

lour. These heirlooms were still evident in the living rooms of the samples of older English houses. In one group of these houses, the original parlour had been transformed into a living room by a process of renovation and upgrading which the housing authority had undertaken. It was noticed how the television set had changed position after these structural alterations.

The use of living rooms and/or dining-kitchens for eating meals was evident in both the English and Australian studies. The historical analysis of English houses revealed that the introduction of the gas cooker permitted cooking activities to move from the living room into the scullery. This social trend developed many years prior to the First World War. It reflected a preference to separate cooking activities from living activities, and this preference was expressed by some respondents in the ethnographic study. The Australian study has suggested that there is a strong public attitude in favour of a visual separation of cooking and eating activities. Furthermore, in the ethnographic study (28 of 48) respondents had carefully positioned an upright refrigerator, a room divider or a preparation bench to screen the cooking area from the dining area. Here, the spatial expression of social ideas was expressed in a variety of ways that were influenced by personal choice.

In both case studies the respondents were asked to discuss preferred arrangements for the planning of kitchens, dining areas and living rooms. Those respondents who did not prefer a living-dining room to a dining-kitchen plan form commonly said that those activities which usually occur in the living room should not be related to eating meals – and the association of cooking smells and dirty dishes. Conversely, those respondents in both samples who had a preference for a living-dining plan form commonly said that they preferred not to entertain friends in the kitchen where dirty pots and pans detracted from the meal. Hence, two clearly different clusters of activities result from these variations in the classification of activities in space: in one system

Fig. 1

The diagrammatic representation of facilities and activities which are spatially associated or demarcated in the houses in Australia and England in this study.

