wasn't that work in those days was any easier. In fact it was much harder, but everyone was honest and everyone knew about farming and those necessary but now highly unpopular events which defined the rural cultural calendar, like cubbing, fox-hunting and the annual pigeon shoot. Almost everyone got involved in some activity or other. Time for the whole village was organized around this rural timetable, which has now mainly disappeared, save for the Harvest Supper and annual inter-village ploughing match. At that time, Ross agreed, the entire organization and activity of the village centred around the rural calendar. Everyone agreed on the necessity to exploit the land and its resources (both wild and domesticated), and there was no polarized dichotomy between (incomer) environmentalists and (local) farmers. Now, events like the ploughing match and especially the Royal Cornwall Show are, Ross feels, really important occasions when busy farmers from all over Cornwall and further afield can come together and compare equipment, catch up on gossip, and exchange complaints. They reassure themselves that they are all doing things 'right'. Says Ross, 'it keeps us sane'.

Simon Schama has recently written (1995: 61):

Landscapes are culture before they are nature, constructs of the imagination projected on to wood and water and rock. [...] But it should also be acknowledged that once a certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision, establishes itself in an actual place, it has a peculiar way of muddling categories, of making metaphors more real than their referents, of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery.

4. A pseudonym.

Attitudes to the landscape (the ‘countryside’) and the people and animals that inhabit it are a crucial and highly visible means by which identities are made and kept distinct: the metaphors and myths of Penberthy abut uncomfortably on to the expectations of incomers. Farmers such as Ross Tremayne saw both land and animals as commoditized. Ross owned the five-hundred-acre dairy and arable farm which he and his ancestors had built up over generations through sheer hard work and graft. As the landowner, he felt more or less able to do what he wanted, even—and especially—when this involved practices of dubious legality, such as the burying of agrochemicals which had been banned and which would have been expensive to dispose of according to the letter of the law. The same went for the destruction of the ancient dry-stone hedges that are so characteristic of conventional Cornish farm practice. The gateways were so narrow that much of his modern plant was unable to fit through the gaps, and anyway, he said, some of the enclosed fields were so small that they were hardly worth using. He solved both problems by simply grubbing up the hedges. Needless to say, this had caused a great deal of alarm to those who had moved into the area in search of a rural Arcadia. Although campaigns and petitions had been organized, signed solely by those recognized, by both groups, as non-locals, the farmer stuck to his guns and continued with the process of making his fields easier for him to get into to plough and harvest. As Ross put it: ‘These upcountry types forget that this isn’t the garden of Eden; and even if ‘twas, a garden requires a gardener; and it’s me that puts the food on their tables’. However, given the propensity of environmentally concerned incomers to buy organic produce in the nearby supermarkets of Truro, that might not actually be as true as Ross thought.

Ross, as my main informant (being a major client of the veterinary practice), seemed to be precisely the sort of person to whose discourse one could apply Rapport’s notion of loops of discourse. For Rapport loops of discourse are idiosyncratic, cyclical sets of associated phrases, regularly repeated in daily utterances. ‘Each loop seemed to represent a whole world, a world replete with relevant people and events, manners and mores, institutions and relations, evaluations and expectations’ (Rapport 1993: 122). Rapport, from his key informants, isolated several personae and world-views, i.e. complexes of loops. This is what I propose to apply to the discourses of Ross Tremayne.

One of Ross’s most frequent discursual loops was that of him as *villager*. Whether concerned about the raft of planning applications by incomers to have satellite dishes fitted, or about the increase in bed-and-breakfast accommodation run by the incomers, which undermined the ‘traditional’ sources of income to the locals, he frequently invoked his genetic claim to legitimately be in the village and to be a ‘proper villager’. Although there was no ‘core’ of real villagers who were related by birth (as Strathern, for example, found in Elmdon [1982]) and who were recognized, by various audiences and thus by varying memberships, to be genuine locals, ‘proper’ villagers were, Ross said, those who had always lived in the village or nearby (i.e. in a neighbouring village) and whose parents had also resided locally. Church attendance, although not obligatory in defining proper ‘villager-

ness', was often a corollary, and presence at village social events such as the annual Young Farmers' Hog Roast and village-hall coffee mornings was more obligatory.

The term 'proper' in the local dialectal meaning is imbued with a moral judgement that the individual concerned fulfils through residence, dress, occupation (or, if retired, past occupation), and daily behaviour. Those who change within one of these categories of local recognition are liable to be viewed, at least temporarily, with some suspicion, their actions being carefully scrutinized in case the individual is 'picking up emmet ways'.<sup>5</sup> Ross's use of 'proper' expanded out from his recognition of locals and non-locals, and also, interestingly, was applied to tasks and chores that were in his eyes efficiently and effectively carried out: 'proper job', he would observe, as the vet appropriately assessed, diagnosed and treated an ailing animal. When he spoke of outsiders and their activities, they were identified as 'that bloke in advertising', identity here being contingent on occupational specialization alone. The fact that, for example, the advertising copywriter had lived in the village for ten years did not make him any more of a villager, because the grounds for membership of the category 'villager' were not ones that either he or anyone else could fulfil. That does not, though, stop people who have lived in the village for a fairly long time thinking that they are '*almost* locals', an identity they base solely on the length of time they have been resident in the village and on knowing most people in the village by name. This kind of statement is greeted with more than derision by Tremayne: 'Ah, them's not *proper* locals, however long they're here, them's always new, they don't understand our ways'.

The agricultural round of activities governs many of a farmer's activities. The hours of daylight still tend to dictate how long they work. Tremayne valued his early starts in the morning, which in some ways defined his identity and his localness. He liked to wake up to the early news briefing on the radio, grab a bite of breakfast and a mug of tea as he decided what to do that day, and then head out to the fields and barns to collect his herd for milking or to deliver bales of silage for animals in outlying fields. He derived some pleasure from chugging through the village on his tractor, hard at work, while the incomers were mostly asleep. This, though, he also found frustrating, that he should be out getting dirty, working in all weathers, while those with 'cushy jobs' could take their time in getting up, head out to their cars and drive to a nice warm office somewhere. Simultaneously, he disapproved of their behaviour, which affirmed the value of his. This was reinforced by the fact that as he drove along the main street of the village, he could see lights in the houses of those he recognized as locals—even the elderly tended to get up as early, as they had when they had *had* to rise early to work on the farms.

5. 'Emmet' is explained below.

*The Veterinary Surgeon*

The veterinary surgeon I accompanied most frequently on farm visits was Martin. Having been born and educated in the Bristol area, from primary through to veterinary school, he was recognized as being from the West Country and so was not that much of an 'up-country emmet': he was not *exactly* 'one of us', but neither was he seen as an interloper. The pejorative term 'emmet' is used by supposedly native Cornish people to describe those who have not been born and bred in Cornwall and is recognized as a valid category vividly conveying one's right to be living in the Duchy. Gilligan writes that 'the derogatory term 'emmet' [...] can encompass both tourists and [now resident] outsiders in a deliberately blanketing and hostile manner, but is generally only used to refer to abstract categories of persons rather than to actual individuals' (Gilligan 1987: 78).<sup>6</sup> Until and unless a veterinary surgeon makes a mistake or is perceived to have made a mistake, he or she is usually insulated from being labelled as an 'emmet' because of the clearly useful services being provided. This is in rather sharp contrast to those graphic designers, architects, etc., who, having moved into the heart of the village or into a 'done-up' (converted and renovated) barn, do not produce anything useful, though none the less they openly flaunt their wealth in the form of large cars, 'poncy' mobile telephones, useless dogs, and so on.

*Of Cars and Commuters*

There is thus a cultural difference in the prestige invested in those things which legitimately show wealth according to local cultural norms—such as new(er) tractor and equipment, computer-controlled cattle-feeding equipment—and those forms of ostentation which are locally modelled as non-legitimate. A surprising area of contrast was provided by the Land Rover. This distinctive cultural icon is used by both sides to define themselves, but in different ways. Of late, the four-wheel-drive Land Rover has become a popular vehicle with incomers, and they are a familiar sight both in the village and commuting to offices in the city of Truro and even as far afield as Plymouth. However, without exception, the model of Land Rover that incomers purchase is the Discovery, the model which is explicitly marketed as a leisure vehicle. The farming fraternity, meanwhile, loyally continue to purchase (or mend!) the Defender, the original Land Rover model, which usually lacks the refinements that make the Discovery such a popular buy, such as metallic paint, carpeting and air-conditioning. The Defender is available in the five-seater configuration, but this is almost always rejected in favour of a model

6. For a number of years it has been possible to purchase a car sticker declaring that the driver of the car is not an emmet. The matching term employed in Devon is apparently 'grockle'.



with a canvas hood over a rear pickup section. Thus the Defender is a culturally appropriate vehicle for the locals, while the Discovery, usually pristinely clean and undented, is deemed singularly inappropriate. The locals seem to find something immoral in the sight of a Land Rover which is not a 'working' vehicle, an impression highlighted by their cleanliness.

The metaphor of dirt is a powerful means of elucidating the difference between people (cf. Okely [1983] on Gypsy notions of internal versus external purity). Similarly in many ways dirt is employed to distinguish between true and new locals in and around Penberthy. Farmers and others who have not moved into the area recently tend to prize the dung-bespattered condition of their vehicles and, often, much-mended clothes as markers of their ability and respect for the ethic of hard work. Clichés often heard are that there is 'no shame in hard work' and that 'where there's muck, there's money'. If something breaks down or falls apart, great efforts are made to repair it before its perhaps inevitable replacement. Non-locals, however, would tend to skip the repair-attempt stage, an action which again was endowed with a negative moral value by the locals. Taken through to its logical conclusion, this is best exemplified by the recognized fact that those local farmers with the most wealth do not, in fact, look as if they have very much. While incomers, like as Roger Dunn, originally from the Milton Keynes area, mouth such epithets as 'You never see a dead donkey and a happy farmer on the same day', the farmers and their associated service-industry workers (such as a local tyre-service contractor who mends punctures on large farm plant) admire a dispassionate, dour attitude to life and its endless disappointments—as they model their own existence. The very rich farmer dresses like his fellow farmers, i.e. dresses less well than his poorer friends and colleagues; this is admired, not so much in terms of what people say about him but, rather like the dog that did not bark, in terms of what isn't said about him. Approval, it is important to note, can be gained and marked by lack of display, and also by the absence of disapproval. This is reflected and emphasized in the 'proper' kinds of dress appropriate for going to market or church, where the 'special' suit will be worn.

### *The Knacker's Yard: Identities in Conflict*

The specific case of the knacker's yard crystallizes all the tensions that exist between what we might call the 'traditional locals' and those *arrivistes* in search of a sometimes elusive sense of rural peace and tranquillity. It is a recognized fact, at least among farmers, veterinarians and so on, first that there is a certain mortality rate among livestock, and secondly, that economic criteria cannot be excluded from the rearing of farm stock. The first is common sense; the second relates to the decision of a farmer or herdsman to 'send an animal away' if, for example, it consistently fails to thrive as well as its fellow stock or, in the case of

breeding females, if it repeatedly miscarries or gives birth to below-average young. The time comes when the animal is sent either to a market cull-sale (which means that they progress straight from the market to the slaughterhouse and are not fattened up), or the knacker man is called in. As well as dealing with animals which have died and those which are no longer economic to keep, he also humanely destroys casualties (those with broken legs, etc.). The sites where knacker men operate from are where they bring back carcasses, butcher them and treat the meat so that it is safe for the pet-food trade as well as grinding bones for bonemeal, etc. Of course, these operations create a fair amount of smell, an issue which absolutely galvanized the villagers of Penberthy. Many of those who had moved into the village and bought expensive new bungalows on a ridge opposite the yard, with a commanding view of the village,<sup>7</sup> had been unaware of the smell that would waft up to them when the wind changed direction and when the seasons grew warmer. Singularly unimpressed with this very necessary aspect of the farming industry, they attempted to have the yard closed, or at least moved. Unfortunately for the protesters, knacker's yards are highly regulated by the Health and Safety Executive and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; moreover the knackers were adhering closely to the law.

What, I suggest, the incomers found distasteful and revolting was the fact that while they had been convinced by a multitude of literary and televisual sources that the countryside was an open, honest and welcoming place, a place of tranquility where farmers were decent, if earthy, folk, and where both people and animals lived out happy and healthy lives wafted by Cornish sea-breezes, there were plenty of lacunae in the existential validity of this world-view. What they were highly disturbed to find was that up discreet slopes, tucked away in picturesque villages on the main south-coast road, the countryside and its economy possessed hidden parts which allowed the non-hidden parts (i.e. animals in fields, picturesque farms and colourful farmers) to exist. These consisted of hidden parts of the rural organism, such things as abattoirs, knacker's yards, horse-slaughterers, intensive pig and chicken units and so on. This the incomers somehow saw as 'dishonest'. They remarked that they did not know that such places existed, as though the countryside and the village should reveal all of its faces so that non-rural innocents would not be offended by unpleasant sights or smells.

The reality, of course, is that there is a miscomprehension, a *méconnaissance*, of what the shared image of the countryside is. Everyone sees (topographically) hills, valleys, trees and hedges: the difference between the farmer and the architect is in terms of what one could label 'cultural modelling'. While the cultural modelling of the farmer is non-Arcadian, the incomer is unable to grasp the complexities of agro-economics or the problems caused by leaving gates open and having unruly dogs around sheep. Several incomers indicated that they had

7. Perhaps symbolic of the incomers' aloofness and presumed superiority, Ross and other locals modelled the residential location of the incomers by labelling them the 'high and mighties'.

expected the countryside to be much more similar to the books and films they had read and seen when they were growing up than the more profit-oriented, industrial reality which characterizes modern farming.

There was a connection between this complex of beliefs about what the countryside and its population(s) ought to be and the loops of discourse that were employed. Incomers' speech tended to be peppered with references to peace, quiet, restfulness, the 'slow pace of life', the escape from the daily grind of the 'rat race' of London/Bristol/Milton Keynes, and so on. These were in extreme contrast to, say, the farmers, who could never comprehend there being a 'slow pace of life' when their harvesting equipment or tractor spare-part deliveries were being held up behind tourist caravans in the narrow lanes leading up to Penberthy. In fact, they said, farmers had never been busier, with more paperwork, fewer employees, and more expensive contractors than in the past. They resented the visible leisure time the incomers ostentatiously flaunted (they 'rub our faces in it') with their long walks, hours of gardening, and so on.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, I would like to draw a historical contrast with the example of a working definition of a village published in 1964:

with the changing years has come leisure and new interests. It is in the development of sectional organizations, each catering for special interests of all the inhabitants, irrespective of status, that we may see, not the disintegration of social life, but its enhancement. There are local football and cricket leagues in which village plays village, there are village dramatic societies which compete with one another at drama festivals; groups of villagers can hire a bus for an expedition, and above all there are the Women's Institutes to which all classes belong and at which the most retiring can be 'brought out' by competitions, little exhibitions, and simple games. These are but a handful of village activities. Where they flourish we can say that the village is alive. (Sprott 1964: 88)

Although this sounds quite dramatic, we must conclude that if the village of Penberthy is defined as above—and similarly seen through the discourses of the locals—as such it is dead. There is a radical rupture between the village as it was and is remembered by those locals who had been part of a community—which they say was similar to that in the above quotation—and the village as lived in by incomers. The latter find a certain village ethos largely because the village is now mainly comprised of people who also expect the village to take a certain form and provide certain things which, in the form of a self-fulfilling prophecy, they then ensure that it does. Control of the metaphor of the village has been wrested from

the hands of those local to the area, something which is made manifest in all areas of behaviour, from the composition of the cricket team to pew seating arrangements right through to membership of the Women's Institute. The whole basis of identity and the means by which it is engendered, maintained and reproduced has altered. Even though those who are originally from the area attempt to maintain the relevance of their criteria through use, it seems that this arena of discursive distinctiveness has a limited future. The time-scales of the village, its joint activities and the very landscape itself have been contested by incomers and have thus changed. I contend that through a close analysis of loops of discourse, one can isolate the threads of everyday speech in which these contradictions and conflicts can be viewed. I am reluctant to make any suggestions as to how the present situation could be alleviated: I feel that the solution really lies in the hands of the incomers, to make their approach to Penberthy more sensitive and to hope that this effort will be reciprocated by the locals.

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