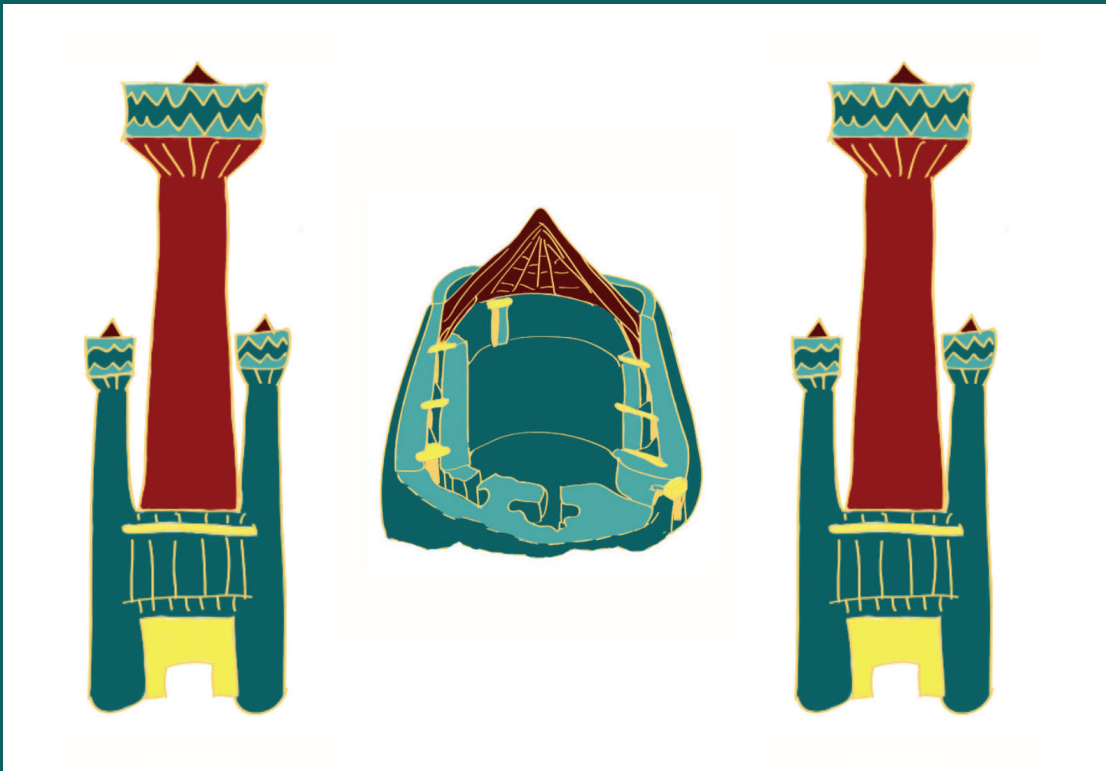




Gardening time

Monuments and landscape from
Sardinia, Scotland and Central Europe
in the very long Iron Age

Edited by Simon Stoddart, Ethan D. Aines
& Caroline Malone



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McDONALD INSTITUTE CONVERSATIONS

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with contributions from

Ian Armit, John Barber, Lindsey Büster, Louisa Campbell, Giandaniele Castangia, Graeme Cavers, Anna Depalmas, Matthew Fitzjohn, Mary-Cate Garden, Andy Heald, Luca Lai, Robert Lenfert, Mary MacLeod Rivett, Hannah Malone, Phil Mason, Megan Meredith-Lobay, Mauro Perra, Ian Ralston, John Raven, David Redhouse, Tanja Romankiewicz, Niall Sharples, Alfonso Stiglitz, Dimitris Theodossopoulos, Carlo Tronchetti, Alessandro Usai, Alessandro Vanzetti, Peter Wells & Rebecca Younger

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On the cover: *Cut out reconstruction of a broch flanked by two reconstructed Nuraghi, reconsidered by Lottie Stoddart.*

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Simon Stoddart

A tribute in honour of Giovanni Lilliu (1914–2012)

Anna Depalmas

Remembering Giovanni Lilliu may seem an easy task. One might think that it is only necessary to list his rich scientific bibliography and to describe his great work over the course of nearly a century, as a university professor and archaeologist. However, a simple listing of his achievements would not transmit the true importance of his work. He not only illuminated the prehistoric archaeology of Sardinia, but also used it to establish the idea of a Sardinian epic which he connected to the modern world.

Prehistory was the choice of his field of study – rather than the predominant exaltation of the Roman era and classicism of the time –, and this had its origins in his study under Ugo Rellini at Rome. He graduated in 1938 and worked as Rellini's assistant until 1942, when he returned to Sardinia to take up the position of Professor of Historical Archaeology and Geography at the University of Cagliari. From 1942 to 1958, he taught various subjects – Paleoethnology, Geography and the History of Religion – and in the latter year became a Full Professor and was appointed to the Chair of Sardinian Antiquity at the University of Cagliari. From 1944 to 1955 he also worked for the Superintendency of Sardinian Antiquity.

He held many posts in his long academic career. He was for a long time, and on various occasions, dean of the Faculty of Letters, Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Arts, Director of the School of Specialization in Sardinian Studies and Editor of the Journal carrying the same name (*Studi Sardi*), and, in 1990, he was elected a fellow of the Academy of Lincei of Rome. In his later years, he remained a very active Professor Emeritus at Cagliari University.

In 1936, while he was still a student, he published his first work on Su Nuraxi di Barumini. This was his birthplace, and throughout his life he maintained a close and almost embodied connection with the village. This also led him to carry out his most important

archaeological work in the landscape of his birth. Indeed, between 1951 and 1956, he worked on excavating an artificial hill there, which was found to cover the nuragic complex of Su Nuraxi di Barumini. This was the first excavation conducted in Sardinia using a stratigraphic methodology to establish a time-line for the nuragic period, and it became a benchmark for later investigations and chronological research. His work at Barumini formed the basis for a series of fundamental papers on Sardinian proto-history, from *I nuraghi. Torri preistoriche di Sardegna* (The Nuraghi, prehistoric towers of Sardinia) in 1962 to *Civiltà nuragica* (Nuragic civilization) in 1982.

He was the first to study many of the themes that he investigated in depth during his long scientific career and many of these were only studied for the first time in the first half of the twentieth century. The chronology of proto-Sardinian civilization was one key field that he developed, modified and changed in the course of his long academic career. At the same time, Lilliu published a brief essay in which he attempted to identify certain constant factors in the history of Sardinian art, and this was developed in the catalogue for the exhibition of Sardinian bronzes in Venice in 1949. Following the theories of Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli on how to classify the art of the ancient world, Lilliu assessed the coexistence of the 'anti-naturalistic' art of the barbarian world and the 'naturalistic' art of the classical world within which he inserted Sardinia as a 'land of pure expression', and defined as anti-classical and barbaric. This line of thought became the nucleus of a theme which he studied from various angles and which helped him to define key concepts in his field of study.

At the beginning of the 1960s, he published his wide-ranging synthesis of Sardinia, *La civiltà dei Sardi dal Neolitico all'età dei nuraghi* (1963) (Sardinian Civilization from the Neolithic period to the nuragic

era). This work was later reprinted, expanded and revised in various editions until 1988. Apart from incorporating the results of later research, the later editions also allowed him to reassess some of his earlier observations with a critical eye, which was always one of his great strengths as a researcher and academic. The book proposed that a single unifying thread ran through Sardinian prehistory from the Neolithic period, even starting in the Palaeolithic period, until the Phoenician conquest. It established elements of the historiography of the island using data obtained from his work as an archaeologist. Many of the principal Sardinian monuments were described in an elegant style which alternated with detailed, creative and lyrical descriptions. The book was aimed at not only archaeologists and students, but also at a wider public, and indeed the book was dedicated to 'the shepherds of Barbagia'. Generations of archaeologists have studied the manual and found themselves cited in later editions, in agreement with Lilliu's global historiographical approach which aimed to unite past archaeological research with his experience of teaching Sardinian Antiquity in a university context. This book also gave birth to a national and popular history of prehistoric Sardinia, and expanded the work of archaeologists and their research from being only something studied in university lecture rooms and solely of interest to academics to its status as part of the common heritage of all Sardinians.

This social dimension, this impact, can be clearly seen from Giovanni Lilliu's popularity, which came from having shone a light on the national history of Sardinia and giving life to a Sardinian historiographical tradition, i.e. one with a strong sense of identity. His fame led to him being consulted, even in the later years of his life, on current events in Sardinia not necessarily related to culture or archaeology and being seen as a kind of prophet or even as the 'father of his country'. One of the many lessons that he taught us, and in which he himself was an expert, was the importance of intellectuals being able to discuss, communicate and talk about complex historical themes in a way which was both comprehensible and of interest to laymen.

He showed a total but clear love for his land by taking on civic responsibilities, which he fulfilled in a way which was never dull but rather vigilant and acute, despite his soft tone. As a cultured man, he worked for the Regional Council of Sardinia, drafting the Special Statute of Autonomy. He was also involved in politics, first as a member of the Christian Democrats and later as a supporter of initiatives which promoted the independence of Sardinia and of progressive positions which were

close to the Centre-Left. In practice, he was active in actions which were designed to give greater value to Sardinian identity and culture.

The ideological basis for these activities were elaborated by Giovanni Lilliu at the start of his intellectual life, and were made completely clear in the 1970s when he developed the concept of 'constant Sardinian resistance'. At the beginning of the first prehistoric phase, the Sardinians were characterized by their resistance to foreign invaders and any attempts at acculturation. This characteristic did not disappear in ancient times, but has been a constant theme of Sardinian history and ethnicity, and is still present today. In this sense, Sardinian culture is not a fossil, but rather displays an extraordinary historical continuity with the past. This is an analysis which never became an idealization of aspects of Sardinian society and behaviour, but rather provided a clear and realistic picture through also identifying its negative aspects and its limitations. Nuragic civilization in particular became a symbol of a polycentric society, always in conflict with itself, the land and foreign invaders.

However, it is certainly limiting to supply a rigid definition of what Lilliu meant by nuragic civilization, given that he saw it as a dialectical relationship between its various dimensions, and worked on a reconstruction of it that was complex and multifaceted. He proposed an interpretation of nuragic civilization that saw it not as local but Mediterranean. In this, he was greatly influenced by his direct experience of excavations in the village of Ses Paisses in Majorca, where he found ethnic roots which were common to all the large islands of the West Mediterranean, the Balearics and Corsica, although there were also differences connected to the independent developments drawing on their insularity.

The fact that he found writing easy as can be seen from his some 330 publications. The last of these was in 2010, and was a detailed description of the excavation of the Giant's Tomb of Bidistili in Fonni. It is worth saying that many of the present arguments about certain elements and problems of prehistoric and proto-historic Sardinia were originally raised by him.

I would like to end this brief and partial memorial to Giovanni Lilliu by mentioning his work as a university professor of prehistoric and proto-historic Sardinia (and not only those subjects – with great versatility he also taught Geography and Christian archaeology). What I will personally remember is his little figure in jacket and pullover (he seldom, if ever, wore a tie), typewritten sheets in hand, and always punctual. He never postponed a lesson and was never

absent. As an examiner he was always courteous and understanding. But you had to be very well prepared for his exams. The end of the course every year was the moment that we all waited for. Then there were the one or two day excursions that he led us on to various parts of Sardinia. We students would present

our explanations of the monuments and he would listen with great attention as if it were his first visit, and then sometimes add some of his own memories, making it ever more clear how he was the creator of our view of prehistoric Sardinia.

He really was the memory of Sardinian history.

Tributes to Dr David Trump, FSA, UOM (1931–2016), and Dr Euan MacKie, FSA (1936–2020)

Caroline Malone & Simon Stoddart

David Trump was best known for his important work on the islands of Malta (Malone 2020), but his contribution to the prehistory of Sardinia is also worthy of record in the context of this volume.

David Hilary Trump took his first class BA in Arch and Anth at Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1955, and was a scholar of both the British School at Jerusalem, where he dug with Kathleen Kenyon, and the British School at Rome, where he excavated the key site of La Starza.

After Malta, Trump held the post of Staff Tutor in Archaeology at the University's Board of Extra-Mural Studies until retirement in 1997, when he was succeeded by Caroline Malone. He not only contributed to the teaching of Mediterranean Prehistory in the Department of Archaeology, but also had a large following in the wider, continuing education community, engaging mature students in all aspects of Archaeology in the region and beyond. It was during this period that he made a major contribution to the archaeology of Sardinia, uncovering once again unsuspected phases of prehistory at Grotta Filiestru (Trump 1983) and completing the survey of Bonu Ighinu. At Grotta Filiestru, he characteristically invested all the resources he could muster into constructing an effective chronology (Switsur & Trump 1983) and some of the first faunal studies undertaken in Sardinia (Levine 1983). This work was, in its way, as equally pioneering as his work on the island of Malta. The Grotta Filiestru produced a new scientifically dated sequence of Sardinian prehistory, identifying the fifth-millennium BC Filiestru Neolithic phase for the first time. In earlier fieldwork he also excavated the cave site of Sa 'ucca de su Tintirriòlu (Loria & Trump 1978). His work around Bonu Ighinu (Trump 1990) is, however, closest to the



Figure 0.1. *David Trump.*

theme of this volume since, in typical energetic style, Trump also provided one of the earliest studies of a nuragic landscape, once again demonstrating a pioneering role, now followed by many others.

Euan MacKie was a central figure in the study of brochs, as is shown by the very high level of citation in this volume (Mackie 1965 ... 2008). In several ways the contribution of David Trump and Euan MacKie run in parallel, one journeying south, the other journeying north also from Cambridge beginnings, both Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of London, engaged in seminal fieldwork, on a shoe string generally with volunteers, providing the first chronological foundations for monuments in the landscape and addressing synthesis of the results. Both were pioneers of their generation who retained their own intellectual independence in museums (both) and in continuing education (Trump), rather than a department of archaeology or a heritage organization.

MacKie graduated in Archaeology and Anthropology from St. John's Cambridge in 1959 and took his PhD from the University of Glasgow in 1973, becoming, after a brief period at the British Museum, Keeper and Deputy Director (1986) of the University Hunterian Museum. As a graduate he took part in an expedition to British Honduras, directing the excavation of the Maya site of Xunantunich, leading to an interest in Mesoamerican archaeology throughout his life.

His excavation of brochs such as Dun Mor Vaul on Tiree, published in 1975, Dun Ardtreck on Skye published in 2000 and Leckie in Stirlingshire published in 2008, were fundamental in uncovering the sequence, material culture and chronology of these monuments. He gathered information for his important three-volume compendium on brochs from his own excavations and the investigations of others, undertaking research well into retirement (1998), publishing the final volume in 2007. These volumes are landmarks of data on the subject, a resource which provides a platform for all broch studies. His achievements were also celebrated in his Festschrift, *In the Shadow of the Brochs* (2002), showing the respect shown to him by younger generations.

He ventured far and wide in his more interpretative work. Some of his interpretations of broch builders and their monuments are no longer widely held and the chronologies are currently being reconsidered, but his stimulating approach to ideas endures. He



Figure 0.2. Euan MacKie on Mousa broch in the Shetlands in 2000 at the Tall Stories conference.

was passionate about many other subjects including his seminal work in prehistoric metrology and archaeoastronomy. The volume *Science and Society in Prehistoric Britain* (1977) was a central work for Glyn Daniel's teaching in Cambridge, and he made the valid point that the sophistication of prehistory is not to be underestimated. His interest in ethnography, no doubt drawing on his Arch and Anth undergraduate career at Cambridge, gave him a great respect for other ways of thinking and for the architectural and political achievements of prehistoric Britain, most notably for the builders of the brochs themselves in the Iron Age.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Simon Stoddart, Ethan D. Aines & Caroline Malone

Gardening may seem worlds away from *Nuraghi* and *brochs*, but tending a garden is a long process involving patience, accretion and memory. Scholars argue that memories are also cultured, developed and regained. The monuments in Scotland and Sardinia are both testament to the importance of memory and its role in maintaining social relations.

The main goals of the conference on which this volume is based were to facilitate dialogue between European scholars on the common theme of memory, monuments and history; to explore the use and reuse of prehistoric monuments; to focus on new interpretations of monuments in Sardinia and Scotland that go beyond architecture; to highlight the rich heritage of memory in Europe and offer new methods of conceptualizing memory; and to disseminate the latest thinking on memory and monuments to the wider academic community. In common with previous conferences in series dedicated to the long Iron Age (Cifani *et al.* 2012; Popa & Stoddart 2014), the conference also accommodated case studies beyond the main regional focus of Sardinia and Scotland. The volume follows a format similar to the previous volumes, edited with invaluable assistance of an early career scholar, in this case Dr Ethan Aines. A short introduction opens the volume and a longer thematic endnote closes it.

Gardening Time is a title that draws on many memories of texts read and monuments observed. In essence, it may be seen as a wrapping of Marilyn Strathern with Richard Bradley, linked into a five-year physical experience of the Great Garden of Lismore in Scotland, and informed tourist visits to Sardinia. It is a title that provides a great metaphorical envelope for the collected chapters that follow, apparently disparate, but linked together by the presence of strong, physical forms that provide context for memories, both from the Past and in the near Present.

The metaphor of the Garden provides a rich analogy for the cultivation of time (cf. Street and Copeman 2014): designing, clearing, digging, planting, drilling, mulching, weeding, growing, trimming, pruning, dead heading, tending, cutting, harvesting, composting, fertilizing, burning and sitting (at least in the modern garden). Prehistoric societies probably generated similar metaphorical associations and allusions, one of the major lessons of social anthropology. Gardening is the imposition of order, but that very order is constantly changing in a way that requires constant attention. The monuments in this volume may provide stability for memory. Nevertheless, an unattended garden or monument, even an English garden, soon becomes a wilderness or a ruinous folly. The garden provides a tension between unregulated nature and degrees of imposition of culture. A garden is also a place that has sensory associations. Memory has many similar qualities, particularly in terms of the relationship to the gardener or the visitors to that garden. The idea also draws on Bradley's *Regained Time* (1987) and *Altering the Earth* (1993), in terms of introducing a strong element of materiality to the processes of memory formation.

The introduction of the material brings the most visible prehistoric monuments (mainly but not exclusively *brochs* and *Nuraghi*) of Scotland and Sardinia into focus with a small foray into comparative European worlds (Mason and Wells). These may seem an improbable conjunction of elements, but the combination worked surprisingly well in the original conference, and the reviewers confirmed the success of the unlikely combination in focusing on two sets of prominent monuments, in implicit comparison. Both *brochs* and *Nuraghi* are prominent features of the modern landscape, even if chronologically and conceptually separate. The *Nuraghi* have their origins in the Bronze Age (Usai this volume; Depalmas this volume; Barber *et al.* this volume). The *brochs* have

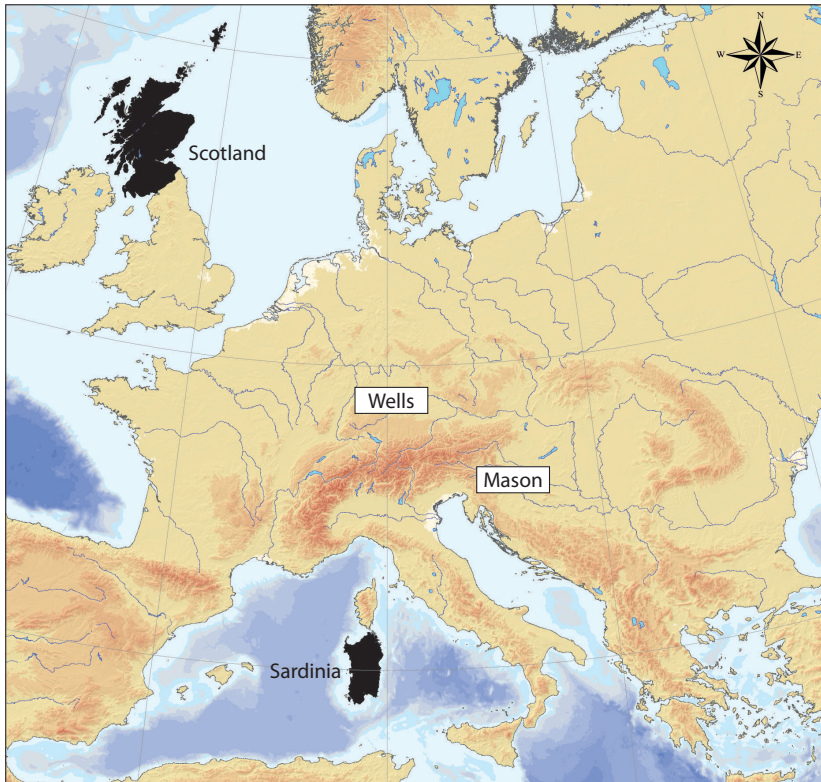


Figure 1.1. The two principal areas covered in the text and the location of the two other articles.

their origin in the Iron Age (Barber *et al.* this volume) and are largely contemporary with a different Roman world. Superficially they look similar, and they share some generalized typologies of simple and complex, but their constructional techniques are distinct and separate. In our editing, we have respected the varied views of the different authors, illuminating the differing memories that scholars as much as the general public have of these monuments. As in common with this series of Iron Age volumes, we have provided a unified bibliography and index, but also given some freedom to each chapter to stand in its own right, leading to some overlap in coverage.

In spite of these separations, the similarities between Scotland and Sardinia, are more numerous than one might initially expect. Both are proud nations with an aura of military prowess that have grown up under the heel of colonialism, both have rich linguistic and musical traditions, both have cuisines declared distinct, and both, importantly for this volume, share similar drystone monuments, brochs and *Nuraghi*. Nevertheless, many of the differences between both Scotland, Sardinia and their colonial oppressors have been exaggerated particularly in reaction to that colonization.

In Scotland, these differences became most pronounced in the period after the Act of Union in 1707. As Trevor-Roper traces, tartan, as we think of it today,

a cloth woven in a geometrical pattern and one of the major symbols of Scotland, seems to have come from Flanders sometime in the sixteenth century (1983, 19). However, its popularity first dates to a pageant devised by Sir Walter Scott. Although Scott rejected the authenticity of the epics of Ossian, written almost entirely by James Macpherson, and another important source of a created, golden age in Scotland (Shanks 2012, 59), he noted that the ancient Caledonians had undoubtedly worn tartan ‘philibegs’ (Trevor-Roper 1983, 18). Only later did the different clan differentiations of tartan really become established. As Hobsbawm (1983, 7) remarks, nationalism was ‘so unprecedented that even historic continuity had to be invented, for example by creating an ancient past beyond effective historical continuity, either by semi fiction or by forgery’.

Cuisine has an important function in emphasizing differences between nations (Murcott 1996, López-Rodríguez 2014) and even within nations (Bourdieu 2010). Porridge (known as oatmeal in America), an icon of Scottish cuisine along with haggis, may have more definitive roots in the past, and it was used, particularly by the English, as a derisive emblem of the Scots in songs during the Jacobite Risings (Hutton 2004). Samuel Johnson noted in his dictionary that porridge was ‘a grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland appears to support the people’ (Johnson 1755). Johnson, who suffered from obesity and

gout (Rogers 1986), could have used a bowl of oatmeal or two, and today, porridge has global appeal, touted by cardiologists as a low-glycemic health food perhaps better for cholesterol levels than statins (Seal 2017).

Likewise in Sardinia, Pecorino, seen as one of the emblems of local cuisine, has a complicated past in regard to colonialism. It was produced in bulk on the island following the Roman conquest in the third century BC, though this tradition greatly diminished following the collapse of the Empire. Yet in more modern times, fromagers (or perhaps more properly *formaggiati*) produced Pecorino predominantly in Latium until the 1880s when, in response to a milk shortage and local prohibition on salting cheese in shops, much of the industry moved *back* to Sardinia (DOOR European Commission 1996). Thus, the cheese became an important local icon during the period following the Unification of Italy, in a time when emphasizing regional differences gained greater urgency. Therefore, while Pecorino has ancient roots, having been celebrated by Cato and Pliny (DOOR European Commission 1996), once again a disjuncture with the past may be observed. These traditions, although lacking what we might think of as direct continuity, are no less important in forming the bases of the imagined communities that comprise nations (Anderson 1983). Further, many of Sardinia's traditions, as in Scotland, such as its rich musical heritage may date back to prehistoric times.

One key issue is how much the monuments under consideration here are part of the public imagination. Clearly the state authorities, Historic Scotland and the Soprintendenza di Sardegna declare them to be so. Is this merely a top down strategy? There is evidence, albeit largely anecdotal, that the approach is more successful in Sardinia than in Scotland (Stoddart this volume).

The articles that follow were invited to reflect on these themes. Some (Hannah Malone, Raven/McLeod, Vanzetti; Stoddart/Malone/Redhouse) reflect with some gusto on the cultivated layers of memory. Others focus on the built monument (Barber *et al.*, Cavers *et al.*, Buster/Armit, Campbell, Lenfert, Perra, Romankiewicz/Ralston, Stiglitz, Tronchetti, Younger). The remainder reflect on landscape (Castangia, Depalmas, Lai, Mason, Meredith-Lobay, Sharples, Usai, Wells).

The volume opens ahead of this chapter with two short tributes to two leading scholars who have worked in Sardinia: Lilliu and Trump. The first was a figure who towered intellectually over the interpretations of Sardinian prehistory, eloquently and sympathetically memorialized by the words of Anna Depalmas. The second is better known for his fundamental work on the smaller central Mediterranean island of Malta, but his contribution to Sardinia, and more particularly

to *Nuraghi* in their landscape was also considerable. What perhaps binds them together was a realization that the public reception and memory of monuments was crucial to their understanding. We have added a tribute to Ewan MacKie who died at the beginning of the year, and who pioneered much of recent modern work on brochs, including their chronology.

The next section considers Built Time. It starts with an explicit comparison between Scottish and Sardinian monuments. Barber *et al.* concentrate on the structural comparison between the two classes of builds, but stress that memory resides in the place rather than the structure itself. Cavers *et al.* see brochs as fluid points in the fluid political landscape. Buster and Armit construct a biography of the memories of Broxmouth, aided by new radiocarbon dating. Campbell examines the depositional strategies, particularly of Roman objects, in reinforcing traditional social concepts. Lenfert transfers the idea of monumentality to island dwellings in Scotland, where practices of reuse may be compared to those of brochs. Perra takes the analysis back to Sardinia, providing an overview of the entangled internal and external memories implicit in the Sardinian monumental sequence. Romankiewicz and Ralston address the question of the timber resources within broch construction and the implication that this holds for long term use. Stiglitz investigates the long-term use of *Nuraghi* after their *original* use, showing another dimension of their entanglement in Sardinian history. Tronchetti addresses the role of the *Nuraghi* in the Iron Age, a period of continued use after the time of their original construction. The final contribution to this section by Younger examines the commemorations in Neolithic henge monuments of Scotland.

The following section places monuments in their landscapes that range outside Sardinia and Scotland into a broader definition of central Europe. Castangia opens the section with a GIS exploration of how *Nuraghi* are linked to visibility and movement, both contributing to memory construction. Depalmas outlines the full ritual context of the *Nuraghi* which must have formed foci for recounting ancestral memories. Lai takes the analysis to the study of the funerary realm redressing some common misconceptions and thus addressing new dimensions of memory. Mason takes the analysis to the hillforts of early Iron Age Slovenia where memory and movement were entwined. Sharples by contrast looks back in time from the Iron brochs at how the tombs of the Neolithic ancestors were a resource for the people of the Iron Age. Usai follows with a survey of the landscape development of the *Nuraghi* and how that interacted with memory in a series of cycles that has similarities to recent research on Malta

down to the detail of protected horticulture (French *et al.* 2020). Wells concludes the section by providing a grand narrative of monuments, material culture and memory in the central European Iron Age.

The final section closes the volume with the layers of time created by monuments. It starts with

a study of the modern Cagliari cemetery (Malone), passing through layers of historical memory in Scotland (Raven/MacLeod and Stoddart *et al.*), and ending with a powerful and wide ranging metaphorical account of nuragic memories (Vanzetti), inspired by this volume's title.

Part I
Built time

Chapter 2

Memory in practice and the practice of memory in Caithness, northeast Scotland, and in Sardinia

John Barber, Graeme Cavers, Andy Heald
& Dimitris Theodossopoulos

The concept of social ‘memory’ (see Shackel 2003; Thomas 2007) as applied to multi-period monuments runs a great risk of being simply teleological. A broch may contain remains dated to the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Early Medieval Periods, presenting the temptation simply to join the dots and produce a teleological narrative linking these potentially unrelated points in a pseudo-history of continuous settlement. This writer, and others (Barber & Crone 2001; Halliday 2007; Cowley 2003) have shown that continuity of settlement even in simple structures is not a first principle, but more often, a desired conclusion masquerading as a first principle, a common logical fallacy (see Mill 1947, Chapter VII). Much prehistoric settlement is of short duration and sequential settlements on the same locus are commonly separated by intervals of abandonment. Where the evidence survives to test this assertion, as in the Alpine lake dwellings (Suter & Schlichtherle 2009, 32–3) or Scottish crannogs (Crone 2003, 110) or settlements in sand dunes (Barber 2011, 50), it is abundantly clear that settlement is intermittent in nature and that the settlement locus reverts to nature in the *inter regna*. It may be argued that these waterlogged or, rapidly sedimenting sites are in some way special but similar evidence exists for the ubiquitous Bronze Age hut circles of the Scottish uplands (Barber 1997, 8–10; Barber and Crone 2001, *passim*: see also Halliday 2007; Cowley 2003). It would require special pleading indeed simply to dismiss the weight of this evidence.

If, for the moment it be accepted that the settlement of brochs may have been of this type, i.e. sequential and episodic, and that the monumental broch structure was not visible during the later settlement episodes then the scope for memory may be embedded in the location or locus, rather than the monument itself (below).

Cultural Landscapes are defined in the operational guidelines to the UNESCO World Heritage

Convention (UNESCO 2008, Clause 47) in the following way:

Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the ‘combined works of nature and of man’ designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal (UNESCO 2008).

The interplay of people and their physical environment specifically as defined in UNESCO’s operational guidelines is referred to here as the ‘people/place relationship’. Settlement on a given locus occurs when the people/place relationships available at that locus favour the exploitation of that place by those people at that time. A naturally defensive position may have been repeatedly, but intermittently, reused as a place of refuge in difficult times because the underlying people/place relationship (here, defensibility) fosters long term if intermittent occupation (with intermittent anthropic deposit formation). The rationalization for reuse, over longer timescales, may lose sight of the pragmatic reasoning for its initial selection and focus instead on a social memory of the traditional use of the place as a refuge in troubled times.

Episodic resettlement on a locus can thus reflect an autocorrelation of people and place *via* some fundamental people/place relationship. It does not, *de facto*, provide evidence of continuity of settlement, on the one hand, nor, on the other, does it demonstrate a causative role for invested memory in predicating reoccupation of the locus.

Concepts and meanings: architecture and engineering

John Ruskin (1989, [facsimile reprint; recté 1880], Chapter 1, 8–9), the great Victorian art critic who had relatives in Perth, defined ‘architecture’ as the elements in a structure that are not essential for its structural integrity, and this is the sense in which the term is used here. The modern term ‘structural engineering’ (Ruskin called this ‘building’) encompasses those elements that are essential for the structural integrity of the building. Engineering differs from architecture in the degree to which it constrains the freedom of the designer/builder to express culturally significant choices. Structural elements constrain the builders’ freedom of choice to those possibilities achievable with the contemporaneous building technologies. For non-structural, architectural elements, the designers’ freedom is relatively unconstrained and they can deploy culturally determined choices to a far greater extent. This distinction between architecture and engineering is perhaps clearer in ancient drystone built structures than in modern buildings. Nonetheless, it is not possible to make an absolutely clear divide between architecture and engineering and indeed, their interplay is the conceptual arena in which architectural tectonics hold sway. As Patrik Schumacher (2012) noted:

If we define tectonics as the strategic utilization of an element’s technically induced morphology in order to address social functions in the articulatory dimension, then tectonics can be redeemed and integrated within contemporary notions of handling form-function relations. We might call this strategy of utilizing technical details tectonic articulation.

Schumacher’s ‘tectonic articulation’ is a useful concept for the consideration of structures and society in the remote past.

The scale of a structure is an architectural factor, used to convey social meanings. Small structures e.g. individual domestic dwellings, display very restricted structural variation within their genre, for example, hut circles are found in almost all periods and in many lands and they were the dominant Scottish built form for over 2,000 years. Ruskin argued that the exploration of cultural choice is naturally restricted to large buildings because small quotidian structures are architecturally too bland to carry much burden of cultural meaning. Archaeologists have long accepted that the scale and monumentality of the brochs and

Nuraghi elevate them to that category of large buildings; Ruskin’s ‘public’ or ‘communal’ buildings. Large buildings are capable of bearing a considerable burden of social meaning which may, in principle, be rediscoverable.

Drystone building technologies

The term ‘building technology’, as used here, refers to the techniques, tools and methodologies deployed in all stages of a drystone-built construction project, from the bedrock quarrying of the stone to the completion of the structure. They influence the scope for structural sophistication as well as for architectural expression, limiting the tectonic articulation of these structures. The morphological and tectonic similarities between *Nuraghi* and brochs arise from their common deployment of a dry stone building technology that relies on horizontal arching, corbelled *tholoi* and cantilevered sub-structures. All of these in turn rely on the natural incompressibility of stone and the immobilization and positional stability of the individual building stones.

Horizontal arching (Fig. 2.1a) creates ring beams, when a circuit of compressed stones is continuous, like the layers within a *tholos*, or beehive-shaped corbelled structure. The stone must not crumble at the contact points and no stone must move out of position (Barber 1992, 24). Segmental horizontal arches (Fig. 2.1b) used as revetments in rectangular floor plans, exploit the same technology, but do not resolve all the forces acting on them and require abutments at either end to contain the unresolved lateral thrusts. Like corbelled *tholoi*, they also require incompressible stone fixed in place with near absolute positional stability.

Corbelling (Fig. 2.1c) is the systematic and sequential superimposition of horizontal arches that reduce in diameter as they rise to achieve a vertical closure which, because it is self-sustaining at every point in its creation does not need scaffolding or centring for its construction.

Cantilevering (Fig. 2.1d) is used to achieve partial closure of a roof space, reducing the span to be covered, by corbelling its margins inwards. Its existence does not necessarily imply that the final closure was by stone; wooden roofing with short beams would have been made easier by this technique.

Incompressible stone was widely used in the construction of *Nuraghi* (mainly volcanic and metamorphic rock types) and of brochs (mainly volcanic and metamorphic on the west coast and mainly hard sedimentary sandstones on the east coast). These are all sufficiently robust not to crumble at the edges at which they adjoin the ring beam.

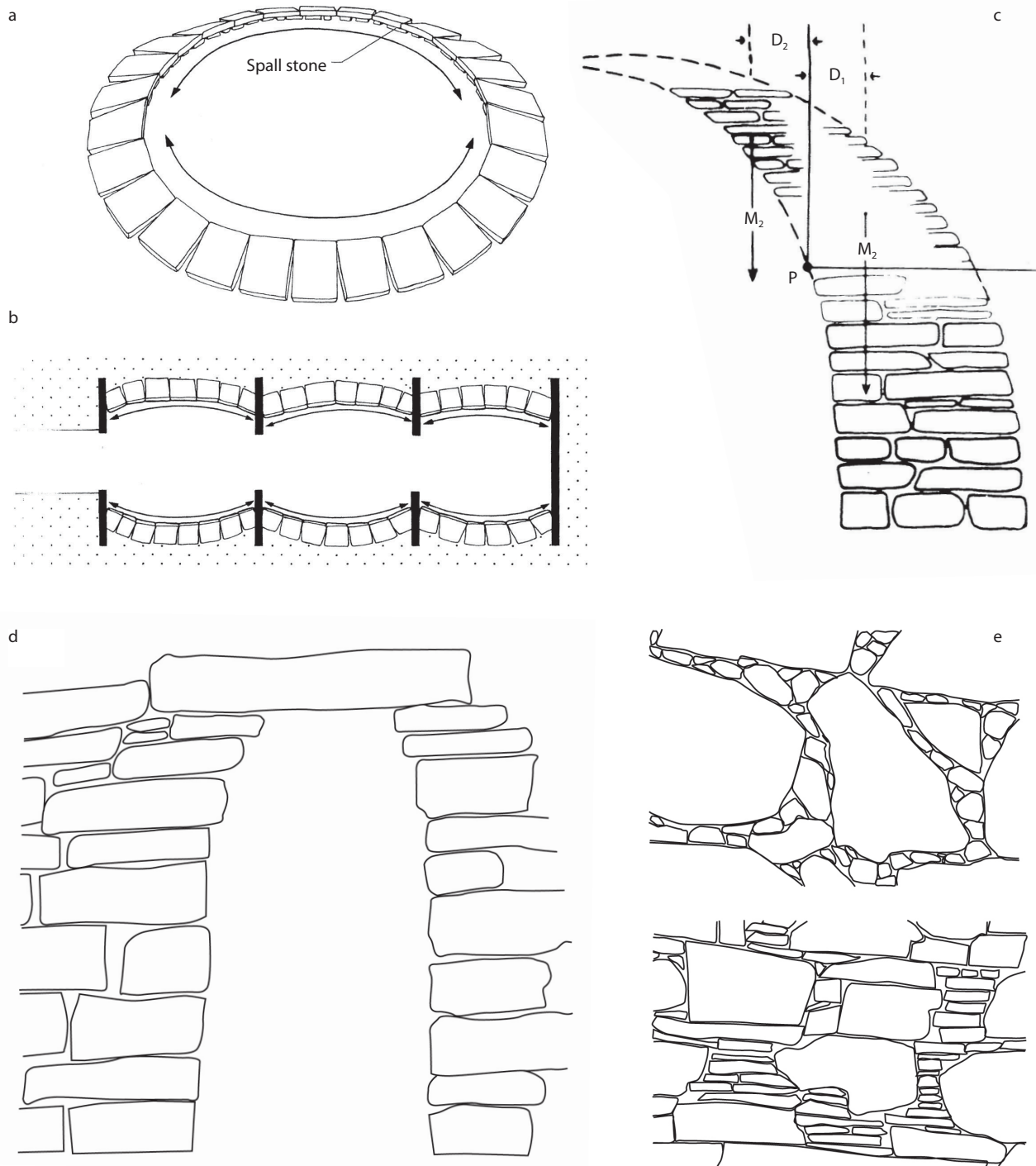


Figure 2.1. Drystone building techniques: a) horizontal arches; b) segmental horizontal arches; c) corbelling; d) cantilevering; e) dense stone packing.

Positional stability of the building stones is a *sine qua non* for the creation of the ring beam effect because structural integrity is lost if its individual components are free to move out of the compressed circuit, even by

small amounts. In brochs, this is secured by panels of pinnings infilling voids between building stones, whilst, in *Nuraghi*, dense stone packing between the large constructional blocks achieves the same end (Fig. 2.1e).

Canonicity and mutability: canonicity

The term 'canonicity', is defined by the OED as '... authoritative; orthodox; standard...'. In this chapter we explore the consequences of architectural canonicity in prehistoric dry stone built structures by which is meant the tendency for structures, especially prehistoric structures to conform to some orthodox or standard design. In historical societies with no, or restricted literacy, architectural canonicity ensured consistency of design by requiring simple initial inputs and deploying known proportionalities to facilitate the transmission of the design concept from client to architect to builder (Schofield 2009, 66–9). Early Christian churches and domestic buildings in Ireland were sometimes specified by a single dimension (Murray 1979, 82–3). The simple wooden oratories of the earliest church in Ireland were so idiosyncratically standard that they became iconic of 'The Church' itself (Bede refers to churches on Lindisfarne constructed of oak, with a roof '...thatched with reeds after the Irish manner...') and are represented in vellum (Book of Kells; Meehan, 1994, 11), metal (House shaped shrines, e.g. Monymusk Reliquary, Eeles 1934, Plate VI) and in the stone capitals of high crosses (e.g. Muiredach's Cross, Clonmacnoise, Richardson & Scarry 1990, 128–9). In the transition to stone built churches the canonicity of the wooden churches yielded to that of simple stone built forms (O'Carragain 2010, 113, *et seq*). Canonicity facilitated church building because, given one dimension (typically the length) all of the structure's other dimensions could be derived from known proportions of this quantum according to a canonical scheme comprehended by the builders.

Architectural canonicity is perhaps best exemplified in the layout of more complex buildings like medieval cathedrals (Stalley 1999, 117–19; Kostof, 1995, 281; Fernie, 1976, 77–86 and Hahn, in Stalley 1999) and whilst some element of *post factum* analysis is detectable in some superficial studies of earlier structures (see Rossi 2003, 2–6 for discussion of the 'Egyptological' phenomenon) the existence of Classical and early proto-historic references to proportional schemes removes any possible doubt about the existence and universality of the process in the construction of large and complex buildings.

Canonicity is a conservative force, ensuring that the complexities of a design (once derived from first principles or from accumulated experience) could be disseminated to less expert workers and still reproduce the design in a safe and usable form. Canonicity resists the introduction of random variation in style or form but, within the canonical framework, some degree of variation is necessarily possible (see for an

extreme example the non-standard form of the Lomello church plan, altered to fit an irregular site, Stalley 1999, 117). Robert Ousterhout (2008, Chapter Three, 58–85), attributes the standardization of church buildings in the Middle and Late Byzantine to the replacement of architects with master-mason equivalents in the building programmes.

Mutability

Humanity's requirements of built spaces vary over time and structures have been modified on scales ranging from minor internal rearrangements to major alterations of the building fabric, in response to socially driven requirements. 'Mutability' as used here, describes a structure's capacity for change.

The radiocarbon dating programme from the excavations at Thrumster broch reveals a complex construction history at odds with the simple appearance of the monument. The latter had been identified by MacKie (2007a, 448) and, pre-excavation, by these writers, as a probable solid based broch. However, the broch's fabric underwent changes of considerable magnitude between c. 400 BC and AD 400 (Fig. 2.2). MacKie has reported clear evidence for reconstruction in the fabric at Clickimin, Shetland (2008) and at Midhowe and Gurness, Orkney (1995). Direct observation of many other sites indicates the probability that their fabrics have been reworked but founding significant conclusions on masonry patterns alone would be rash indeed.

Thrumster broch's fabric was readily modified because it comprises stones of modest sizes. These, unfortunately, are ideally suited for building anything from a stone wall to a large house. It seems very likely that in the Regency refurbishments, stone from Thrumster broch was used during the Regency extensions to the adjacent Thrumster House. Tait (2005, 254–8) has recorded the reduction and loss of many Shetland brochs and their systematic use as quarries. Anderson similarly lamented the erosion of the prehistoric resource base (1883, 184–5). Despite their apparent massiveness as completed structures, brochs were and remain highly mutable during the various periods of their use and vulnerable to down-taking for building materials thereafter. Thrumster, *inter al*, demonstrates that socially driven changes formed part of the early broch biographies also.

Scales of desired social change and of corresponding physical changes

Large scale social change does not always require large scale structural change and the cumulative impacts of many small scale changes can result in large structural

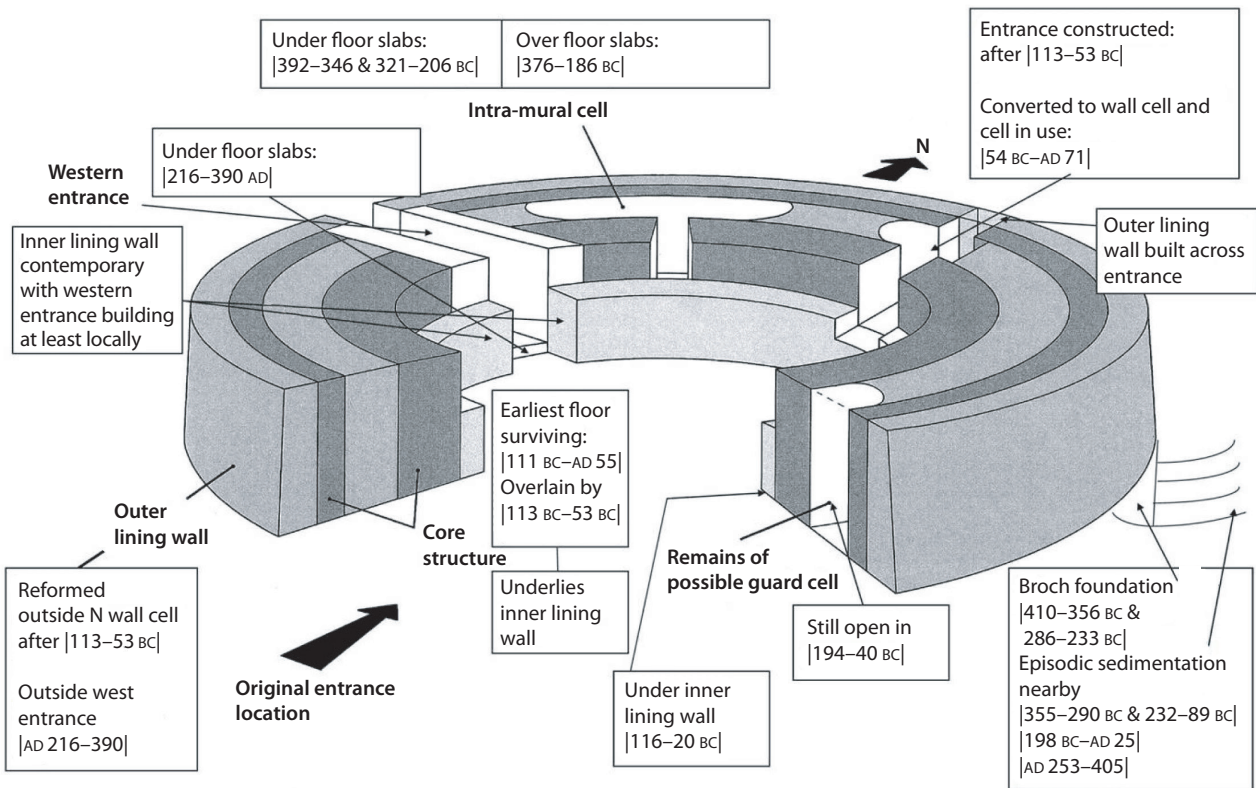


Figure 2.2. *Thrumster broch skeletal chronology.*

alterations. The relationship between structure and the constituent elements of ‘cultural memory’ is neither obvious nor direct (Thomas 2007, 260–6). For example, changes in the use of churches at the Reformation often required only a switch of focus from the high altar to the pulpit, even though the theological change was of the highest possible order (well-illustrated in dreary seventeenth-century paintings by de Witte). The economic investment in the existing structures and the cost of their replacement were also sufficient to deter wholesale change but social factors reinforced this conservatism. In Britain, for example, the process of reformation crystallized around the breeding programme of Henry VIII and was sustained by the collective greed of his ruling elite for church assets. Retention of the old structures to which a bemused populace could turn for spiritual comfort, as they traditionally had done, no doubt tempered potentially destructive responses to divisive and disruptive changes. Thus, theology demanded change, economics counselled conservation and social uncertainty reinforced the drive for conservation of the old forms. It would clearly be unwise to assume that archaeological evidence for great changes in structures demonstrates great changes in social processes or that small changes may be equated with social stasis.

Perhaps all large structures exist in a dynamic equilibrium between the forces of canonical conservatism, augmented by social and economic inertia, and the forces generated by evolving social expectations of the buildings. As the many currently abandoned churches attest, a time is reached in the evolution of the people/place relationship of a structure when the existing fabric is not capable of further modification. At that point the force of social demand exceeds the capacity of the structure for change and the structure is abandoned or demolished.

The monuments: brochs

Brochs are drystone built monuments found only in Scotland and there, concentrated in Atlantic Scotland, a zone that also includes the North Sea littoral. Brochs are widely spread throughout land of arable, if now marginal, quality (see surveys of, for example, brochs in Shetland Fojut (1982) and Caithness, Swanson 1989, 48–9, fig. 6).

Figure 2.3 sets out the terms used here to describe broch features. Brochs are commonly represented as tall structures (up to 13 m high), thick walled (3.5–5.5 m thick) circular structures with external diameters ranging up to 21.5 m with an enclosed area, up to

11.5 m in diameter open to the sky. An enclosed area or 'garth' is contained within a dry-stone-built complex wall. The complex wall, at ground level, contains small cells and is pierced by a single, low, narrow entrance passage usually furnished with door rebates or closing faces, bar-holes and guard cells (Fojut 1981; MacKie 1991, 150–1; Armit 2003, 55–78; Harding 2004, 109–23). Above this level, the complex wall is in fact two walls, separated by up to five lintelled galleries. The inner wall of the complex wall is usually vertical and of uniform thickness (typically about 0.8 to 1 m). The outer wallface of the complex wall reduces in diameter as it rises and the outer wall simultaneously corbels in over its footings, finally to meet with the inner wall just below the wallhead. This differs a little from the standard artist's impression of a completed broch tower (Armit 1996, 126) with wooden internal mezzanines and other features is based on the form of Mousa broch but, while Mousa is a broch, no other broch is a Mousa (Fojut 1981).

A projecting stone ledge forms a scarcement, to support a floor structure. These may have been mezzanine floors, given the common observation of large hearths in the centre of the ground floor and the absence of alternative ingress for daylight. Some broch excavations have revealed traces of post holes in the garth whose erstwhile posts may have supported the mezzanine floor (MacKie 2002, 6). No broch wallhead survives and there is no direct evidence for the nature of their roofing (but see Romankiewicz (2011) for reasoned speculations).

Competing taxonomies of the brochs (see Hedges 1987, Vol III for discussion) were, in the 1990s abandoned and all 'broch types' were subsumed within the general category of 'Monumental Atlantic Roundhouse' (Armit 1992, 22–51; and see Armit 1996, 109–36; and Armit 2003, 13–17 for overviews). Armit (2003, 16), argues that the term 'broch', *sensu* 'broch tower' can be usefully applied only to those structures exhibiting physical remains of a high hollow wall containing superimposed galleries. MacKie (2007a, xliv–lx), however, has identified 78 specific monuments to which he attributes at least a second storey. While the NMRS records some 573 actual, possible and probable 'brochs', structural details can only be observed at about 150 examples. MacKie's list therefore suggests that over 50 per cent of those monuments for which some level of observation is possible were in fact broch towers. The absence of 'Duns' from this listing does not invalidate this statistic, but should be noted.

The spectrum of forms in which Monumental Atlantic Roundhouses exist places the classic broch tower at the more complex extreme, the other extreme being occupied by Simple Atlantic Roundhouses,

like Bu (Hedges 1987, i), Pierowall (Sharples 1984), Quanterness (Renfrew 1979), Tofts Ness (Dockrill 2007), St Boniface, Orkney (Lowe 1998) and Crosskirk (Fairhurst 1984). These low-walled structures have no known intra-mural features or stairs and it is argued that some or all of them were probably built in the first half of the first millennium BC, i.e. pre-500 BC; a view whose confirmation is not helped by the impact of the Hallstatt Plateau Effect on their radiocarbon dates. These, apparently non-tower structures amount to 6 examples, or around 4 per cent of those c. 150 monuments for which some level of structural detail can be observed.

In the current 'standard model', Monumental Atlantic Roundhouses, divide into three significant sub-sets; Simple, Complex and Broch Towers. It further suggests that the Simple form progressed to Complex forms between 500 and 200 BC. The broch towers are viewed as a specialized form of Complex Atlantic Roundhouse which may have emerged around 200 BC (see Armit 2003, 51). Excavations in Caithness (Heald *et al.*, forthcoming; Cavers *et al.*, this volume) and Orkney (e.g. Carruthers 2013, 23–4) suggest that broch towers were often reused, in truncated form, as roundhouses, in the fourth and later centuries, probably by peoples conventionally described as Picts.

Village-type settlements were built around broch towers and other complex Atlantic roundhouses in Orkney and the northeast mainland (see Armit 1990c, 438–40; Foster 1989). Traditionally believed to be Pictish in date, Cavers *et al.* (elsewhere in this volume) present evidence that some at least were contemporaneous with the main period of broch use. In the Western Isles, nucleated settlements are unknown and isolated Complex Atlantic Roundhouses remain the Hebridean norm.

Nuraghi

The *Nuraghi* of Sardinia are described and discussed *in extenso* by our Sardinian colleagues elsewhere in this publication where authoritative descriptions can be found (but see Lilliu 1988, and Moravetti 1998a & 2000 for detailed plans, sections and descriptions of the *Nuraghi* of central-west Sardinia; see also Depalmas & Melis 2010 for their environmental context). Instead, only those features of *Nuraghi* on which the thesis of this chapter relies are presented here. As aliens to Sardinia, the writers are conscious that their observations and conclusions may be superficial and we look to our Sardinian colleagues to correct us where necessary. Much of the following account is derived from the works of the last named scholars, Lilliu, Moravetti and Depalmas & Melis, to whom we acknowledge our

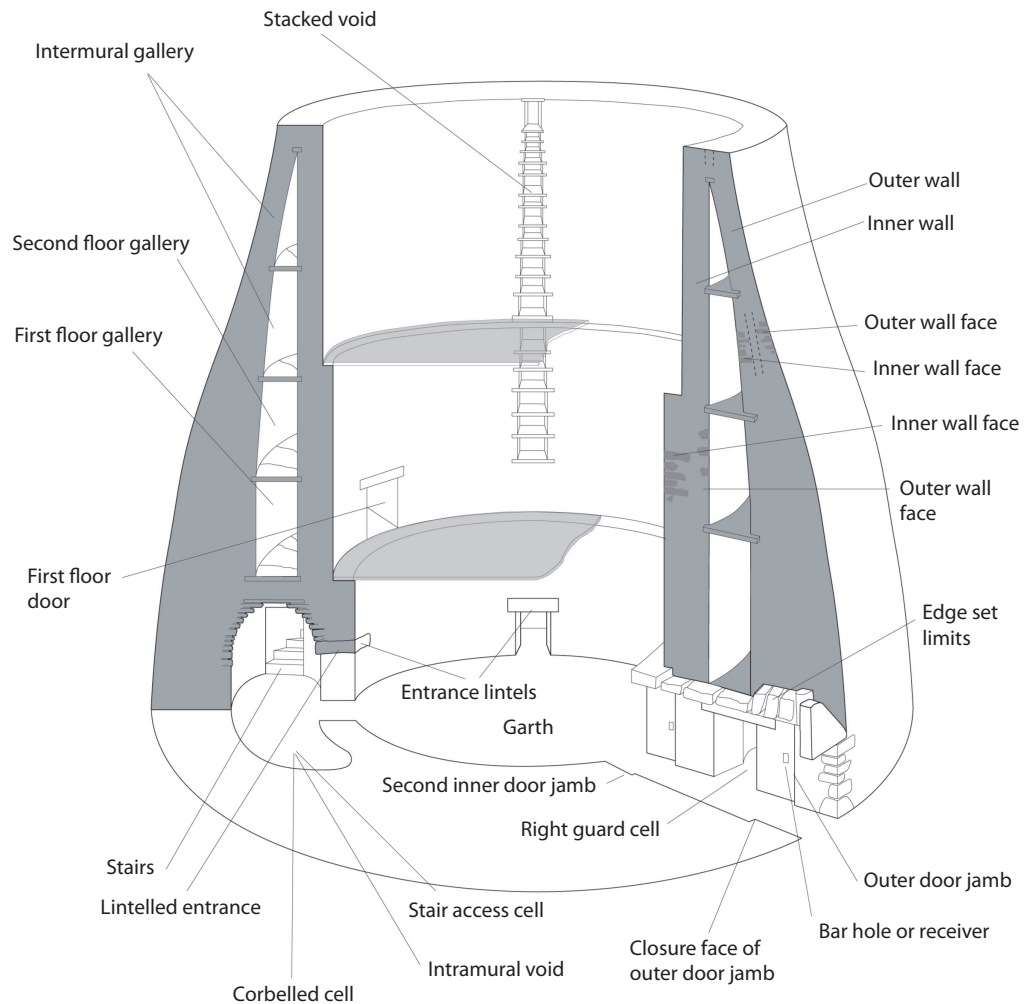


Figure 2.3.
Broch terminology.

debt. One of us [JB] has visited and observed some 35 *Nuraghi*, including all of those referred to here.

Depalmas & Melis (2010) suggest that nuragic towers were first built as single, truncated cone shaped monuments in the period 1700 to 1600 BC. The local agglomeration of isolated towers began in the interval 1600 to 1350 BC and culminated, between 1350 and 1200 BC, in nuragic complexes with up to 6 (more usually 3, 4 or 5) nuragic towers enclosed within a curtain wall. At all stages, the nuragic towers were surrounded by a village-like arrangement of small, mainly domestic structures. While the towers persisted, it is extremely unlikely that any towers were built after 900 BC and the villages continued in use well into the Iron Age.

Nuraghi are taller than the brochs with which they have been compared, by Anderson (1883, 193) and by many others. *Nuraghi* are, in some cases, twice as tall as brochs but single nuragic towers, in general, have smaller external radii, so that the total volume enclosed by the outer wallface of a *Nuraghe* may, on average, exceed that of a comparable broch by only about 30

per cent of the volume of the broch. However, whilst the broch encloses a large garth which is not roofed in stone, the *Nuraghe* is massively built and contains up to three superimposed *tholoi* (Depalmas & Melis 2010, Fig. 11.5), reducing in scale with height. The *tholoi* are accessed by a helical stair, running between the external wallface and the inner *tholos* constructions. The massive nature of the build of *Nuraghi* gives values of up to 50 tonnes of masonry per square metre (tpsm) of enclosed floor space for single *Nuraghi* and perhaps twice as much for the nuragic complexes. In comparison, an average broch required some 35 tpsms (including the garth amongst the enclosed spaces).

Unlike brochs, some *Nuraghi* survive to wallhead height and the architecture of the wallhead arrangements are elaborate. They are machicolated, with a battlement wall carried on projecting machicolous stones, many of which survive (see Depalmas & Melis 2010, Figs 11.5 & 11.6, for examples). In addition, replicas and models of *Nuraghi* were manufactured in stone and metal and these replicate the wallhead

arrangements. These models are associated with 'meeting huts' which are usually the only circular village structures whose interiors are composed of cut and ground stone. The model nuragic tower stood within a shallow but well-made stone basin raised on a plinth. In later nuragic Period structures, altars are found, the corners of which are skeuomorphic representations of nuragic towers. It is suggested that the use of these representations of *Nuraghi* are late in, or post-date, the main periods in which the *Nuraghi* were built, and were possibly used in the Iron Age when the *Nuraghi* had ceased to function as domestic residences.

Post-construction biographies of brochs

Thrumster broch underwent a high level of modification and reuse within the envelope of the original building and during the first Broch period, i.e. between 400 BC and AD 200. The estate history records the removal of what was most probably a settlement around the broch during the Regency remodelling of the monument as a garden feature (Barber *et al.* forthcoming). Circum-broch settlement in the northeast mainland and Orkney were in intermittent use until the end of the first millennium AD. During these reuse periods, the broch was generally reduced in height to one or two storeys and the interior, if not filled and built over, was often reconfigured for use as a domestic residence. Finally, isolated burials were inserted into the mounds of decomposing broch and settlement in the Pictish and Norse periods, and new, rectangular structural forms were built from the displaced stone.

Modern archaeological claims that brochs were iconic can only have been true when their massive structures were still visible. Those involved in the later reuse of broch sites probably had no conception of the broch tower when they reused the locus; which in many cases would have been reduced to a mound of loose stone, or even grassed over by then.

No original or authentic legend, tradition or myth regarding brochs survives to us and they are not mentioned in any early texts (in contrast with, for example Irish ringforts and some Scottish hillforts) and the names by which their builders knew them are unknown to us ('broch' being of Norse origin). Therefore, the original cultural relevance of brochs was lost for a period, after which successive societies created false etymologies to embody broch remains in their own cultures.

The Pictish reuse of brochs was probably an attempt to legitimate the territorial claims of newly emerging princlings by association with the major residences of an earlier and possibly by then an heroic age. Monumental even in decay, their reuse for burial

may have been founded on the perception of that derived monumentality with which association was sought for the dead. This exercise in 'manufactured memory' is a consequence, possibly an unintended one, of a false etymology deployed to explain the monumentality of the remains.

In essence, the broch tower may have been iconic in its own time, but being highly mutable its native iconicism was lost, as its mutability facilitated its progressive degradation, the monument gradually being subsumed within its altered social roles, until the iconic tower monument was finally forgotten. Impressive in decay, it attracted adulatory reuse following its abandonment and elicited a reassessment of its social meaning, based on false etymology, when, its garlands dead and its Gods fled, it was deemed an appropriate burial mound for the occasional Pictish, Viking or Norse burial. It was the locus of the broch rather than the broch itself that retained access to social relevance over the greater part of this period. Sadly, many modern Scots seem never to have heard of a broch and consciousness of the broch's contemporary iconicism seems largely restricted to archaeologists.

Post-construction biographies of *Nuraghi*

As noted above, the massiveness of the *Nuraghi*, and of their individual building stones, render them highly immutable, resistant alike to social and natural vectors of change. The inherent stability of the nuragic structure and the high cost of deliberate down-taking have militated against the loss of *Nuraghi* over time. Depalmas (2012, 172; referencing Contu), suggests that some 7,000 of the 9,000 *Nuraghi* originally built still survive, and records exist for a further 1,000. Their massive numerical and structural presence in the living Sardinian landscape has ensured that they have served as icons of Sardinian local, regional national and international identities, from their construction to this day. When their immutability eclipsed their social functionality, society pointed to their iconic status rather than their pragmatic functionality as the social validation of the nuragic form. For a time, they were venerated in effigy and even when this tradition passed, nuragic ruins continued to act as icons throughout the more recent past, even as they do for contemporary Sardinians.

Conclusion

Drystone building technologies limited tectonic expression, required canonicity and reinforced conservatism in large and or complex structures. Roofing by corbeling the internal space was not technically feasible for

brochs and was possible with *Nuraghi* only by massive building.

The people/place relationship on the sites of brochs continued to refocus upon broch sites even when the broch was forgotten. However, the *Nuraghe* was so dominant and powerful a symbol that it created around itself a 'nuragic landscape' that restricted the people/place relationship to a people/*Nuraghe* relationship; it became its own cultural landscape and persisted in that respect to this very day.

Canonicity implies a guiding mind. The idea that individual communities could each arrive at a canonical form independently is improbable in the context of a large and complex structure. A social mechanism that shared information and influence above and beyond the local and even regional level is strongly implied.

Mutability, as evidenced at Thrumster broch facilitated frequent changes which may have owed their inspiration to individual whim, evolving architectural fashion or the coercion, moral or physical, of more powerful neighbours. The undoubtedly complex relationships between social pressures and the physical organization and reorganization of brochs may yield to further field work. The immutability of *Nuraghi* rendered them immune to social pressures whose existence may be more easily explored in the surrounding settlements and the rich artefactual assemblages they contain.

Memory was embodied in the construction of brochs and *Nuraghi* and modulated in the mutability of

the former but crystallized in the permanence of the latter. Brochs were forgotten and subsequently reinvented (after AD 400) for other uses in which disparate acts of memorialization, founded on false etymologies, may have included aggrandisement of new polities, creation of appropriate burial sites for the 'special dead', Christian efforts at liturgical sterilization of ancient respected places, quarries for new constructions on site and elsewhere, and so on. *Nuraghi* encapsulated memory and by their dominance, formed and constrained it, restricting evolution to agglomeration into complexes. The term '*Nuraghe*' is thought to be a Bronze Age survival and since then, the monumental form has retained its cultural significance as an icon of *Sardo* identity.

Large structures, perhaps all structures, exist in a dynamic equilibrium between the forces of canonicity and conservatism on the one hand and those of mutability and differential social pressures on the other. Drystone built structures may prove more highly mutable that at first appears but if massively built, remain immutable. But social pressures for change need not manifest themselves in the physical realities of the monument. Economic pressures rather than structural tectonics abbreviate the lives of modern structures when their inability to mutate to higher revenue-generating forms falls below a rate commensurate with the burgeoning greed of their owners. It will be hard to detect social mechanisms like this from site studies unless more, and more extensive, excavation is undertaken.

Chapter 3

Monuments and memory in the Iron Age of Caithness

Graeme Cavers, Andrew Heald & John Barber

Scotland's brochs, and particularly the broch village complexes that typify the later prehistoric settlement record of the north mainland, Orkney and Shetland, are often thought of as enduring monuments of Iron Age society: towers of prehistory that are relevant in discussions of archaeology from the mid-first millennium BC to the early medieval period. Recent research in Caithness (Fig. 3.1), however, is beginning to demonstrate the nuances of development and reconfiguration that are attested in the drystone construction of broch complexes, suggesting a dynamism in the development of broch settlements that is often masked by the impression of their longevity. This chapter considers how the revision of sequences based upon surface survey has brought about a change in our understanding of the role of brochs in Iron Age society, and may lead to a more nuanced view of the development of Iron Age society in the north.

It is now nearly 20 years since the publication of Heald and Jackson's paper, 'Towards a Research Agenda for Iron Age Caithness' (Heald & Jackson 2001). That paper reviewed evidence for Caithness and considered a range of scenarios in explanation for the remarkable arrangement of brochs found there. Many of the questions posed by the Caithness Iron Age could be exemplified by the Keiss cluster, where three quite different broch settlements, with apparently overlapping occupation sequences are found in very close proximity. Should the close proximity of these sites be attributed to chronological succession, varied function or varied status?

Heald and Jackson considered the bases upon which our judgements on these issues were made, and suggested that 'status' of individual settlements was assessed on flawed criteria, such as access to imports and sizes of structures (2001, 142). They stressed that, given the complexity and close juxtapositioning of many Caithness brochs, if we were ever to reach a

fuller understanding of Iron Age Caithness, then we would have to broaden our methodological approach and consider more than one site: it would be necessary to consider issues of structural complexity, location, inter-site patterning, and the fluid and developing nature of the Caithness landscape. By taking such an approach it may be possible to model the dynamic and changing character of contemporary social and political arrangements. Focussing on one site, they stressed, would only lead to a partial and simplistic view of Iron Age Caithness.

The broch 'icon': a creation of archaeological historiography or the reality of Iron Age political geography?

Heald and Jackson were attempting to clarify the apparently monolithic impression of Iron Age Caithness presented by simple distribution maps: the area has almost 200 brochs, a far greater density than any other area of Atlantic Scotland. This is the crux of the issue in Iron Age Caithness: the tension between the apparently very large numbers of brochs and their interpretation as symbols of power and authority (e.g. Barrett 1981, 215; Hingley 1992, 40). The examination of this conventionally accepted view of brochs (and to some extent Iron Age monumentality more generally) is one of the key issues considered by our research in northern Scotland.

The implication of endurance and longevity, exemplified in the title of the monograph report of the Howe (*Four Millennia of Orkney Prehistory*, Ballin-Smith 1994) is recurrent in descriptions of Iron Age settlement, particularly in northern Scotland, establishing brochs as physical and iconic landmarks in the landscape of prehistory. The concerted efforts of numerous campaigns of excavation, largely in the 1990s by Edinburgh (Harding 2000) and Sheffield

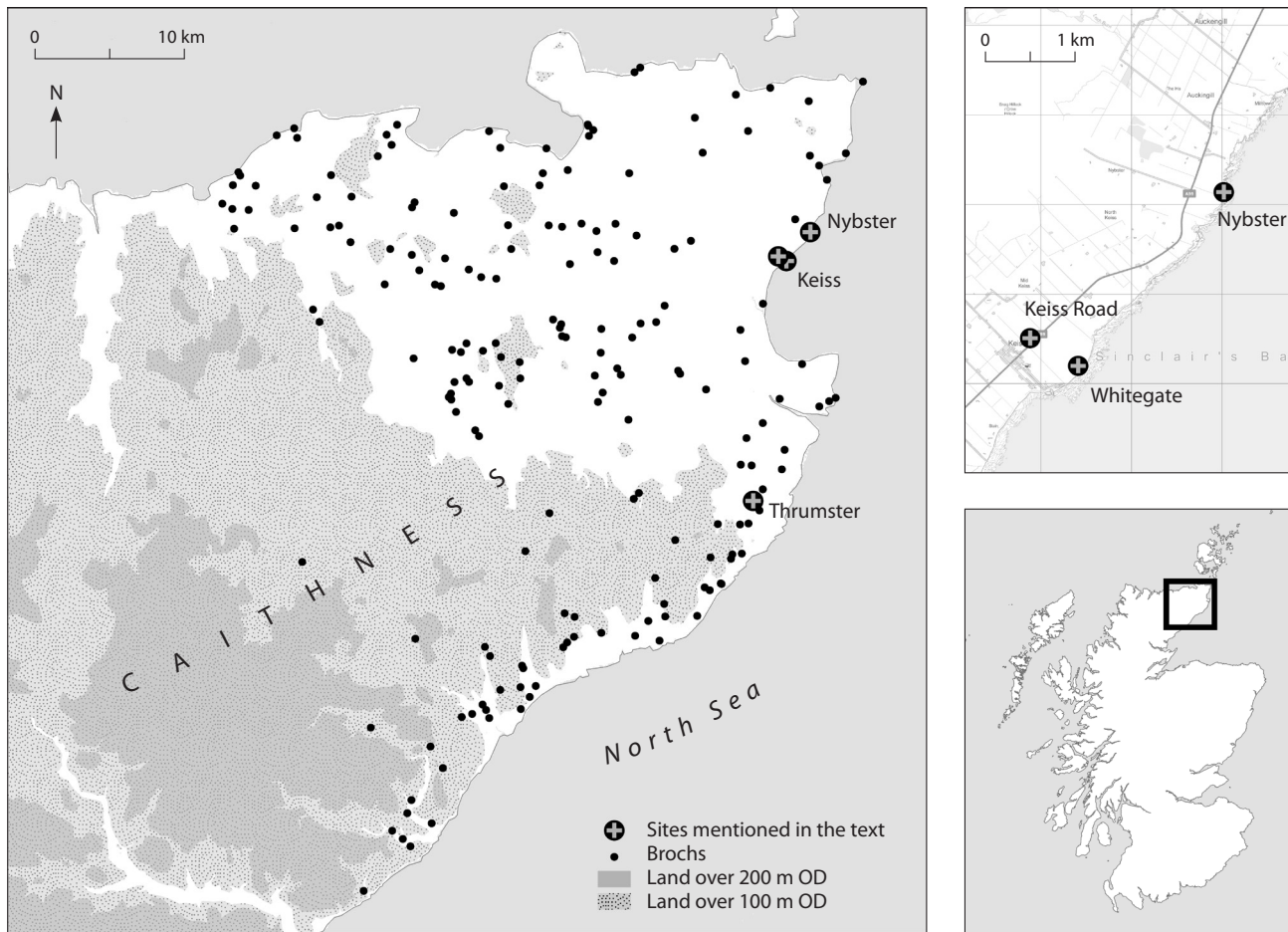


Figure 3.1. Location of Caithness and distribution of broch sites.

(e.g. Parker Pearson & Sharples 1999) Universities and latterly by Bradford at Scatness (Dockrill *et al.* 2010) have pushed beyond reasonable question the origins of broch towers well into the middle third of the first millennium BC, demonstrating clearly that broch settlements were indeed relevant in Iron Age society for a remarkably long time: at least three or four centuries and very probably longer. Studies of brochs and broch landscapes have always struggled, however, to reconcile convincingly the variability of design in brochs and broch-like structures across geographical space and through time, and while problems of chronology inherited from twentieth-century diffusionist agendas compressed the currency of brochs into an improbably brief historical horizon, other geographical studies have perhaps been guilty of the opposite mistake, uncritically taking broch distributions as representative of the complete configuration of the settled landscape.

One of our principal research aims in our Caithness work, therefore, has been to try to understand the

socio-political context that gives rise to the brochs, and how that changes through time. As is often reiterated, Caithness has more brochs per square kilometre than any other region of Scotland, and a fair percentage of the overall total. Several of the larger broch settlements of the county were certainly on the scale of Gurness, Midhowe and Lingro in Orkney, but it is clear from careful examination of these sites that their histories were long and complex, and that radical reconfiguration, rebuilding and reorganization was the norm rather than the exception. At face value, then, Caithness offers an opportunity to evaluate the interrelationships between Iron Age settlements, to explore their relative status within society and to examine the definition of the broch icon within the societies that created them.

From the offset, however, we are faced with the dilemma of the fluidity of broch settlement configuration and the density of the apparent nodal points of Iron Age activity in Caithness. Ongoing excavations at brochs in Caithness are beginning to demonstrate



Figure 3.2. Survey of Nybster broch 'village'.

that what appear to be static and unchanging monuments in the prehistoric landscape were in fact highly plastic in both form and function, with individual structures regularly undergoing radical redesign over short periods, changes that must surely be seen as direct responses to changes in the social and political context of the area.

Surveying the foundations in Caithness

The unique experience of the antiquarian period in Caithness, and in particular the enthusiastic efforts of the mining entrepreneur Francis Tress Barry (e.g. Anderson 1901), has meant that a large number of sites are open and clear of rubble, meaning that the wall faces of roundhouses and their external village-like settlements are exposed and visible. Detailed surface survey of such sites, inspecting build characteristics and stratigraphic relationships has allowed us to arrive at broad relative chronologies for the development of substantial roundhouses and associated cellular

'village' phases on these settlements, even in the absence of modern excavation. At Nybster, Keiss Road and the Keiss foreshore brochs investigated by Tress Barry it was possible to identify phases of construction and build a relative chronology as the hypothesis to be tested by excavation (Fig. 3.2).

Sequences built on superficial survey alone can only provide relative chronologies, however, and the net effect of this is the simplification of the biographies of what we now know are extremely fluid configurations of settlement. The use of comparanda from other settlements to provide chronological 'hooks' to hang the sequences on contributes to the impression of continuity: by matching morphological characteristics of buildings to cherry-picked examples from better-dated settlements, the characteristic arrangements of dated horizons recognizable on model broch complexes creates the temptation, unjustifiably, to envisage an uninterrupted developmental evolution of settlements like Nybster and Keiss Road over the course of some 800 years.



Figure 3.3. *Aerial view of the broch at Nybster, Auckengill, Caithness (photo: RCAHMS).*

Excavation at three Atlantic roundhouse sites – Nybster, Thrumster and Whitegate – have led us to question the impression of continuity given by the face value of the evidence. Where we have looked closely, and tested sequential hypotheses, we see that far from the enduring monuments of prehistory, the brochs settlements of Caithness were plastic and malleable to the changes of prehistoric society, and that the function (and therefore very likely the perceived meaning) of thick walled circular buildings was far from static over the centuries of their use.

Nybster: a study in Iron Age settlement development

Nybster broch is one of the most substantial broch settlements known in Caithness (Fig. 3.3). It was clearly a major settlement of the Iron Age centuries, with an extensive external ‘cellular’ village centred around a massive-walled roundhouse. The rabbit-warren effect of Sir Francis Tress Barry’s excavations have left us with an incomplete jigsaw puzzle to be interpreted by survey and trial excavation, but on the basis of observable physical relationships and alignment with wider paradigms a relative chronology and bracketing

absolute chronology for the development of the site was constructed.

Our hypothesis of the site’s chronology was tested by excavation of what we anticipated were the two ends of the site’s chronology: the phase 1 enclosing rampart (considered to represent the early enclosure of the promontory, perhaps similar in style to Midhowe’s primary rampart; Hedges 1987; MacKie 2002, 239) and the phase 3 cellular or ventral roundhouses (similar in form to ‘Pictish’ structures investigated in Orkney and the Western Isles (Neighbour & Burgess 1996; Ritchie 1979). Several of our assumptions were disproven by the results, and we were forced to re-examine the impression of longevity presented by desk-based study of building forms.

Our working hypotheses for the investigation of Nybster was that the site comprised an early to middle Iron Age enclosed promontory containing a broch tower (albeit of peculiar type, since it appears to lack any of the complex architectural features associated with complex Atlantic roundhouses) and subsequent ‘Pictish’ period cellular-style settlement of the type familiar from many other excavated settlements in the north. Our investigations, however, of the so-called ‘Pictish’ figure-of-8, or ventral buildings



Figure 3.4. *General view of the cellular building, OB2, at Nybster, during excavation.*

have encountered well preserved occupation deposits that have been radiocarbon dated and that show that these buildings were probably well established by the later first century AD (Fig. 3.4). The previously simple picture is furthermore complicated by oblong stalled structures, of the type identified and dated to Howe's phase 8 in the fifth and sixth centuries AD (Ballin Smith 1994), but also to late phases of other sites like the Wag of Forse (Curle 1950). OB3 at Nybster had been taken as an example of this class of building, but it shares a wall with a cellular roundhouse which can now be stratigraphically tied to a construction horizon in the first or second centuries AD.

The defences

The enclosure defences at Nybster further complicated the sequence. Again, on the basis of surface survey, this structure seemed stratigraphically secure in the earliest phases of the site, probably contemporary with the Atlantic roundhouse and possibly even stylistically similar to the blockhouses of Shetland, now generally agreed to relate to the earlier phases of broch chronology (see discussion by Harding 2004, 150). Excavation of the rampart demonstrated, however,

that the Nybster rampart was very much a composite structure, the latest and most monumental phase of which involved a major remodelling of the entrance to create a massive complex-walled rampart (Fig. 3.5), accessed via a causeway over a ditch that was at least 3 m deep. Radiocarbon dates place the construction of this massive, second-phase rampart in the first to third centuries AD, while dates from the collapse were returned in the fifth/sixth centuries AD.

Nybster: discussion

The results of this excavation not only give us cause to review the sequential position of massive walled enclosures of Iron Age settlements in the north, but also raise very interesting questions over the concept of settlement monumentality in the post-broch period. From a methodological point of view, it is worth stressing that our understanding of this sequence could only have come from our decision to excavate trenches placed over the walls of these structures, not between them.

The Nybster experience in the first instance illustrates the care that needs to be taken in the application of general sequences across large areas of northern



Figure 3.5. General view of the Nybster rampart during excavation.

Scotland. Excavations very quickly demonstrated that the impression of longevity given by surface survey was misleading, and that there was no need to pull the chronology of the ventral roundhouses into the middle centuries of the first millennium AD as might have been tempting based on parallels with other sites. These structures, as well as the most monumental phase of the enclosing rampart's use, were probably well established by the first century AD.

The Nybster sequence, furthermore, sounds a clear warning against the simplistic assumption that domestic monumentality declined in the centuries following the peak of broch building activity, perhaps in the period following the turn of the millennium. As we have seen, the settlement would have been an imposing fortification, with the undeniably monumental rampart positioned above a deep rock-cut ditch creating an imposing structure. Again, this most monumental phase of enclosure probably occurred in the post-broch period, in the first or second centuries AD, and must surely indicate that the concept of domestic monumentality went far beyond the broch tower alone.

The Phase 1 rampart and roundhouse remain undated, but pre-date the first/second century reconfiguration and both are placed on a plough soil 20 cm

deep, implying they were planned contemporaneously and as the primary structures on the promontory. A reliable *terminus post quem* remains to be demonstrated, but is certainly in the earlier Iron Age, and may be comparable for those obtained from Gob Eirer, a coastal promontory fort on the Isle of Lewis, spanning the ninth to fourth centuries BC (Nesbitt *et al.* 2011, 47–8). The well known broch villages of the north, then, might tend to lead us towards a view of continuity that may not be represented by the excavated evidence. Where relative chronology is tested, the impression is of constant reconfiguration and rebuilding, perhaps reflecting short term ebbs and flows of the significance of these sites in the local political landscape.

Thrumster broch

Similarly, the excavations at Thrumster broch brought into focus just how malleable the Atlantic roundhouse structures of the northern Iron Age really are. Like Nybster, Thrumster broch had been cleared out by antiquarian investigators in the nineteenth century (MacKie 2007a, 448), meaning that our excavations were able to investigate all phases of the site's construction evident in the readily exposed stonework.



Figure 3.6. *View of the galleries at Thrumster broch, during excavation.*

The results demonstrate a long and complex history of construction, modification and alteration over the course of several centuries.

Like the Nybster roundhouse, on the basis of surface survey, Thrumster was peculiar, lacking many of the key characteristics that are taken to denote the presence of a broch tower, and there was nothing unequivocal to indicate the presence of intramural galleries or other complex architectural features prior to excavation. A confusing arrangement of multiple visible wall faces and apparent revetments meant that pre-excavation analysis was unhelpful in clarifying the structural history of the site, a situation that was further complicated by the unknown extent of Victorian excavation, rebuilding and gardening (Fig. 3.6).

The Thrumster sequence

It was unclear, then, whether Thrumster represented a solid-walled roundhouse, perhaps a simple Atlantic roundhouse, or something more closely related to a true broch structure. The reality was none (or perhaps all) of these things. The Thrumster settlement was seen to have had a highly complex history of construction and modification, beginning with the establishment

of the site as a relatively slight-walled roundhouse in the early Iron Age, very likely in the third century BC and probably established on the site of an even earlier enclosed settlement which was overwritten by later building. After this date (but before a hiatus in activity in the second century BC) the site was converted to a complex-walled, monumental roundhouse designed on the 'broch' template, and almost certainly with tower-like proportions. Following a period of little detectable activity the broch was reused for what may have been a relatively short-lived episode in the period 194 to 40 cal. BC.

Following a second hiatus in activity and very probably a catastrophic collapse, the structure was again radically reorganized in the third or fourth centuries AD, including a major modification of the entrance to the structure and possibly even involving its relocation to a modified wall cell. Structural analysis of the wall remains has shown that the 'broch' style roundhouse was certainly capable of supporting a structure of tower-like proportions, but it is very probable that by this later phase the structure was no longer tower-like, with the wall configuration no longer capable of supporting the weight of a structure taller than perhaps 3 or 4 m in height.

Thrumster: discussion

This simplistic description of the complex Thrumster sequence has several implications for our interpretations of broch structures more generally. Firstly, the results demonstrate very clearly the futility of founding broad-brush interpretations of broch structures in Caithness based on surface survey, since the visible configuration should be expected to represent only one episode, possibly palimpsest in nature, in what is very probably a complex history. The implications for the interpretation of material culture and its chronological (and therefore social) significance are similarly clear, with major reworking of soft deposits likely to accompany structural modifications. It is also important to reiterate that these results could only have been obtained through excavation of the walls of the structure themselves: these major structural changes were simply not recognizable in associated soil deposits.

The Thrumster broch went through multiple constructional phases, sometimes involving rearrangements so radical that the earlier phase was barely distinguishable, and the site apparently grew and receded in monumentality over time. Radiocarbon dates suggest that the site underwent these reconfigurations repeatedly from the earlier Iron Age through to earlier first millennium AD.

In the latest phases of activity, Thrumster ultimately followed a similar trajectory to other Caithness brochs, finally ending up as a burial mound of the early historic period (see Batey 2002, 188). It is possible that the tendency for repetition of characteristics in Caithness broch sequences has in the past led to assumption of similarity across the board, and that what we are missing are the nuances of social change which, far from being solidified in drystone monuments, are reflected in their extreme plasticity.

Whitegate: a warning

One further site excavated as part of this programme gives further cause for warning, and demonstrates how Iron Age structures probably changed radically in both form and function. At Whitegate, one of the Keiss cluster (Anderson 1901, 127–30), excavation in 2006 and 2007 demonstrated that the site comprised a massive walled roundhouse, with the large number of animal and human bones deposited in the mural cells, probably in the early centuries AD, one of several characteristics of this site that raise serious questions over the domestic function of the building (Fig. 3.7). Again, pre-excavation survey had suggested that Whitegate fell into the simple walled roundhouse category, while antiquarian finds seemed to support an early dating of the structure. The reality demonstrated



Figure 3.7.
Excavation of human and animal remains in the Whitegate mural cells.

by excavation further underlines the consistency with which Iron Age settlements in the north were radically redesigned, but also warns against any simplistic equation of roundhouse with domestic structure, at least in every phase of the site's use. In lacking a typical domestic assemblage and containing unusual structured deposits, Whitegate may raise questions over how buildings with ritual or other non-domestic functions would be recognized in the Atlantic Iron Age, and how different a shrine or similar building might look to the evidence recovered here.

Like the other sites discussed here, Whitegate went through repeated phases of reconfiguration, but several objects, such as a complete pot of Early Iron Age date, not to mention the mix of human and animal bones deposited in the wall cells, survived within the building throughout the later activity. Aside from this single exceptional pot and the remarkable bone assemblage, there was very little else in the way of domestic material culture recovered from that excavation. The warning that Whitegate gives us is that there was clearly more to the landscape of Caithness than brochs and broch-like settlements, and it is disingenuous to characterize Caithness as settled by brochs to the exclusion of all other settlement forms.

Discussion

Our experiences in Caithness raise several key issues with ramifications for the interpretation of Iron Age settlement more generally, and specifically for the interpretation of brochs.

Firstly, the concept of settlement location was extremely durable through later prehistory. Taking into account the probable ratio of archaeological survival of broch settlements (see Tait 2005) and the possible percentage of false identifications, Caithness still has such a large number of brochs that modern survey must be able to make some informed estimate of the original number. Without exception, the excavated examples demonstrate a history that is to be measured in centuries, rather than decades. While the form and layout of the settlements changed (and therefore, perhaps the *meaning*, in the iconic sense that has been discussed in the past by Armit (e.g. 1996, 131), Hingley (1992, 14–15), Sharples and Parker Pearson (1999), then, the locations stayed relatively constant as nodal points of activity in the landscape. This fact must have a considerable impact on the collective memory of the local populations.

These patterns hint at flexibility of Atlantic Iron Age settlement that may tend to be disguised by the physical stature of the settlements. There is growing evidence for seasonality of settlement in the Iron Age record of southern Scotland and certainly for the

intermittent and repetitive occupation of defended enclosures, but the perceived monumentality of broch settlements in the north and west tends to lead to an assumption of continuity that may be more imagined than real. Discussions of the duration of occupation of later prehistoric settlements have tended to emphasize the probability of short occupation of individual roundhouses (e.g. Barber & Crone 2001), a pattern that has direct implications for the arrangement of agricultural and pastoral regimes (and so presumably land division) in the local area, and the bulk of recent research on the timber-built settlements of southern Scotland continues to support the view of relatively fleeting, but repeated occupation of settlement locations. Caithness flagstone has long been recognized as the timber of prehistory in the north; its resistance to decay should not, and properly interrogated, does not disguise the patterns of reconfiguration, abandonment, and reoccupation that are plotted in intersecting post holes and ring-grooves elsewhere.

Thrumster broch demonstrates clearly, however, that the freedom of expression in Iron Age architecture was not unbound by parameters of design, and it is perhaps here that we can introduce a concept that we have found useful in our discussions of broch settlement development: that of the *canonicity* of the 'broch' form (see Barber *et al.*, this volume). That the form and layout of a 'broch' was a recognized template to be emulated is reflected in the reworking of the existing Thrumster roundhouse into something that fitted the socially accepted concept of a broch, long after its original layout as a settlement. It may be possible to see this as illustration of the way that the broch symbol was employed at different stages in the development of different sites, as the broch tower became relevant to the social conditions, or social standing of the occupants at the time.

Numerous interpretations have been offered for the logic behind broch building, the currently prevailing preference is that the broch was a statement of authority of the occupant group (see Armit 2002, 2005, for example). The meaning of such buildings was unlikely to have been static through time, however, while variability in concept of the monumental round 'house' in the Atlantic Iron Age is perhaps hinted at by the results from Whitegate, the latter does not easily fit the definition of a domestic structure by any standard definition of the term.

Conclusion: brochs and the architecture of society

Our derivation of social models for the Iron Age must account for the appearance, modification and reconstruction of architecture that is apparent in the

excavated evidence. Other writers have explored the idea of the iconic status of broch towers, perhaps playing a role in demonstrating the autonomy and legitimacy of the occupants in periods of territorial pressure. Our experience in Caithness demonstrates that the development and decline of domestic monumentality was not a linear process, and that the requirements of domestic architecture changed dramatically over the lifespan of any individual settlement.

Armit, Sharples and others have discussed the impact of the construction of brochs on the patterns of inheritance and the continuity of communities in Atlantic Scotland (e.g. Sharples 2005), arguing that, in contrast to the more transient cellular structures of the Atlantic Iron Age, brochs remain resistant to modification and stand as metaphors for the occupant community and their relationship to the local environment. As such, they are memory monuments. Several authors have taken this view of the broch as the enduring monument of Iron Age society, closely associated with the ancestors and lending legitimacy to the occupant group. The evidence from Caithness leads us to believe not only that this metaphor was not consistent in its meaning on individual sites through time, but also that settlement monumentality took different forms in different stages of a site's development. The changes written in the reconfiguration of broch settlements in Caithness may reflect a much more heterogeneous and fluid settlement configuration than is often recognized, and may imply the importance of other elements of the settled landscape that are less frequently studied (cf. Cowley 1999, 73–4). Memory is as malleable as the monuments themselves.

Monuments and memory: brochs as physical and conceptual raw material

Brochs constitute raw material for the architecture of Iron Age society. Far from enduring and unchanging, they were plastic and highly sensitive to the prevailing socio-cultural conditions. Locations, however, retained significance to the extent that broch mounds were seen as suitable places for burial in the late Iron Age and early Historic periods, even when all recognizable traces of the settlement and its structures must have been lost. In contrast to the monumental impression given by broch structures, it was in fact the locations of broch settlements that were most enduring, with

the physical forms of the structures themselves being highly fluid and susceptible to change. The repeated decision to use the same locations must reflect a perceived importance that went beyond the practicalities of convenient sources of stone. It is possible that the repeated use of the same locations reflects the coalescence of the landscape into territorial or administrative units; the comparison of later medieval land division to the distribution of long-lived broch settlements may be illuminating (cf. Halliday 2002).

What has always been troubling in the interpretation of the Atlantic Iron Age is the dichotomous tension between the view of brochs as symbols of independence of the occupant group and pinnacles of tyrannical elites. One alternative – if controversial – hypothesis might be to see the broch phenomenon as relatively short lived, with the tower-like phase of many broch settlements occurring within the same relatively short horizon in a competitive political landscape, after which these established nodal points became the canvas onto which the rise and fall of localized elites were written. It is possible that few broch towers survived far beyond the original constructional generation, with the ever-changing political landscape determining that some grew and developed, while others were dismantled and reconfigured as cellular settlements. In this model, broch settlements would physically and conceptually provide the raw material for later arrangements, and it is possible that rebuilders attempted to key into the perceived power of the location by reusing brochs. By the Norse period, this may have translated into the desire to bury the deceased with the ancestors of an heroic age, as suggested by the recurrent appearance of early historic burials on abandoned broch mounds.

Our research may help to move us towards a more sophisticated view of architecture in the Iron Age: rather than seeing brochs as enduring statements of authority, they can be seen as representative of the wax and wane of localized authority through time. It is possible that this view of brochs as fluid and responsive to change helps to reconcile the dichotomy of power and community represented in areas densely populated by brochs. We believe that these conclusions bring us closer to an understanding of the nature of broch settlement development in northern Scotland, and closer to the complex reality of Iron Age political geography in areas like Caithness.

Chapter 4

Materializing memories: inheritance, performance and practice at Broxmouth hillfort, southeast Scotland

Lindsey Büster & Ian Armit

Well, the main fortified place was built, and, when finished, houses were erected within it. There were two well-fitted and framed houses among them, one of which was named Raukawa, after the sea that separates the two islands; this house belonged to Tautoki. The other superior house was named Wharerangi, in remembrance of the place where the sacred Wharekura [*place of learning*] was situated in the old-time fatherland. The fortified village was named Whetu-kairangi. (Best 1927, 96)

The opening quotation was reportedly spoken by a nineteenth century Maori elder and recorded by the New Zealand ethnographer, Elsdon Best, in the 1920s. It describes one particular example of a type of Maori fortified village (known as a *pā*), remarkably similar in many ways to European Iron Age hillforts (e.g. Fox 1976; Armit 2007). What is most important for present purposes, however, is that they were large communal enclosures that represented a high investment of labour and resources, and tended to have long periods of settlement. The traditions relating to this particular *pā*, at Miramar near Wellington, had reportedly been preserved over 28 generations (perhaps around 700 years). Whether this is accurate in historical terms is not particularly relevant here: what is important is that people locally believed it to be true.

The quotation is particularly interesting for a number of reasons. First, it reminds us that the archaeological remains we study were once people's homes. Our floor plans and sections represent places where people actually lived, and spent a large part of their lives. Individual buildings within the *pā* had their own names, and each name was meaningful, acting as an *aide-memoire* for stories and traditions about ancestors and the origins of the community. These houses were

a locus for communal memory, each with its own identity. They were far more than just places to cook, eat and sleep. The name ('Whetu-kairangi') of the *pā* itself means something like 'precious' or 'finest star'. It seems to have referred to the view of the *pā* from the land below, particularly at night when fires lit up the hilltop. It suggests perhaps an affectionate regard for the place, and an allusion to its role as a home and place of safety.

With these ideas in mind, we will consider an equally long-lived settlement dating to the Iron Age in southeast Scotland.

Broxmouth hillfort

Broxmouth hillfort was located roughly 2.5 km south-east of Dunbar, and 600 m inland, on the East Lothian coastal plain (Fig. 4.1, inset a). Although excavated in 1977–78, post-excavation was never completed and the site remained unpublished beyond interim accounts (Hill 1979; 1982). A programme of post-excavation leading to full publication was carried out in 2008–12 by the University of Bradford (Armit & McKenzie 2013), funded by Historic Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland).

The site comprised six main phases of Iron Age occupation, bracketed by ephemeral evidence for Late Neolithic activity and a single inhumation of early medieval date. The Iron Age sequence began around 640/570 *cal. bc*¹ with the construction of a palisaded enclosure (Phase 1). Whatever might have been inside, it was completely destroyed by later occupation. Later, a sequence of at least two, very large, timber roundhouses was built outside the palisaded enclosure. These only survive, fortuitously, under a later rampart, and this early settlement was probably originally much more extensive. Later, sometime around 490/430 *cal. bc*, the hilltop was completely

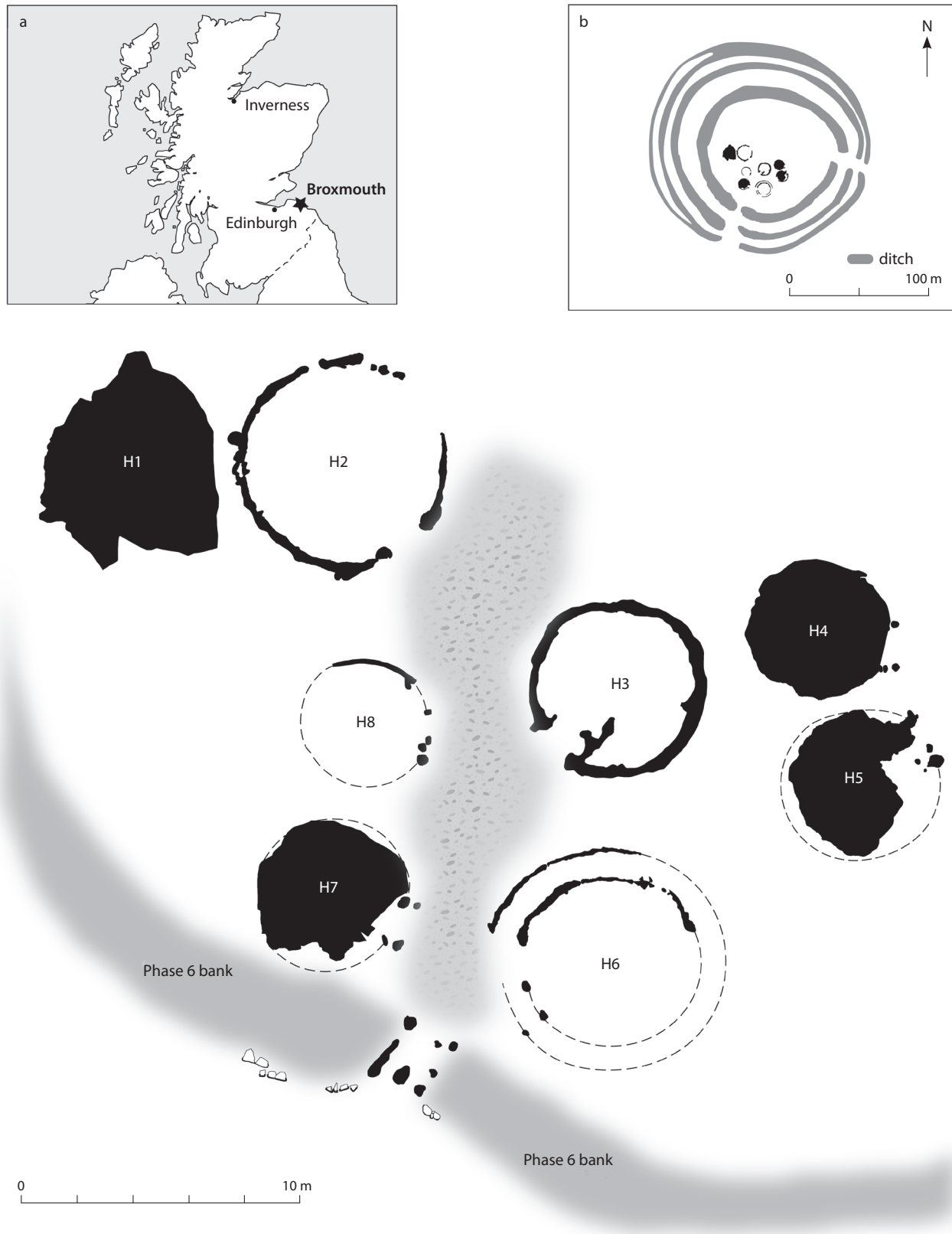


Figure 4.1. The Late Iron Age settlement (Phase 6) at Broxmouth. Insets, a) location map; b) schematic plan of the hillfort.

transformed by the construction of a univallate hillfort (Phase 2a), subsequently rebuilt as bivallate (Phase 2b), with massive timber-lined entrances facing east and west (although only the west one survived). This huge operation would have involved a large number of people for a significant period of time. Once built, the hillfort was progressively remodelled, becoming variously univallate, bivallate and trivallate (Phase 3), though exhibiting no unilinear sequence of development (Fig. 4.1, inset b). The original west entrance was blocked and a new, even more monumental, entrance was built facing southwest. From around 295/235 *cal. BC*, the ditches went out of use and the settlement expanded over them (Phase 4). A series of roundhouses was built within the line of the Inner Ditch, which were preserved where their floors had sunk into its subsiding fill (similar structures can also be discerned within various ditch sections around the perimeter of the site). Around 200 *cal. BC* (Phase 5), a small cemetery was built outside the ramparts to the north (Armit *et al.* 2013), though settlement continued within the interior. From around 100/60 *cal. BC*, a low, stone-faced bank, with a narrow, timber gateway, was re-established along the line of the old inner rampart, and a dense settlement of stone and timber roundhouses constructed within it (see below; Fig. 4.1). Finally, around *cal. AD 155/210*, the site was abandoned.

The dates quoted above are based on a comprehensive AMS dating programme (158 radiocarbon dates in total) which demonstrates that this Iron Age occupation, which appears to have been continuous, spanned a total of roughly 800 years (i.e. 640/570 *cal. BC*–*cal. AD 155/210*; Hamilton *et al.* 2013), or some 32 generations. By Phase 6, if not before, the settlement would clearly have been perceived as being of considerable antiquity, if not immeasurably ancient. Furthermore, since occupation appears to have been continuous, with no observable hiatus in the settlement sequence, it may reasonably be assumed that genealogical links existed between the Phase 1 founders of the settlement, and the inhabitants of Phase 6.

Evidence for internal occupation exists only for Phases 1, 4 and 6, the remainder apparently destroyed by truncation of the settlement during its Iron Age occupation (Armit & McKenzie 2013); this is indeed why the most comprehensive settlement evidence exists for the latest phase (6) of Iron Age activity. In fact, earlier (pre-Phase 6) roundhouses and associated structures only survive in Phases 1 and 4 where they were, respectively, protected from truncation under later ramparts and by subsidence into earlier ditches. Large amounts of redeposited material, identified through AMS dating, attest to the

continual reworking of the site during its Iron Age occupation, during which time it is also likely that earlier, previously buried, features were re-exposed within the context of later settlement activity. Indeed, a burial, which probably dates to Phase 1, appears to have been ‘rediscovered’ during construction of the Phase 6 settlement and may even have influenced the location and orientation of House 2, since the relationship between the two, with the grave lying adjacent to the northern post hole of the roundhouse entrance (Fig. 4.2), suggests a certain intentionality.

The Late Iron Age settlement

The Late Iron Age settlement represents the latest phase (6) of Iron Age activity at Broxmouth, and, as such, has by far the best surviving evidence for occupation. The surviving settlement comprises eight roundhouses, six of them aligned along a central road running through the main southwest entrance (Fig. 4.1); this entrance was created in Phase 3 and retained, in various forms, throughout the remainder of the settlement’s history. The surviving settlement occupies only roughly half of the area within the enclosure system, however, since the northern part was badly scalped by ploughing. It is likely that both the roundhouse settlement and the road system were originally more extensive.

The roundhouses of the Late Iron Age settlement are all broadly contemporary, with Phase 6 occupation beginning around 100/60 *cal. BC* and ending around *cal. AD 155/210*, spanning a total of some 215–310 years (Hamilton *et al.*, 2013). Interestingly, and in contrast to chronological models based on roundhouse typology (e.g. Feachem 1965), the roundhouses exhibit a variety of form and fabric, including timber- and stone-walled structures, and combinations of the two. Furthermore, some of the house-stances containing stone-walled structures are scooped (i.e. cut into the subsoil so that the walls at the rear of the structure are semi-subterranean), whilst others (predominantly those of the timber-walled structures) are not.

Household identity

The Phase 6 roundhouses are remarkably well preserved and indicate different maintenance and renewal strategies. Some structures, predominantly the timber-walled examples, appear to have been maintained/rebuilt on a piecemeal basis, and were never wholly replaced; by contrast, most of the stone-walled roundhouses, within their scooped stances, appear to have been completely remodelled on several occasions (Büster & Armit 2013). The latter phenomenon frequently included the



Figure 4.2. House 2, showing the (Phase 1) burial adjacent to the northern entrance post hole (represented by the crouched individual).

retention of fabric from previous structures, so that each new roundhouse was effectively cradled within the remains of its predecessor.

The high level of survival and the excellent stratigraphic information within the scooped houses provided the opportunity to look more closely at the biographies of the various structures and the ways in which these may have been intertwined with the biographies of the households which inhabited them. The AMS dating programme, which yielded roughly 45 dates for the Phase 6 roundhouses (in addition to five pre-existing conventional radiocarbon dates), allowed for a rough estimate of the rate of remodelling of the stone-walled structures. Based on the best-preserved stone-walled roundhouse (House 4, see below; Fig. 4.3), wholesale remodelling appears to have taken place roughly every 40–60 years (Büster 2012), that is, on a generational or bi-generational basis. It is likely, however, as ethnographic studies suggest (e.g. Boivin 2004, 172), that other types of modification such as replastering, re-roofing, or the rearrangement of (possibly non-earthfast) internal partitioning and other furniture (perhaps accompanying important events in the life of the household or the community at large), altered the appearance and experience of the roundhouse on a more frequent basis.

Structured deposition

Most of the artefacts recovered from the Phase 6 roundhouses appear to represent deliberately placed items rather than the *in situ* remains of daily activities (Armit 2006, 241, 244; Webley 2007). This suggestion is supported by evidence, in the form of dished floor profiles and the erosion of floor surfaces well below the basal course of their associated walls, for the frequent sweeping out of roundhouse interiors, which would presumably have removed everyday refuse. Most of the evidence for structured deposition survived in the walls and paving of the stone-walled roundhouses, though it also occurred in the negative features (pits, wall-slots and post holes) of both the stone- and timber-walled structures. Much of this is represented by foundation or abandonment deposits associated with the construction or infilling of specific features and, in the stone-walled structures especially, the construction or abandonment of the successive roundhouses themselves (see below). In certain cases, deposits placed between successive walls, or within paving sealing earlier pits and post holes, may have been associated with both the closure of one roundhouse and the foundation of its successor; in these liminal circumstances it is perhaps better to understand them as structured *transitional* deposits.

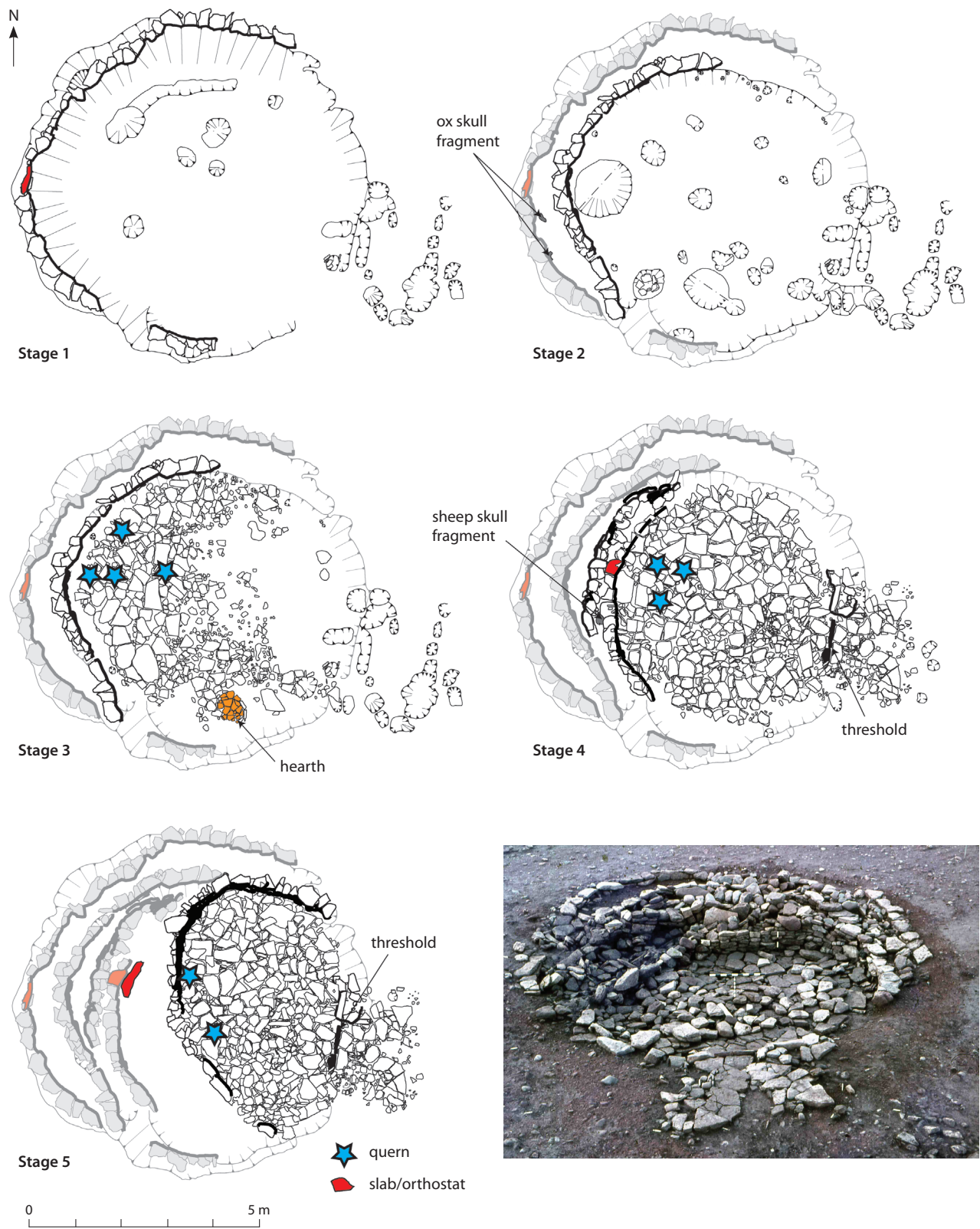


Figure 4.3. House 4, through its five major structural stages. The photograph shows the final incarnation of the roundhouse, with the structural fabric from previous stages visible in the background.

In some instances, there was a striking repetition in the type and location of deposits. In the stone-walled roundhouses, querns were frequently incorporated into wall fabric and paved surfaces. The inclusion of worked stone artefacts in these contexts may, in part, simply represent their convenient use as building material, though the apparent votive significance of querns in particular is noted throughout Iron Age Britain (e.g. Heslop 2008). Other types of deposit appear directly to reference each other, either through strikingly similar contexts of deposition, or comprising closely similar artefacts or groups of artefacts, separated by significant periods of time; the latter in particular almost certainly indicates the deliberate curation of items prior to deposition (see below).

House 4: a brief biography

The best preserved of the stone-walled roundhouses at Broxmouth is House 4: this structure also displays the most complex surviving structural history, which involved the substantial remodelling of the roundhouse on at least four separate occasions after its initial construction (Fig. 4.3). These successive rebuilds are referred to here as 'stages 1–5': all date to Phase 6.

The house-stance, as for most of the stone-walled roundhouses at Broxmouth, was scooped, creating a structure with a semi-subterranean internal space. Fabric from each stage was retained as occupation progressed, creating a 'nested' structure, in which each subsequent remodelling was physically cradled within the shell of its predecessor. Indeed, the retention of successive walls progressively decreased the internal area of House 4 to less than 40 per cent of its original footprint in its final incarnation (stage 5), which must have had a significant impact on the use of space, and perhaps the function of the roundhouse. This phenomenon, seen also in stone-walled House 7, is quite different from the treatment of the timber roundhouses where walls were realigned and maintained in piecemeal fashion, with defunct or decaying sections being periodically replaced by newer ones. Indeed, it may have been the very materiality of stone, its durability, and thus its possible association with the ageing process and with the ancestors (Bloch 1995, 215), which led to its retention as a visible and tangible link with past inhabitants of the roundhouse. There may indeed have been a symbolic distinction between the stone-walled and timber-walled structures, the latter of which 'shed their old skins' upon remodelling or 'rebirth' (Parker Pearson & Ramilisonina 1998, 316; Parker Pearson 2004, 73, 75).

The deposition of a bone spoon under the stage 1 wall of House 4, apparently as a foundation deposit, is mirrored by a similar object under the stage 5 wall (Fig. 4.4, a & b). If the deposition of the first spoon (marking the initial construction of the roundhouse) was known by the stage 5 inhabitants, perhaps having been handed down via oral tradition as part of the life-story of House 4, the spoon deposited in stage 5 (the final period of occupation) may represent a deliberate attempt to reference this; in effect, bringing the life-history of the roundhouse full-circle. This pattern of repeated actions is mirrored by the deposition of ox and sheep skull fragments, in almost identical locations, respectively, against the base of the stage 1 wall during construction of the stage 2 roundhouse (Fig. 4.3, stage 2), and between the inner and outer faces of the stage 4 wall (Fig. 4.3, stage 4).

A further example of apparent structured deposition involves the use of building material rather than portable objects. Firstly, orthostats were incorporated into the stage 1 and stage 4 walls, in roughly the same relative location, opposite the roundhouse entrance (Fig. 4.3, stages 1 and 4; Fig. 4.5). Then, during construction of the stage 5 roundhouse, a non-earth-fast slab was positioned directly in front of the stage 4 orthostat, leaning against it, prior to infilling of the intramural space between the stage 4 and 5 walls (Fig. 4.3, stage 5; Fig. 4.5b); this later slab mirrors almost exactly, in terms of size and shape, the much earlier orthostat incorporated into the stage 1 wall (Fig. 4.5a). These three stones are strikingly different from the rest of the Phase 6 roundhouse fabric, and the thin, square dimensions of the stage 5 slab and stage 1 orthostat (Fig. 4.5) are particularly unusual; their inclusion in the fabric of House 4, directly opposite the entrance (Fig. 4.3), is thus probably deliberate. Once set in position, the slab would have been quickly covered by earth and rubble as the stage 5 wall was constructed, so it was never intended to remain visible during stage 5 occupation; this was clearly intentional, since the slab could just as easily have been incorporated into the stage 5 wall, as in stage 1. House 4 decreases dramatically in size in its final stage (5), and it is therefore possible that the slab was deliberately chosen in order to 'bracket' all House 4 occupation prior to stage 5, and to confine these earlier structures to a combined and amalgamated past; one from which the structure could be reborn (perhaps, given its small size in stage 5, with a different function).

Other deposits in House 4 appear to make direct reference to earlier activity in a more overt and tangible way. Two antler gaming pieces deposited at the base of the stage 3 wall (retained from stage 2)

during the foundation of the stage 4 roundhouse, for example, match another deposited in the infill of a pit during the closure of the stage 2 structure (Fig. 4.4, c–e). The distinctive appearance of these items, not found elsewhere on site, suggests that they belong to the same set. As such, it is likely that the pieces deposited during the foundation of stage 4 had been curated for some considerable time. Likewise, two sherds from the same pottery vessel were deposited during construction of the stage 2 wall and in the infill of a pit at the end of stage 2 occupation; the latter may similarly have been deliberately curated prior to its final deposition, perhaps in direct reference to the former.

Finally, two fragments of human bone (cranial and mandible fragments, from separate individuals) were deposited at the base of the stage 2 wall before it was sealed during construction of the stage 4 roundhouse. The condition of these human remains relative to the faunal bone which accompanied them suggests that they had been curated prior to deposition. The cranial fragment bore evidence for peri-mortem sharp

force trauma, most likely a sword-cut, whilst the isotopic signature of both fragments (as was generally the case for the whole assemblage of 22 human bone fragments recovered from across the site) was distinct from that of the Phase 5 cemetery population, suggesting that these individuals may have been non-local to Broxmouth (Armit *et al.* 2013, 84, 92–3). It would thus be tempting to see these fragments as having derived from trophies displayed in or around the roundhouse (Armit *et al.* 2013, 87, 94); perhaps the ultimate incorporation of these two particular fragments into the fabric of the stage 4 structure signalled the renegotiation of relationships between the Broxmouth community and its neighbours.

Querns also served to link the various stages of House 4; these (predominantly rotary examples) were incorporated into the paved floors which were laid down from stage 3 onwards. Shortly after the abandonment of the stage 2 roundhouse (since there is no evidence for a hiatus in occupation), the paved floor of the stage 3 structure was laid. This included four querns, all located towards the rear of the roundhouse



Figure 4.4. Paired artefactual deposits. Left: the bone spoons deposited at the base of the stage 1 (a) and stage 5 (b) walls; right: the gaming pieces deposited in the infill of the stage 2 pit (c) and at the base of the stage 2 wall, during the foundation of stage 4 (d & e).

interior (Fig. 4.3). Two of these sealed the largest of the stage 2 pits (this phenomenon is also witnessed in House 7), whilst the stage 3 hearth sealed another. It is possible that the location of the querns (and hearth) was intended to reference these former features, creating a tangible link between the two stages of occupation, and perhaps between two generations of inhabitants. Such a link may have been strengthened, or periodically renewed, by the pouring of libations or other offerings through the quern feeder-pipes into the features below (Campbell 1991, 133); a particular affordance of rotary querns. The similar relative location of two querns in the succeeding stage 4 paving may also represent an attempt to reference the stage 3 querns, and the stage 2 pits below, or at least provide some physical continuity of function in this part of the roundhouse. The apparent continued visibility of one of the stage 3 querns in the stage 4 paving, and similarly, one of the stage 4 querns in the stage 5 paving, would have strengthened this link with earlier structures.

Upon abandonment, House 4 became infilled with a mixture of rubble and midden, at least some of which derived from the partial structural collapse of the roundhouse walls. AMS dates of 350–50 cal. BC (2135±30 BP; SUERC-33364) and 400–210 cal. BC (2270±30 BP; SUERC-33368) indicate that some elements of this infill material could have pre-dated construction of the roundhouse by up to three centuries. It is possible that material, including animal bone, was deliberately deposited as part of the structured ‘closure’ of House 4. Alternatively, this material may derive from the turf/earth cores of the stone-faced walls that surrounded House 4 in its various incarnations. In either case, this material probably pre-dates the

construction of even the first (stage 1) roundhouse to occupy this stance by a significant period; since the construction of House 4 is undated, it is impossible to be sure exactly when its initial construction began, but the balance of probability is that it was constructed in the early first century BC along with the rest of the Phase 6 settlement. If the use of this material was deliberate, it may have been intended once again to create tangible links with a genealogical or mythical past. If deliberately deposited during the infilling of the house-stance, it may have signalled the final incorporation of the abandoned house into the realm of the community’s ancestors.

Discussion

The evidence from the Late Iron Age settlement at Broxmouth suggests that a biographical and materiality-based approach to the study of roundhouses can offer insights into the lives of later prehistoric households. The materials used in roundhouse construction were chosen for more than simply practical reasons, governing, perhaps, the ways in which individual roundhouses subsequently developed. At Broxmouth, in the stone-walled roundhouses at least, reference to former inhabitants appears to have been important in everyday life. The generational (or near-generational) reconstruction of roundhouses that appear to have been structurally viable, and in no particular need of such drastic remodelling, suggests the periodic renegotiation of household identities, perhaps upon the death of the head of the household, or some other major event in the life of the community. The same generational tempo for change is true of the Broxmouth settlement sequence more generally, with

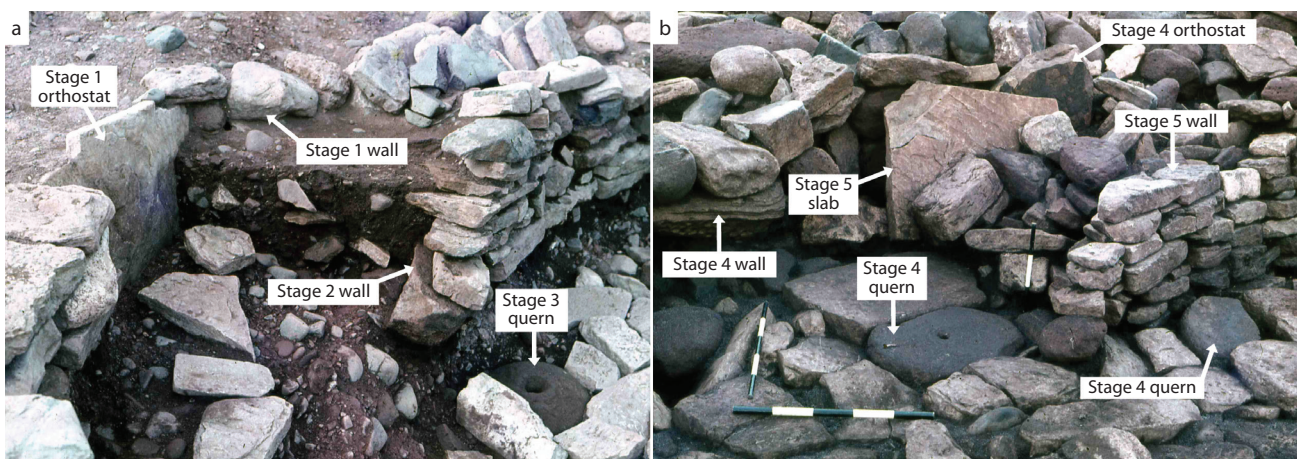


Figure 4.5. The orthostat incorporated into the stage 1 wall (a), and the slab, of similar proportions, leant against the stage 4 orthostat during construction of the stage 5 roundhouse (b).

AMS dates suggesting generational modification of the entrance gateways and the enclosing ditches of earlier occupational phases (Armit & McKenzie 2013).

Just as the Phase 6 settlement was cradled within the denuded earthworks of the earlier hillfort, which must have represented a visible reminder of past inhabitants, the retention of defunct structural fabric with each reincarnation of the stone-walled roundhouses suggests a desire to contextualize new household identities within the broader life-history of the house: as such, it was the house that became the link between generations (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1982). At Whetu-kairangi (the Maori *pā* described in the opening quote), the *name* of the enclosure and its houses provided a means by which continuity was established between past, present and future inhabitants; these names perhaps serving as mnemonic aids for stories regarding the origins of the settlement and its ancestral inhabitants. The same appears to have been true at Broxmouth, not just for the Phase 6 roundhouses, but for the settlement sequence more generally.

Within the roundhouse interior, the same tangible links were reflected in the curation and deposition of artefacts, or sets of artefacts, within and between structures. Many of the deposits within the Phase 6 roundhouses may best be understood as *transitional*, deposited when the structure and household were in a liminal state; times when social relations within the community would have been reordered and renegotiated in relation to what had gone before.

Whilst some of the artefacts would have become invisible shortly after deposition, the referencing of former internal features by, for example, querns and hearths, is likely to have had considerable influence over the way the subsequent structure was organized and experienced. As such, the stone-walled roundhouses represent a microcosm of the Phase 6 settlement itself, cradled as it was within the ruinous Phase 3 enclosure works and organized along an arterial route-way which continued to use the long-established southwest entrance into the settlement. In this way, the roundhouses, and the Phase 6 settlement more generally, served as mnemonic devices through which the biography of Broxmouth and its inhabitants was played-out, remembered and renegotiated in daily life.

The curation of items or the transmission of memories relating to specific (depositional) events across several generations, spanning several hundred years, may stretch our modern notions of what is realistic in a world without documents. Ethnographic studies indicate, however, that oral tradition in non-literate societies is far more integral to the social cohesion of a community than in those where written documents

have become repositories of tradition and communal history. As such, oral tradition is capable of transmitting genealogical histories and origin myths over considerable periods. Indeed, amongst communities in the Tari Basin of Papua New Guinea, genealogical histories could extend over some 500 years (Ballard 1994); the same scale order as has been claimed for the Maori traditions quoted at the start of this chapter.

The creation of these memories is enabled not just by the manipulation and deposition of objects, but by the performative nature of these acts. As Wells (2012) has pointed out in the context of, for example, funerary performances, the physical movement of people and objects acts to turn experience into memory. As with Bradley's (2005) conception of ritualization, the formality of such performances (perhaps accompanied by orations, invocations to the supernatural, extravagant gestures, etc), with material objects frequently at their centre, makes certain moments in the life of communities special and memorable. At Broxmouth, we might envisage the placing of the two bone spoons into the wall foundations of House 4, probably several generations apart, as being accompanied by exactly these sorts of elaborate performances, fixing them in the communal memory of the household. Since many of the deposits were subsequently buried, or obscured by later structural material, their presence and location would not have been obvious to those unfamiliar with the life-history of the roundhouse. Witnessing or having knowledge of their burial, their 'making hidden', may indeed have played a central role in the perception, understanding and legitimization of an individual's inclusion within the household.

Over very long periods of time (perhaps beyond around 400–500 years), broadly factual accounts are inevitably replaced by 'mythical histories', where real, named ancestors give way to supernatural beings (Gosden & Lock 1998, 5–6). For the Phase 6 inhabitants of Broxmouth, their Phase 1 ancestors had most probably slipped into this mythical realm, and the inclusion in the Phase 6 roundhouses of limpet-scarred stones (from the nearby coast), which bear a superficial resemblance to Neolithic and Bronze Age cup-and-ring marked stones, may represent a desire to reference an even deeper mythical past. The young man buried at Broxmouth in the early medieval period (cal. AD 400–540; 1606±27 BP; combined determinations GU-1142 and SUERC-21989) attests to the likelihood that the memory (mythical or otherwise) of Broxmouth lived on, far beyond the physical abandonment of the site, and that it continued to play a sufficiently significant role in his, and his community's, social identity to warrant its choice as his final resting place.

Conclusion

Not all later prehistoric sites display the same longevity of occupation as Broxmouth, or indeed the level of preservation observed in its Late Iron Age roundhouses. The evidence from this remarkable site does, however, allow us to glimpse the ways in which prehistoric communities, here and elsewhere, could draw upon the world around them (their landscapes, their settlements, and their houses) to rationalize and renegotiate their place and role within it. Like the Maori *pā*, Iron Age places like Broxmouth would have had their own names, histories, characters, and personalities, and at least some of the buildings within them probably did too. Though Broxmouth occupied a low rise in the landscape, this was not a prominent natural feature: settlement could easily have drifted off elsewhere over the centuries, if some strong force had not acted to hold it there. The sheer persistence of occupation in this one location demonstrates that it retained meaning for the local community throughout its various incarnations, and suggests that the materiality of the settlement itself, and the stories it told, were central to the identity of the successive generations who called it home.

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Note

1. All italicized radiocarbon dates and date ranges quoted in this chapter are based on Bayesian modelling, full details of which can be found in Hamilton *et al.* 2013.

Chapter 5

Memories, monumentality and materiality in Iron Age Scotland

Louisa Campbell

The construction and application of explicit theoretical models has transformed archaeological approaches to the study of material culture (Miller 2005) and landscapes over the past two decades (Gosden & Head 1993). Demonstrably appropriate ethnographic analogies (Binford 1983; Lane 2008) have rendered modern Westernized perceptions as inadequate for providing insights into ‘social landscapes’ as active embodied entities (Fowler 2008) which are understood, engaged with, lived in (Thomas 2008) and experienced through culturally embedded social practices (Bourdieu 1977). Phenomenological approaches encourage active engagement with landscapes as a sensuous and somatic experience (Brück 2005) within the social dimension rather than an extra-somatic study of disconnected, de-territorialized spaces that can be adequately captured through computer models or photographic imagery (Tilley 2008; Barrett & Ko 2008).

A long-term holistic approach to the study of active embodied Iron Age landscapes, settlements and associated material culture in northern Britain is proposed here as an effective model for identifying patterns of continuity and change, taking account of similarities and differences on a macro and micro scale at the inter and intra site level. These interconnected strands are integral components in the construction of identities and the formation of new hybrid identities within Iron Age communities engaged in variable degrees of contact with Roman incomers (Alcock 1979; Haselgrove & Moore 2007; Hunter 2007). These continually reinforced and renegotiated connections between people, places and time (Ingold 1993) are here proposed as central to understanding social landscapes and people’s engagement with social memories as a collective concept in interpreting the past (Halbwach 1992; Hutton 1993) through selectively remembering and forgetting (van Dyke & Alcock 2003a). Such concepts inform the interpretive foundation for research

(Campbell 2011) that reassessed Roman material culture crossing social and imperial boundaries (McCarthy 2008) into Iron Age contexts in northern Britain.

Social landscapes and memories

Ethnographic analogies provide valuable interpretive insights into the concept of ‘social landscapes’. For example, Aboriginal ideological belief systems, laws and patterns of life are informed and defined by The Dreamtime. These are complex oral traditions passed through successive generations to explain the creation of sacred places, animals, people and customs (Isaacs 1980). Such belief systems confirm that through place-making people actively construct place (Rubertone 2008, 13) in an embodied landscape imbued with cultural and ancestral significance marked by monumentality (Bradley 1998a), materiality (Miller 2005), objectification (Tilley 2006), memories (van Dyke 2008) and enchainment practices (Chapman 2008; Campbell 2016). The concept of enchainment links people to inalienable objects and imposes culturally specific restrictions on their use, reuse (Campbell 2012a) and/or discardment (Strathern 1988). Enchainment is inextricably linked to objectification, identity or multiple identities and dividualism where links are formed and forged between people through the medium of material culture (Tilley 2006). Shared identities are therefore forged and reinforced through shared embedded objects and places as a means of negotiating the social interface (Alcock 2002; Myers 1988, 54) and constructing social memories.

Ingold (1993) uses ‘taskscape’ to discuss landscape as technology, while McAnany and Hodder (2009, 10) explore the concept of structured deposition (Hill 1995). They offer ‘social stratigraphy’ as an interpretive framework for the identification of deliberate construction, closure and reconstruction of

buildings over previous structures as a means of creating, maintaining and reinforcing connections with the past, forming layers of meanings for social practices which intentionally relate to earlier deposits and the continual reuse of space. The reuse of significant places in the landscape (Barrett *et al.* 1991; Garcia Sanjuan *et al.* 2007) and incorporation of traditional and newly acquired foreign objects (e.g. Eckardt & Williams 2003) into structures may constitute a means by which people manipulated the past to make sense of the present by establishing connections between the ancestors, social memories and changing identities (Hingley 1992, 29).

While people can 'give away' rights to certain places in the landscape, that does not necessitate the severance of their own connections to and identities within that landscape. As Myers (1988, 53) makes clear in his study of Pintupi Aborigines, land can be shared, but it can never really be lost. Therefore, northern societies may have tolerated an incoming Roman military force 'borrowing' land rights, but they are unlikely to have abjured their own ancestral, contemporary or future rights to and deep-rooted connections with the land. While Keppie (1989, 6) suggests that the Roman presence is likely to have been largely welcomed in northern Britain, the placement of military installations directly overlying existing settlements, such as the camps constructed on top of settlements at Caronbridge and Dun in Montrose or the Antonine Wall cutting through the hillfort at Castlehill, must surely have caused a certain amount of resentment and disruption to the existing occupants of this landscape. Indeed, the imposition of the Empire's most northern frontier in the form of a massive mural barrier, in itself an example of Roman monumentality, cutting a swathe through the Scottish Lowlands is likely to have consumed some culturally important places and caused a level of social and ideological upheaval. Many of these spaces will have been re-aggregated into local traditions on the Roman withdrawal from the region.

Changes to the social landscape may have altered the expectations, interpretations and perceptions of local populations (Lucas 2001, 55) whose oral traditions over time could transform culturally significant places to embody cultural tradition, identity or power (Garcia Sanjuan *et al.* 2007, 1). Bradley (1990; 1998a, 66) has demonstrated that ancestral rituals permeated Neolithic society and Garcia Sanjuan *et al.*'s (2007, 1) case studies of prehistoric Spanish funerary sites propose this legacy of cultural belief systems and practices, coupled with a system of significant places and landscapes, resonated throughout the Bronze and Iron Ages of European societies. Oral tradition imbues certain places with social significance and their physical properties, including monumentality, location,

visibility, material and symbolic associations, to enable archaeological interpretation. Cultural associations would have altered over time and successive generations may have transformed these sites to embody changing social conditions. People engage with social memories as a shared concept in interpreting the past (Hutton 1993) through selectively remembering and forgetting (van Dyke & Alcock 2003b) different versions of that past to negotiate their needs and validate their actions in the present.

Religion and ideology are likely to have been intricately entwined within the Iron Age societies conquered by Rome and a cultural response to the political and economic dominance of the Empire may have been to invoke cultural memory to stimulate ideological and symbolic resistance (Garcia Sanjuan *et al.* 2007, 2). In this way, reuse of traditional sites could enable provincial peoples to legitimize the present by manipulating the past in the same way that a resurgence of votive deposition during the Roman Iron Age in northern Britain may signify communities who felt under threat from a foreign culture and a requirement to reinforce their cultural identities (Harding 2004, 81). The expression of identities can intensify within groups who are experiencing increased competition for resources or other social tensions (Hodder 1979) and material culture can be utilized to reinforce group identities as a form of cultural resistance (Herring 2007, 23). Deliberate and selective adoption of foreign material could have facilitated the transformation of traditional cultural concepts through the acquisition, reformulation, creative interpretation, adaptation and appropriation of Roman material and ideas into existing social strategies (Miller 1987; Roymans 1996, 99; Campbell 2012a), including deposition into places inscribed with ritual significance.

Changing perceptions, interpretations and use of cultural landscapes before, during and after Roman occupation of territories (Petts 1998, 91), as well as the placement and treatment of material culture associated with ritual practices can also aid our understanding of spatial, symbolic, temporal and ritual issues (Weekes 2001, 75) as well as the choices of the participants. Such rituals often follow distinctive phases in the form of preliminal, liminal and postliminal stages of rites of passage (van Gennep 1960 [1909]) and changes in context can indicate cultural change, perhaps through imperialism or appropriation. However, these must always be considered within the context of the specific societies and agents under study, taking account of intentionality (Barrett 1994; Gardner 2004; Robb 2010) whilst ensuring that we do not unconsciously impose motivations, structures and language stemming from colonial impositions of the nineteenth century (Dietler 2005,

49) onto the past. At the same time, the use of modern anthropological examples from different geographical, temporal and cultural contexts cannot be applied uncritically and universally. But rather a more critical assessment of potentially relevant analogies (Owen 2005) requires to be undertaken and applied where, and if, their appropriateness can be demonstrated.

Northern landscapes in the Roman Iron Age

Northern Britain was well known to the Romans. Ptolemy's *Geographia* provides the first definition of tribal boundaries from around the mid-second century AD. However, his reliance upon predominantly first century sources and incorrect 90 degree bending of Scotland has caused considerable problems in correlating his locations with modern geography (Strange 1997). For example, uncertainty surrounds whether his assigned place-names refer to Roman or indigenous places (Mann & Breeze 1988; Barrow 1989; Breeze 2002).

Northern studies have historically benefited from a strong tradition of gathering data on Roman material culture recovered from Iron Age contexts (e.g. Curle, J. 1913; 1932; Robertson 1970; Hunter 2001). Much of this research, however, amounts to little more than a cataloguing exercise and lacks any commitment to comprehend the deeper social meanings behind locals appropriating Roman material culture. It is also, perhaps, surprising to note the absence of any comprehensive landscape study of Roman period sites in Scotland as a means of understanding the impact a large invading army might have had upon the existing population. These embodied landscapes would most likely have been imbued with oral histories and experienced through a wide range of traditional and situationally relevant practices as critical components of strategies for the negotiation of identities, particularly the Roman and provincial interface in regions historically considered as marginal.

A detailed assessment of depositional practices set within the framework of biographical approaches (e.g. Kopytoff 1986; Comaroff 1996; Gilchrist 2004; Meskell 1999; Hoskins 2006; Stahl 2010; Campbell 2012a, 2016) are proposed here as critical to any attempt to interpret social practices, relations (Stahl 2008) and memories (Joyce 2008; Pollard 2008, 58–9) as they inform symbolism (Hodder 1982b) as well as mundane and profane practices (Brück 1999). The Scottish evidence confirms, in many cases, that Roman objects have been deposited in contexts which appear to have ritual significance and several of these sites experienced lengthy human occupation spanning the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods. An analysis of depositional trends appears to have confirmed

inter-generational connections between life cycles of landscapes, structures and people (Campbell 2011).

There is a marked preference for Roman ceramics on sites where craft-working activities were being undertaken. Such sites have traditionally been considered as the domain of elites; however, this present research cannot corroborate that assumption on the basis that such activities could equally have been ascribed ideological significance (Hingley 1997). Leadership does not necessarily require hierarchical social structures, but rather it can be context specific and a temporally imposed construct based upon the performance of certain rituals at particular times by selected individuals perceived as situationally appropriate (Bern 1979). Therefore, it is possible that metal-workers and potters could have been revered as holders of magical and ideological powers for their capacity to transform the properties of raw materials into entirely new physical objects.

It could be further argued that the continued imposition of modern Westernized models for social structures onto Iron Age societies based largely upon the presence or absence of Roman objects is unhelpful at best and heavily biased at worst. Rather, the presence of metalworking evidence on sites with higher numbers of Roman sherds, particularly reused Samian, might equally be interpreted as rituality ascribed to metalworking or potting crafts, to which we might add glassmaking. That such evidence predominates on sites with lengthy occupational sequences might further corroborate the proposal that certain activities were being performed in 'special places' within a landscape perceived as culturally and symbolically significant (Halbwach 1992; Hingley 1996; Garcia Sanjuan *et al.* 2007).

The lowland brochs serve as a useful case study to explore these concepts further by assessing the material expression of social and ancestral memories (Alcock 2002) through monumentality in the context of the communities in northern Britain affected by Rome's expansionist policies.

The lowland brochs

Aside from Traprain Law and Edinburgh Castle, larger Roman ceramic assemblages come exclusively from the southern brochs. These enigmatic circular drystone solid-based towers are situated on prominent and strategically important positions in the landscape, commanding extensive views over their surrounding terrain. Animal bones from Teroy, Dumfries and Galloway (Curle 1912) as well as Fairy Knowe, Buchlyvie (Main 1998) and Leckie in Stirlingshire (MacKie 1979; 1982; 2004) confirm livestock kept or consumed at these

sites, whilst palaeobotanical evidence confirms cereal production and processing at the latter two, suggesting a mixed farming economy.

Contention surrounds the appearance of brochs in southern Scotland. For instance, MacKie (1982) has argued that these alien architectural forms, normally prevalent in the Atlantic north and dating to the first millennium BC, are the result of dominant southerners migrating northward. However, there is now general agreement that the southern examples were built in the first to second centuries AD, probably for the display of wealth in architectural form, where elites of hierarchical societies controlled the redistribution of prestige Roman goods in the region beyond Hadrian's Wall (MacInnes 1984). However, they may equally embody widespread cultural and political contacts across Scotland (Hingley 1992, 28). This current research proposes that brochs also fall into the category of monumentality during the Iron Age as a means of memorializing and commemorating special places as well as reinforcing and publicly displaying social memories and ancestral connections between the land on which they are constructed and their associated communities.

The diverse range of artefacts recovered from Fairy Knowe, Leckie, Torwoodlee and Hurlly Hawkin confirms that the occupants of these brochs, in common with several Iron Age hillforts, may have been engaged in craft-working activities and they may also have served as central storage places for communal agricultural surplus (Hingley 1992, 29). The presence of 125 amphora sherds at Fairy Knowe (Main 1998) might imply Roman influence on the storage of food; however, they originate from a single vessel and cannot, therefore, be taken as evidence of changes in traditional storage practices. Internal dividers follow the tradition of timber roundhouse predecessors (Piggott 1951; MacKie 1979, 1982; Main 1998), although brochs contain an added vertical dimension which may have reinforced hierarchical social divisions (Foster 1989). The format of internal spaces could equally have depended upon a range of factors including areas associated with sleeping, working, age, gender (Harding 2004, 291) or public and private space.

The lowland brochs are commonly multi-period sites that demonstrate complex and lengthy occupational sequences. For instance, Hurlly Hawkin, Angus (Jervise 1868; Taylor 1982) and Torwoodlee in the Scottish Borders (Curle 1892; Piggott 1951) have been constructed on earlier Iron Age hillforts. These brochs, along with Edin's Hall in the Scottish Borders (Dunwell 1999), were superseded by stone-built settlements (Cunliffe 1991, 115). Radiocarbon sampling suggests the Stirlingshire brochs which replaced earlier timber structures date

to the first century AD. Meanwhile post-broch occupation is evident at some sites including Leckie and the construction of a souterrain at Hurlly Hawkins.

The presence of human internments on several southern brochs after they have fallen out of use is deeply enigmatic. For instance, historical sources record a stone-lined human burial at Fairy Knowe (Main 1998, 295) and a cist was also unexpectedly recovered from the intersection of deliberately infilled broch and hillfort ditches at Torwoodlee (Piggott 1951, 105). A similar practice is evident further north with cist burials contained within post-broch settlements at Gurness, Orkney (Hedges 1987b, 61) and Crosskirk, Caithness (Fairhurst 1984). Meanwhile disarticulated human remains were recovered from the wall filling at Hurlly Hawkin (Jervise 1868, 212) as well as the interior of Dun Mor Vaul on Tiree (MacKie 1974), both of which are thought to postdate the brochs' primary occupational phases. Such burial practices may confirm the cultural significance of these sites over extended timescales and the ideological connections continually reinforced by people with places ascribed with symbolic and ancestral meanings.

Roman objects have been recovered from several lowland brochs (Fig. 5.1), but only Fairy Knowe and Leckie contain anything approaching large Roman ceramic assemblages, both are almost exclusively dated to the first century. That such goods appear then to have become more widely available in the second century when the frontier moved north to the Antonine Wall, potentially allowing locals easier access to material and interaction with the Roman army (Erdrich *et al.* 2000; Harding 2004, 188), may strengthen MacInnes' (1984) argument for elite restriction of exotica to the wider population. However, analysis of the artefacts from other southern brochs indicates that these dates may be too restrictive and Edin's Hall, for instance, may have been constructed in the late pre-Roman Iron Age (Hunter 1999, 342).

The absence of Roman artefacts at Edin's Hall (Dunwell 1999) may suggest that the occupants were either not motivated to interact with the Romans or did not have direct access to *negotiatores* to trade with them (Hingley 2004, 337). Alternatively, the absence of Roman material on many southern brochs may hint that some communities elected actively to resist, either overtly or covertly, close interaction with the Romans. Thus:

In such a fluid situation, each southern broch may have had a quite different history, reflecting the local experience of conflict and collaboration with the Roman world (Armit 2003b, 132).

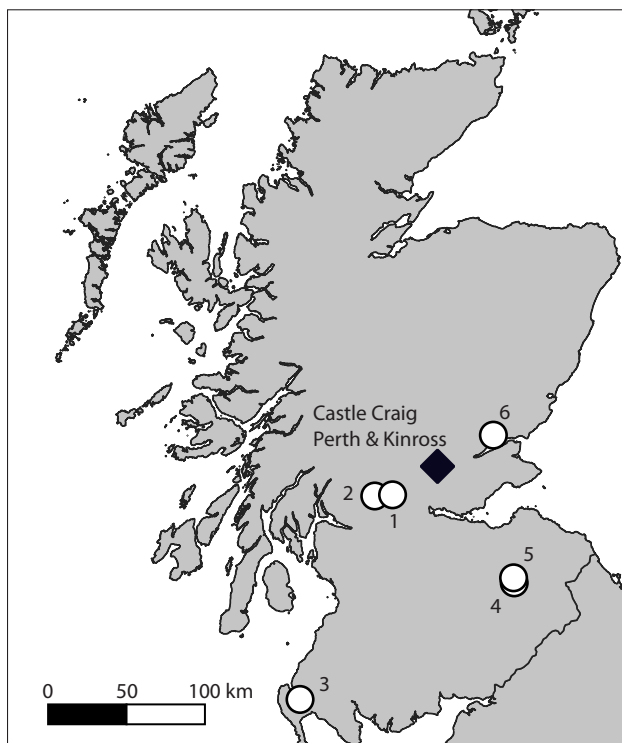


Figure 5.1. Lowland brochs with Roman material culture, including a newly discovered broch at Castle Craig, Perth & Kinross. 1) Fairy Knowe; 2) Leckie; 3) Teroy; 4) Torwoodlee; 5) Bow Castle; 6) Hurly Hawkin.

Each site must therefore be considered on its own merit and complex and multifaceted processes of adaptive practices and negotiation are evident across the region and between sites. Attention should also be drawn to the potential for inadequate excavation of some sites. For instance, excavations by the local rambler's club at Torwoodlee (Curlie 1892) failed to reach the structure's true occupational floor which lay some 6–9 inches deeper (Piggott 1951). Given that the same group excavated at Bow Castle (Curlie 1892), it is tempting to speculate that this broch too holds more meaningful data yet to be revealed.

Lowland broch depositional trends

Perhaps because of the smaller internal dimensions, some southern brochs have benefited from relatively comprehensive excavation and provide welcome contextual data (Table 5.1). Reports from excavations at Leckie broch, Stirlingshire (MacKie 1979; 1982; 2016) contain limited information on contexts of deposition so more reliance is placed on the published accounts of other brochs for this survey. For instance, the charred and scattered condition of artefacts across the interior

courtyard at Fairy Knowe (Main 1998), combined with heated glass and burned Samian, provide evidence of burning at the end of the broch's life. Notably, the excavator makes no assumptions as to whether the internal fire was accidental or an act of deliberate arson. However, she does make the point that the dismantling of the inner wall, foundation course and northwest wall core was a deliberate act of destruction, although no assumptions are made as to why this was done or by whom (Main 1998). This is opposed to Leckie where the excavator considers the broch destruction to be the result of attack by hostile Roman forces because of the presence of a Roman crossbow bolt and two cracked granite boulders thought to have been used as missiles covered in burning oil and fired from Roman ballistas (MacKie 2016, 81). Although he recognizes dismantling of the structure was systematically undertaken after the fire caused little damage (MacKie 2016, 15), he credits Romans with the demolition to render the site indefensible (MacKie 2016, 81). No evidence was recovered to suggest reoccupation of Fairy Knowe after destruction, though occupation continued at Leckie in the form of a stone roundhouse then an 'unfinished promontory fort' and confirmed by radiocarbon dating evidence until the end of the second century AD (MacKie 2016, 58).

Of the contexts of deposition at Fairy Knowe, one Samian sherd has been recovered from a thin deposit of blackened soil on the entrance passageway floor, an adjoining sherd of which came from the broch interior (Main 1998, 303). The handle of a Roman blue-green glass bottle was recovered from the paving of an intramural chamber floor, whilst Samian and amphora sherds came from the chamber rubble; additional amphora sherds came from the rubble overlying extra-mural cobbling on the south of the building (Main 1998, 307). Several sherds were associated with an iron furnace and iron slag in the east of the broch exterior. The remaining Roman sherds and glass fragments came from the burnt interior courtyard and could have fallen as upper floors collapsed during the fire or as a result of deliberate placement prior to the fire (Main 1998, 310) in the manner of other potentially placed objects within the broch (Main 1998, 304; 390). The intentional placement of material prior to firing of a structure can be challenging to identify (Cessford & Near 2006; Twiss *et al.* 2008), but a detailed contextual analysis, taking account of associated material and place of deposition, can clarify such practices (McAnany & Hodder 2009). Therefore, given that the excavator suggests the possibility, it is entirely possible that objects were intentionally placed at specific places within the broch prior to it being set alight at the end of its life.

Table 5.1. *Southern brochs and souterrains – depositional contexts.*

	Brochs					Souterrains		
	Fairy Knowe	Leckie	Torwoodlee	Hurly Hawkin	Castle Craig	Redcastle	Tealing	Hurly Hawkin
No. of sherds	171	81	35	3	1	2	1	5
Site Reused	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Entrance	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
Inter-mural chamber	*	*	*	*				
Inside walls			*	*				
Pit			*					
Quernstones	*		*	*			*	
Metal-working	*	*		*		*		*
Fabric-making	*	*	*	*			*	*
Reused Roman material	*	*	*	*	*	?		
Glass	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Deliberate deconstruct/ closure	*	*	*		?	?	*	* (sealed)
Burial/ cremation/ human remains			*	*	*	*	*	*

Very little in the way of artefactual evidence was recovered from Teroy, Dumfries and Galloway, and the shallow nature of floor deposits led the excavator to conclude that the structure did not have a long occupational sequence, although he does note that the floor surface could have been destroyed by the removal of flagging stones (Curle 1912, 187). It is also possible that the excavator did not reach the true floor of the structure, as earlier work at Torwoodlee (Curle 1892) has been found to have been less than thorough (Piggott 1951). A deposit of dark soil mixed with charcoal, burnt bone and two small oxidized pot sherds was placed in the crevice of a rock adjacent to a flagstone in the west-southwest, that is, on the wall directly opposite the entrance. Close to this deposit, a small lump of iron was recovered as well as the upper stone of a rotary quern, whilst half of a very coarse pottery disc with central perforation, probably a loom weight, was found in the main passage.

Given that the report was written a century ago, it should perhaps raise no surprise that the excavator does not recognize any potential significance attached to the apparently deliberate placement of objects adjacent to the flagstone opposite the broch entrance. The presence of charcoal as well as burnt bone in the darkened soil deposit may signify the remains of a ritual event involving burning. Significantly, the two very small and undiagnostic pottery sherds contained within this deposit are extremely abraded and therefore challenging to identify with absolute confidence; however, they could be Roman, possibly manufactured

at Inveresk as the fabric appears to conform to the vessels from there (Swan 1988). More importantly, neither sherd has been subject to burning, suggesting that they were not incorporated into the fire from which the remainder of the deposit derives. These could, therefore, have been added after the burning of wood and bones as a further layer of structured material deposition.

Roman material dating to the Flavian period, including pottery and glass, has been recovered over a layer of ashes at Torwoodlee broch in the Scottish Borders which the earlier excavators (Curle 1892, 75) incorrectly identified as the broch's occupational floor, although Piggott (1951, 96) does note that the paving appears to have been removed. The actual floor lay 6–9 inches below and contained a scatter of Roman pottery and glass fragments which Piggott (1951, 96) assumed derived from the levels accumulated above. Some pits in the broch interior contained Roman pottery sherds and Roman glass was recovered from a post hole. Three sections through the broch wall also contained Roman material, including a BB2 pot sherd from within the large upper stones and earth, a fragment of Roman glass from the wall base and a Drag 18 or Drag 15/17 Samian platter sherd from above a section of the hillfort rampart which had been incorporated into the broch wall.

Additional Roman grey coarse ware sherds were recovered from a pit under the entrance of the stairwell chamber, whilst carrot-shaped amphora and Samian sherds were recovered from a pit in the southwest of

the broch interior (Piggott 1951, 102). The central pit appears to have been deliberately filled then overlain with flat slabs. It contained two rubbers or whetstones, a sherd of a Samian platter, two amber glass fragments and charcoal of alder and willow (Piggott 1951, 102). Several sherds of Samian platter, grey ware and carrot-shaped amphora were also recovered from the broch floor, whilst Dressel 20 amphora and whitish mortaria sherds (unseen in the NMS collection) were found in the entrance passageway floor. It seems not unreasonable, therefore, to interpret the sherds recovered above an ashy layer during the early excavations as deliberately placed after a burning episode at the closure of the structure. Like at Leckie (MacKie 1979; 1982), Piggott (1951, 96–114) posits that Torwoodlee was also deliberately deconstructed, possibly as a result of Roman military attack, as evidenced by the very minimal amount of silt accumulation within the surrounding ditch prior to its filling with tumbled building-stones.

Hurly Hawkin lies much further to the northeast of Scotland in Angus and is the only southern broch associated with a later souterrain. A fragment of second-century AD glass bracelet made from reused Roman glass was recovered from the wall chamber floor, whilst a glass bead similar to types found in the possible third- to fourth-century AD layer at Traprain Law and made from reused Roman glass was recovered from the broch filling and a much corroded *sestertius* of Geta dated to AD 210 has also been found nearby. Roman pottery sherds were also recovered from the broch wall filling and thought to post-date the broch (Taylor 1982), potentially signifying ritual activity associated with a 'rite of termination' (Merrifield 1987) at the end of the structure's lifecycle. A similar practice of the deliberate placement of objects and the by-products of metalworking in closure contexts is also evident at some souterrains (Campbell 2011, 198–205), potentially constituting votive offerings (Turner, forthcoming, 7). Roman objects have also been recovered from recent excavations at a new discovered lowland broch at Castle Craig, Perth and Kinross (Fig. 5.1), and it remains to be seen whether post-excavation analysis by Archaeology at the University of Glasgow will reveal any interesting depositional practices at this site.

Wider settlement depositional trends

Some intriguing depositional trends have also arisen for enclosed settlements, such as late first- to second-century Roman flagon and bowl sherds recovered associated with seven Iron Age pottery sherds from the northernmost house enclosure bank at Boonies, Dumfries and Galloway (Jobey 1974, 135–7). Two very

abraded and possibly reused second-century Samian sherds came from the upper fill of the enclosure ditch at Drum Farm, West Lothian (Rees 1998, 423); one undated Samian sherd came from the upper fill of the enclosure ditch and one from a central post hole of a ring-groove house at the settlement enclosure at St Germain, East Lothian (Alexander and Watkins 1998, 233–4); two undated Samian sherds were recovered from the ringwork bank at Queen's Park, Glasgow (Fairhurst and Scott 1951); and one coarseware sherd came from the post hole of a roundhouse at the palisaded enclosure at Bannockburn, Lower Greenyards, Stirling (Rideout 1996, 208, 257). A first-century Samian platter sherd (Dunbar 2003) came from the upper fill of the v-sectioned rectilinear enclosure ditch at Longnewton Mill in the Scottish Borders, suggesting deposition long after the site ceased to be occupied. The short-lived rectilinear enclosure at Cuilburn immediately east of the Roman road at Perth and Kinross is almost barren of small finds. However, Woolliscroft and Hoffmann (2001, 163) consider a single first-century Samian sherd from a Drag 37 decorated bowl a stray loss during construction of buildings in a later period, but the presence of two possible BB1 sherds in the fill of another foundation trench may confirm deliberate deposition. A first-century grey ware sherd, also from Perth and Kinross, came from the upper fills of the enclosure ditch at Mains of Fullarton (Strong 1985, 218).

Taken together, the evidence suggests the deliberate deposition of Roman material culture at key phases in the life cycle of structures and enclosures, particularly at their birth and death. The incorporation of Roman objects into funerary and other contexts with potentially ritual connotations, including hoards and places associated with water (Campbell 2016), is similarly enigmatic and suggests deliberate votive deposition of objects perceived as culturally significant.

Discussion

Given the deliberate placement of querns and other specific objects such as cup-marked stones built into walls close to entranceways at some souterrains and hillforts, such as Broxmouth (Hill 1982) in East Lothian (Fig. 5.2), it should perhaps raise no surprise that other objects could have been subject to similarly deliberate placement. While it is admittedly risky to generalize on the topic of depositional practices based upon a select number of sites, the lack of recorded data for many of the finds from earlier excavations precludes their detailed interrogation. That such data is predominantly available from hillforts, brochs and souterrains is unsurprising given that archaeological attention

has traditionally been fixed firmly upon such sites. Where depositional information is recorded, some intriguing practices have emerged and it is tempting to ponder whether unusual contextual circumstances have encouraged such recording, particularly in earlier excavation reports. However, a detailed contextual survey confirms that deliberate deposition is not restricted to these supposed 'elite' structures and extends to several enclosed settlement ditches, pits and post holes. Certainly, placement of Roman ceramics within rampart cores is evident in hillforts such as Eildon Hill North (Owen 1992) and Clatchard Craig (Close-Brooks 1986) as well as enclosure banks of settlements such as Boonies, Drum Farm and St Germain's.

Meanwhile, more comprehensive and systematically recorded modern excavation of lowland brochs such as Fairy Knowe, Hurlly Hawkin and Torwoodlee confirm clear deliberate placement of Roman ceramic sherds, glass fragments and other material during the construction and closure of the structures, a pattern also observable at Broxmouth and other hillforts as well as souterrains. Such practices are also apparent in Orcadian brochs, where single Samian sherds have been recovered from destruction deposits such as the main entrance rubble layer at Howe of Howe (Ballin Smith 1994, 250), the wall debris at Knowe of Taft (Watt 1882, 450) and two Samian sherds from the gallery entrance at Rousay Midhowe (Callander & Grant 1934; Hedges 1987c, 116).

Reliance must therefore be placed upon stratigraphic relationships of material including horizontal stratigraphy and contextual data to provide interpretive

insights into the placement of foreign objects. A good number of the lowland brochs appear to confirm that Roman pottery and non-ceramic material were being deliberately placed, particularly within construction and destruction contexts of these monuments. This confirms that rites of passage (van Gennep 1960 [1909]) can be appropriately applicable to the life cycles of structures as well as people, and that rites of termination (Merrifield 1987) at the closure of sites involved the manipulation and incorporation of foreign objects into their ultimate closure deposits, probably in a locally specific, relevant and acceptable manner (Kopytoff 1986; Thomas 1991; 1992; Thomas 2002).

Single or very small numbers of Roman ceramic sherds deriving from entirely different vessels predominate on northern sites and most fall within the range of 3–5 cm, suggesting secondary deposition (Campbell 2007; Campbell 2012b) of vessel parts or more likely long-term curation of objects prior to deliberate deposition. These patterns are intriguing and could support the proposal that some pots, particularly Samian vessels, were ascribed ideological significance before being subject to breakage then proportioned out to individuals, possibly as part of ritual events (Campbell 2016). However, such cultural significance is unlikely to have been immediately ascribed to foreign objects and it is entirely possible that these objects, or parts thereof, were subject to curation over extended timescales and incorporated into oral histories and story-telling traditions and thereafter inextricably linked to the memories of people and special places.



Figure 5.2. *Querns integrated into Broxmouth hillfort, East Lothian (© W. S. Hanson, used with permission).*

Conclusion

This study confirms that only a detailed and holistic assessment of evidence from sites spatially and chronologically separated, combined with micro and macro comparisons between sites and across regions, can elucidate meanings ascribed to material, places and practices. Wider research suggests that local strategies for appropriating Roman objects could be seen as objectification, a non-verbal means by which people embodied and manipulated material and places in a social landscape to create, idealize, negotiate, transform and reinforce social concepts (Hoskins 1998, 2; 2006; Tilley 2006). These objectified objects and places may have come to be regarded as socially meaningful (Shankar 2006, 298) for their recipient communities and were objectified through their consumption and transformation

(Miller 2006) during the latter part of their life cycles in a culturally relevant and contextually specific manner, perhaps also associated with ritual practices.

This social redefinition of incoming Roman objects which have been ascribed with new meanings may have enabled the incorporation of foreign material culture into traditional practices. Thereafter, the manipulation of this material within monumental structures located in traditionally important places which evidence multiple occupational sequences is deeply enigmatic. Such practices speak to the interconnectedness of material and monuments in the construction of social memories, perhaps as a means of negotiating changing cultural identities or even to tame foreign objects (Thomas 1991; 1992) so that they can be appropriated into existing social conditions to reinforce traditional social concepts.

Chapter 6

Rooted in water: the Scottish island-dwelling tradition

Robert Lenfert

The human affinity for living along the margins of watery places – seas, rivers, lakes and wetlands – can be regarded as a near-universal trait with a long pedigree. This bold statement is hardly a revelation, as water sustains human life – along with countless other organisms upon which our lives depend. It is therefore not surprising that the abundant freshwater lochs located throughout much of Scotland served as focal points for human activity throughout the ages, whether for survival or security, serenity or status. Yet rather than being content simply to live *near* watery places, many former inhabitants of Scotland chose to live *on* the water. This tradition is readily visible through the remains of over 500 artificial or modified natural islets whose collective chronologies span a period of over five millennia. Neighbouring Ireland also contains numerous occupied islets of a slightly later nature whose main floruit of use appears to be during the Early Christian Period, though recent fieldwork is steadily rolling back this horizon (O’Sullivan 2009), while one crannog is currently known to exist in Wales at Llangorse lake; reputedly the legacy of an Irish settler in the ninth century AD (Redknap & Lane 1999, 377).

Briefly, there are a few caveats to digest. Today, Scottish island dwellings are most commonly known by just one of their various medieval monikers as *crannogs*, while numerous terminologies for island dwellings in all their various guises exist – an issue which has muddied the classificatory waters in Scotland (Henderson 1998, 235–40, Harding 2000, 301, Lenfert 2011, 4–6, 2012, 47–71, 2013, 125–7). This has inadvertently led to a divide between the study of Hebridean and mainland crannog use – effectively a singular concept typically expressed primarily in stone rather than timber. In this regard, the analysis of islet use in Scotland is often a contradictory affair. There are few wholesale observations which can be

applied to the overall tradition beyond the shared concept of living on a small islet, while conversely, variation abounds.

Context is often key with crannog discussions. I believe a biography of island dwellings in Scotland is particularly well-suited for discussions on memory and reuse, and therefore *not* particularly well-suited for highly focussed discussions on specific periods. In doing so, one risks losing sight of an inherent part of this rich tradition, namely longevity and persistence. In this sense, a narrative of Iron Age islet use plays an integral role within a Medieval or Post-Medieval narrative, one which sees the much later reoccupation of prehistoric islets which reproduces the same concept – living on water. This underlying theme of reuse and reoccupation provides fertile soil for a number of discussions, not all of which can be addressed in the available space, but alluded to below. These topics include the formation and creation of memory through oral or invented traditions, threads of continuity and change, what monumentality is or is not, and finally, the transposition or projection of legitimacy through the occupation of ancient places.

Presence in the landscape

Current research indicates there are some 571 known or suspected examples of occupied islets in Scotland, ranging from Shetland in the north to Dumfries and Galloway in the south (Lenfert 2012). The majority – at least 347 – are believed to be primarily artificial, i.e. crannogs. Crannogs were laboriously constructed in a number of ways, usually by simply creating a robust mound of stones on shallow loch shelves to form a small island – a technique primarily seen in northern Scotland and the Hebrides, or alternatively, by driving a ring of timber piles into a suitably shallow area of loch bed and filling the interior with peat, brush

or stone, until an islet large enough to provide structural support emerged – a technique most commonly witnessed in more northeastern and southern areas of Scotland (Henderson 1998, 231).

Therefore, in a very real sense, crannogs are a direct reflection of their immediate environment *at the time of construction*, which relied upon readily available materials in the surrounding environment. As a result, these artificial islets range in composition from nascent examples of Neolithic Hebridean crannogs, a current rarity in the archaeological record (Lenfert 2013, 129), to peat-covered mounds of stone built after the wind-swept Western Isles became largely treeless, a lengthy event which began in the Mesolithic and culminated around the late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age transition (Tipping 1994, 23, Fossitt 1996, 171). On the Scottish mainland, the construction of crannogs also mirrors their environment, typically comprising dense agglomerations of timber and brush, rich in organic materials, in those areas which retained sufficient timber resources.

Today, mainland crannogs are deceptive in their appearance – generally nothing more than small, heavily vegetated islets in the picturesque lochs of Scotland, which typically garner little attention from tourists, boaters or fishermen. Underwater inspection in cold, low visibility conditions is often necessary to confirm their artificial nature, which is typically confirmed by the presence of worked timber piles or a tell-tale foundation of irregular boulders small enough to be deposited by human action, while the occasional drought or loch drainage scheme has allowed for sporadic chance identifications without the need for diving. However, it is quite a different story in the Western Isles where prominent drystone architecture visually dominates the archaeological record, alerting us to past activity on islets through a number of intricate and certainly monumental forms: Atlantic roundhouses, including brochs, duns and cellular structures such as wheelhouses, and later, robust, rectilinear Medieval structures.

Access to island dwellings is archaeologically visible through the remains of stone, and less frequently, timber causeways, or the presence of logboats. As recent fieldwork by the author demonstrates, numerous island dwellings are situated in waters shallow enough to provide direct access by simply wading, a habit made easier by simply lifting the traditional highland dress – the belted plaid (not the kilt), commonly worn throughout much of Scotland until at least the early eighteenth century. Conversely, a number of later island dwellings are situated far from shore in deeper water – necessitating the use of boats for access. Overall, this legacy of islet use in Scotland

has arguably manifested itself as one of the longest-surviving and most unique settlement traditions in European history.

A 'wide-angle view' of islet use in Scotland

From an archaeological perspective, one of the most immediately recognizable characteristics of island dwellings is their extensive, if not unrivalled, chronology. Scottish crannogs were variously constructed, renewed or reoccupied over some five and a half millennia, from the Neolithic to as late as the eighteenth century, yet this scenario is certainly not one of complete continuity, at least in the current archaeological record. Scottish island dwellings made a Neolithic debut in the Western Isles of Scotland at sites such as the crannog of Eilean Dòmhnuaill (Armit 2003a), the natural or modified islet of Eilean an Tighe (Scott 1950) and the apparent Neolithic stone and timber crannog at Loch Àirigh na Lic (Dixon & Topping 1986, 191) during a period when static settlement forms and agriculture became widely established. Given the limited depth of fieldwork carried out thus far on Hebridean islet sites, it is almost certain that additional Neolithic crannogs exist here – an area the author intends to revisit in the near future. In contrast, this poorly understood but apparent Neolithic appearance was followed by an extended hiatus in islet use during the Bronze Age, with the sole exception of limited islet occupation in Argyll at the beginning of the first millennium BC (Rennie & Newall 2001). Here, Melldalloch Island exists as a large natural island, and thus stands out as something of an anomaly in both chronology and setting. While future findings will no doubt alter this early chronology, in reality there are currently over 200 radiocarbon or tree-ring dates available from Scottish island dwellings (Lenfert 2012, 18–19). With this amount of data now available, the stark absence of Bronze Age activity during all but the very end of the Late Bronze Age suggests islets during this period were simply not occupied on an appreciable scale.

It is on the periphery of the Early Iron Age (c. 800–700 BC) that island dwellings are first constructed on an appreciable scale in Scotland, making the leap in both time and space from the Western Isles. By the mid- to late first millennium BC, crannog use reached a floruit, appearing across much of Western Scotland, and to a lesser extent, eastern areas linked by water routes. These later prehistoric sites appear in the archaeological record as largely unassuming homesteads – it is their unique location that holds an air of monumentality, rather than the limited material assemblages which speak more of domesticity than defence, though concerns of ritual matters appear to

have been present as well (below). The island dwelling tradition was largely unaffected by the limited Roman presence, particularly in areas of direct contact such as Dumfries and Galloway. It persists throughout much of the first millennium AD, after which it all but vanishes in the current archaeological record during the Norse Period (c. AD 800–1266), only to re-emerge yet again during the Medieval and Post-Medieval Periods, as a form of settlement increasingly associated with royalty, clansmen and tacksmen. This later use of islets is witnessed by a growing number of written references in the form of charters, official documents and first-hand accounts which tantalizingly allude in the briefest of entries to island dwellings as the setting for feasts, weddings, conflicts and truces – perhaps masking the presence of more commonplace island occupants at this time.

At the end of this saga, the island dwelling tradition ultimately witnessed a rapid demise in the mid- to late seventeenth century. This decline was brought on by a combination of factors, most notably an increasingly centralized government which was effective in dismantling what it accurately saw as an unruly, independent and troublesome clan system. In turn, these efforts toppled long-standing social hierarchies (Shelley 2009, 204), which indirectly led to ideological changes amongst younger members of the land-holding or ruling classes. Newer generations were more likely to be educated in England or on the Continent, or at least exposed to these cultural norms, and domestic desires turned towards constructing tower houses, or later, stately homes with large formal gardens, rather than artificial islands upon which to make their mark. Though the situation in Scotland was far from politically stable – the Jacobites loomed large upon the scene and the Risings of 1715 and 1745 were yet to come, later seventeenth-century life had taken on a considerably more settled tone with reduced internecine violence and raiding that often typified earlier eras. By this point in time, living on an islet went from being a widely accepted practice, which had successfully resisted countless centuries of change, to becoming what basically amounted to an antiquated oddity. The frequently harsh and rugged, yet easily romanticized notion of islet life – one spent hunting and fishing, feasting and heroically defending ancient lineages and traditions, it seems, had gradually given way to afternoon tea.

Living on water – revisited

Given the sweeping timescale for the construction and occupation of island dwellings, in addition to their sheer numbers, it is reasonable to assume at

least a certain percentage would see phases of reuse after their initial construction and occupation phase. In reality, this concept is more canonical than exceptional. Currently, with the only clear exception of the Post-Medieval site of Eadarloch (Ritchie 1942; Crone 2011, 36), *every* island dwelling excavated to date typically indicates one or more of the following characteristics: extensive periods of largely uninterrupted occupation, multiple occupation phases, or a sudden revitalization and reoccupation, often centuries after initial construction. Why does this reuse appear so systemic throughout the island dwelling tradition? Is it merely related to the opportunistic renewal of an already-existing site, or does memory and ancestry – however real or constructed – contribute to the decisions made by subsequent arrivals? Perhaps, above all, it typifies what has been referred to as ‘the deliberate re-activation of an antique site’ (O’Sullivan & Van De Noort 2007, 71).

Deconstructing defence

This question of ‘why choose to live on an islet?’ rightly forms one of the most fundamental topics within island dwelling studies. As with most debates in archaeology, the reality is that there are multiple, equally valid explanations for living on water. Defence is the most obvious and most commonly touted motive – a pragmatic, plausible notion which leads back to views held by early antiquarian investigators such as Stuart (1865) and Munro (1882). While any islet has inherently defensive characteristics by virtue of being surrounded by water, there are several factors which weaken this argument as the sole reason to build an island.

First, and perhaps most telling, artificial islands were often constructed in lochs where natural islands already existed, yet these ‘ready-made’ and therefore easily annexed islands often show no archaeological indications of use. This intriguing juxtaposition between unoccupied natural and artificial islets can be seen at Loch Lomond, for instance, where five crannogs were built near natural islands which lacked evidence of human activity (Baker & Dixon 1998, 23). Far from an isolated case, numerous examples of artificial islets built next to natural islets are also found in the Lake of Menteith (Henderson 1998), Loch Awe, Loch Garry and Loch Lundie (Blundell 1909), to name but a few examples. If defence was the overriding issue, using natural islets would free up labour and materials for the construction of robust defensive structures such as palisades, rather than diverting efforts towards the inherently painstaking task of building an island. Second, as fieldwork in the Western Isles has shown (Lenfert 2012, 253–8), it is frequently easier to wade out



Figure 6.1. *Author standing on submerged causeway leading to Dun Ban, Grimsay. Causeways are present on many Hebridean crannog sites in particular, yet access is often problematic despite their presence (photo: Nataliya Danilova).*

to many islets, rather than having to rely solely upon unstable, algae-covered causeways or boats for access. In fact, several islet sites inspected during this research are located in water less than 50 cm deep, while in contrast, navigating stone causeways was considerably more time-consuming, and indeed treacherous, that simply wading to islets through shallow water, though local knowledge of loch depth certainly plays a key role in this observation (Fig. 6.1).

Third, far from being secluded enclaves, island dwellings are highly conspicuous in their environment, often visible for a considerable distance. This attribute implies more about making one's presence known, rather than concealing it. Fourth, there is no clear archaeological evidence for violence on any appreciable scale taking place on Scottish crannogs until the later Medieval Period – it should be noted there are exceptions to this in Ireland, however, which appear to relate more to early Norse forays (O'Sullivan 2000). Fifth, and perhaps ironically, island dwellings are particularly vulnerable to any form of siege for the exact same reasons that underline any apparent defensive characteristics. As historical accounts indicate, there are several ways to make life unbearable

for islet occupants, ranging from simply waiting for the besieged occupants to deplete their limited stores of supplies, to more Machiavellian measures such as flooding islets by blocking loch outlets or equally dramatic examples of Post-Medieval cannonades from the foreshore – again in Ireland (O'Sullivan 2000, 41). Finally, protection of food stores from scavengers is another motive which overshadows a potential defensive motive. This holds particularly true in the context of prehistoric societies, at a time when now extinct predators such as lynx, bear and especially wolves would have been encountered with some frequency (Yalden 1999, 111; Lenfert 2012, 561). Finally, food stores on a crannog would be much easier to protect from rodent infestation – a more timeless threat which would have plagued both Neolithic and Medieval occupants alike.

Crannogs, prehistoric belief systems: ceramic and metalwork deposition

If we look beyond overtly physical virtues, towards early spiritual concerns or belief systems, we see additional motives for the prehistoric occupation of



Figure 6.2. Notable examples of largely intact prehistoric pottery recovered by the author from the lochbed surrounding Hebridean crannogs. Though absent from most mainland sites, typological ceramic forms in the Hebrides can help identify phases of occupation where no other chronological evidence exists.

islets which extend beyond the realm of the pragmatic. Based upon notable finds by the author of largely intact prehistoric vessels (Fig. 6.2) deposited around the submerged margins of crannogs in the Hebrides (Lenfert 2011, 17, 22–4, Lenfert *forthcoming*), evidence of intentional ceramic deposition on the loch bed adjacent to crannogs is now apparent in the island dwelling record, as these vessels appear to have been carefully placed upright or in one instance, (Lenfert 2011, 24) nested inside one another, rather than simply discarded into the loch.

In addition, extensive metalwork deposition, well-known in numerous prehistoric European contexts, further alludes to the belief that watery places held a specific significance in prehistory, perhaps later transposed upon themes in early Christianity. These Pagan belief systems deified natural elements, many strands of which were later adopted by Roman incomers. Rivers, lakes, pools and wells have long been associated with not only the essence of life or sources of healing, but also the otherworld (*cf* Green 1995), though much of this evidence is largely anecdotal in nature, primarily surviving through mention in either Greek or Roman sources. In this sense, a reverence for watery places, e.g.

Scottish lochs, raises the strong possibility of a ritual association with the construction and occupation of artificial islands, as opposed to solely natural islet use, as places *intentionally* surrounded by life-giving water, protected and blessed by virtue of their location and detachment from their earthly surroundings.

Furthermore, there exists a similar dynamic for the curious appearance of a number of well-preserved ards deposited in the sub-flooring on crannogs such as Milton Loch (Piggott 1953), Buiston (Munro 1882; Crone 2000), Oakbank (Dixon 2004) and Cults Loch (Cavers 2010). In this vein, it is therefore rather surprising that ritual metalwork deposition is not found in more secure association with island dwellings, although this may simply reflect a lack of excavation on the surrounding lochbed. Sites such as the ‘Iochdar Complex’, in the Western Isles (Lenfert 2012, 490), Dowalton Loch in the southwest and perhaps most importantly, Duddingston Loch (Stuart 1865) have produced evidence of metalwork deposition in association to known or suspected crannogs, yet in many cases, it is difficult to make a convincing correlation due to either the lack of provenance from antiquarian relict hunters or evidence for continuity between site occupation and

artefact deposition. Most crannog excavations have understandably focused upon the islets themselves, not systematic searches of the surrounding lochbed for submerged artefacts. The strongest evidence for metalwork deposition in relation to crannogs comes from neighbouring Ireland. An amnesty for archaeological relics in Ireland was called during the late 1980s. Underwater metal detectorists, in particular, revealed a large number of metal objects deposited near crannogs (O'Sullivan 1998, 42), further strengthening arguments for a correlation between crannogs and deposition associated with ritual activity.

Island dwellings and the concept of monumentality

Thus far, while defence (from both humans and animals) and ritual concerns appear to provide *partial* explanations for the prehistoric occupation of islets, several other factors play into this discussion, namely

monumentality. This theme holds particularly true in regards to Hebridean islet use, characterized by the presence of imposing Atlantic roundhouses represented by sites such as Dun an Sticer, Dun Cromore, Dun Torcuill and Dun Nighean Righ Lochlainn (Fig. 6.3), to name but a few of the better-known examples (*cf* Beveridge 1911; Armit 1996; Lenfert 2012) In this sense, most archaeologists would agree monumental architecture is typified by large man-made stone structures such as Scottish brochs or Sardinian *Nuraghi*, or earthworks such as Silbury Hill in England or Monk's Mound in North America. Therefore, it is reasonable to ask what outwardly monumental characteristics crannogs possess. Despite the technical skill and sheer labour associated with their construction, little evidence of the toil necessary to build them is readily apparent to outsiders who might rightly assume the island is not simply natural. Furthermore, within perhaps a decade of abandonment, vegetation would likely obscure any remaining walling present,



Figure 6.3. Examples of prominent 'monumental' islet architecture: (clockwise, from upper left) Dun Cromore, Lewis, Dun Nighean Righ Lochlainn and Dun Torcuill, North Uist.

providing the impression simply of a natural islet without visual clues as to its human past.

The answers to this lie more within contemporary site use, in the context of outward visibility and initial impressions upon neighbouring social groups. The ability to construct an island represents the creation of a lasting, highly visible feature in the landscape – one that is not readily discounted. Archaeological evidence from prehistoric crannogs (*cf* Munro 1882; Piggott 1953; Crone 2000; Dixon 2004) may lack much to associate them artefactually with royalty or high-status lifestyles, yet the available picture is one of often intense activity: a timber causeway leading to a thriving, smoky roundhouse set upon the water, perhaps with a log-boat moored alongside. There would have been the sights and sounds of families carrying out daily tasks, the grinding of grain on a quernstone, or the working of timbers accompanied by the smells of cooking, the butchering of livestock and the processing of animal hides. Infrequent visitors to a particular loch (perhaps during seasonal pastoral movements) would likely be left with quite an impression upon discovering that not only was there a new island in the loch, but that it now contained a bustling household. Experimental archaeology also plays a direct role in forming these perceptions.

Based upon the imagery above, crannogs would therefore possess monumental aspects on several levels: most directly, during the active life-cycle of the site, and less tangibly, after abandonment, as the focal point or setting for events subsumed into local memory. At this junction, oral traditions would become the primary channel through which the knowledge of past events and places on these enigmatic sites were transmitted down to successive generations. Meanwhile, the occasional or accidental recognition of ‘forgotten’ artificial islets through processes such as drought or the discovery of artefacts adds a new variable to sites which became ‘lost’ in local knowledge – including modified or invented histories to explain these peculiar places in the landscape.

Island dwelling use and reuse in the archaeological record

Below are several cases of reuse or lengthy occupation in the island dwelling record which provide insights into the differing patterns of reuse visible in the archaeological record. These traits include: intermittent use or long occupation spans, Medieval or Post-Medieval reoccupation of prehistoric islets and lastly, symbolism associated with the later use of crannogs as political centres of control. The methodology of dating islets in a Scottish context deserves some discussion here. First, the taphonomy of islet sites is particularly

challenging due to variations in loch levels, currents, wind and biological factors, not to mention subsidence of mound structures from any number of causes, most commonly unstable foundations. Attempting to date island dwellings by association based upon visual clues can be deceptive. A clear example is seen at Loch Tay, Perthshire, where two crannogs exist within *c.* 50 m of one another – Dall Farm North (still above the water-line) and Dall Farm South (completely submerged). Despite being submerged, and thus of greater *apparent* antiquity, Dall South instead returned an Early Historic radiocarbon date in contrast to a considerably older, Mid-Iron Age determination for the still-exposed Dall North site (Dixon 2005, 259). Thus, we see that assumptions regarding site-formation processes relative to adjacent sites cannot be relied upon for relative or sequential dating purposes.

From an artefactual standpoint, it has been noted that the material culture of Scotland is largely homogenous throughout much of later prehistory (Henderson 2007, 171), making it difficult in some instances to date assemblages even broadly based on typologies alone. In addition, the material culture associated with mainland crannogs is largely undiagnostic and virtually aceramic until the mid-first millennium AD. Beyond Neolithic or later Hebridean islet use almost all prehistoric vessels and containers recovered from crannogs are crafted from wood, not ceramics. Again, islet sites in the Hebrides and Northern Isles stand out here as the primary exceptions – places which contain a visible ceramic tradition throughout later prehistory. Therefore, in mainland areas radiocarbon determinations, and to a lesser extent, dendrochronology, play a particularly vital role in chronological discussions of islet use and reuse, rather than reliable typological dating of artefacts.

Loch Olabhat, North Uist, Western Isles

Perhaps the most persistent example of artificial islet use occurs at the Neolithic site of Eilean Domhnuill in Loch Olabhat, North Uist. As with most sites on North Uist, it was first investigated by the keen antiquarian Erskine Beveridge, who noted the presence of several rectangular structures overlying earlier midden ash and quantities of patterned pottery (Beveridge 1911, 198). Little else transpired until the site was re-excavated by Ian Armit in the late 1980s who initially believed the site to be another example of Medieval use based upon the rectilinear foundations (Armit 1987; 1988; 1992a; 1996; 2003a). However, excavation revealed at least three successive Neolithic drystone houses whose foundations were largely contiguous and measured some 6 × 4 m internally (Armit 2003a, 94). Underwater

trial trenches revealed earlier strata which pre-date the structures, and it is surmised that a rapid sequence of flooding and rebuilding took place during the first of the substantial occupation phases represented at the site (Armit 2003a, 95).

The site appears to have witnessed a troubled history, perhaps a testimony to the dogged nature of the occupants who repeatedly returned here. Over multiple cycles, the islet appears to have been completely flooded, abandoned, and then – as it re-emerged from the waters – was rebuilt and occupied yet once more. In comparison to mainland Iron Age crannog assemblages, the Neolithic material culture from the site was prolific. Some 20,000 sherds of Unstan and Hebridean ware were recovered, along with carved stone balls, pumice fishing net floats and numerous saddle querns, while anaerobic conditions provided well-preserved organic layers, including evidence of wattle screens and faunal remains associated with food consumption. However, the notion of the islet as a ‘typical’ domestic site is challenged by Armit, who cites a lack of evidence for the working of materials or the keeping of livestock (e.g. no dung) on the site, along with the fact it was fastidiously maintained from c. 3650–2600 BC despite episodic flooding events. As Armit relates, ‘Whatever else the site was, Eilean Domhnuill was important and permanent’ (Armit 2003a, 98).

However, the story of islet use in Loch Olabhat does not end here. The site of Eilean Olabhat, only 200 m east of Eilean Domhnuill within the same loch, was also excavated by Armit and produced dates ranging from the mid-first millennium BC to the onset of the Norse Period, with even later evidence for late Medieval or Post-Medieval reuse (Armit 1988, 35; Armit *et al.* 2009). This former islet is now connected to the foreshore because of changing loch levels and the encroachment of blanket peats. It is considerably larger (c. 60 × 80 m) than its artificial neighbour Eilean Domhnuill (c. 23 m diameter) and is of natural origins although heavily modified with perimeter walling. The earliest construction phase is represented by a small circular stone structure measuring 4 × 5 m internally (Armit *et al.* 2009, 32), followed by three more archaeologically discernible phases of use, occurring not as continuous occupation but as largely discreet episodes. The first and second phases in the second half of the first millennium BC, and perhaps early centuries AD, appeared to have been episodic, not continual. A third phase is evident after a lengthy abandonment in the mid-first millennium AD, marked initially by a domestic occupation phase, followed by the emergence of considerable metalworking activity on-site until perhaps the eighth century AD (Armit *et al.* 2009, 45). The evidence for metalworking from

phase three in the Early Historic Period is notable; 86 mould fragments were recovered while traces of silver were recorded in five crucible fragments (Armit *et al.* 2009, 83). Finally, phase four occurs after yet another lengthy period of abandonment, as a final discrete phase ending somewhere between the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries AD.

Dun an Sticer, North Uist, Western Isles

Another prehistoric islet which was later reoccupied in the Medieval and Post-Medieval Period is Dun an Sticer (Fig. 6.4), a prominent prehistoric Atlantic roundhouse situated on a natural islet on North Uist in the Western Isles. This popular site amongst tourists today is notable by the insertion of a Medieval rectangular interior within the modified broch shell (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland 1928, 51). Dun an Sticer retains some of its associated oral tradition, unlike the majority of other islet sites. The Post-Medieval occupant, Hugh, son of Archibald ‘the Clerk’, utilized Dun an Sticer as a base from which he set out to murder the Chief of the MacDonalds and thereby assert control over North Uist during a period of inter-clan unrest after the murder of his father (Beveridge 1911, 140). This would-be usurper on North Uist reputedly held out for nearly a year on this prehistoric broch, until he was reputedly betrayed by his mother attempting to flee by swimming away. His capture, imprisonment in Duntulm Castle on Skye and gruesome death by being given only salted meat and no water, mark an end to this episode (Beveridge 1911, 138; Miers 2008, 5). It is difficult to imagine the unfortunate Hugh chose Dun an Sticer to make his ill-fated bid without considering the historical implications of political power associated with this islet. While this example is one of the more vivid legacies, the overall theme of reoccupying abandoned sites with an associated genealogical or mythological legacy (Gosden & Lock 1998, 2) is archaeologically visible throughout much of the Medieval period, though perhaps lacking the striking narrative associated with Dun an Sticer. It is plausible that throughout Scotland, multiple instances of islet reoccupation were key components towards asserting or contesting claims of ownership or control over the surrounding landscape.

Eilean na Comhairle, Islay: a prehistoric crannog fit for a medieval king

Loch Finlaggan, located on Islay in the Inner Hebridean archipelago, contains several islets which arguably play an under-recognized role in the history of Medieval Scotland. Loch Finlaggan is directly connected to the



Figure 6.4. *Dun an Sticer, North Uist – a prehistoric Atlantic roundhouse with Late Medieval modification and reoccupation.*

powerful Lordship of the Isles, which broadly existed from the mid-twelfth to the late fifteenth century AD. Between 1990 and 1998, excavations led by David Caldwell (Caldwell 2010a, b) allowed the team to conduct relatively dry excavations on some 80 sq. m of previously submerged lochbed (Caldwell 1997, 19). The loch contains three islets, two of which are artificial. Towards the southern end of the loch Eilean Mhuireill exists as an artificial sub-circular crannog measuring some 30 × 50 m at its base, with a usable living area of approximately 17.5 × 12.5 m (Holley 1995, 20). Local tradition indicates that Eilean Mhuireill served as a prison for the Lords of the Isles, visible through the remains of two sub-rectangular structures measuring approximately 3 × 7 m internally (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland 1984, 154). Holley investigated the site as part of his PhD fieldwork in the Inner Hebrides (Holley 2000) and subsequently discovered the crannog was situated in water too deep for causeway construction, thus requiring a boat for access (Holley 2000, 210) further strengthening its attractiveness as a prison.

However, it is the second completely artificial islet, Eilean na Comhairle, located at the northern end of the loch, which provides one of the best examples of high-status medieval reuse of a prehistoric crannog in Scotland. Eilean na Comhairle, or ‘Council Island’ is a completely artificial Iron Age crannog some 30 m in diameter. Radiocarbon dating of structural timbers indicates an initial construction phase from the second century BC, with a second phase of revitalization taking place some seven to eight centuries later, on the cusp of the late Iron Age/Early Medieval transition in the fifth to sixth centuries AD (Caldwell 2010a, 49). Notably, the crannog later served as the principal residence for John, First Lord of the Isles (AD 1329–1380). This crannog is in turn associated with Eilean Mor some 50 m away, a substantially larger natural island which, in contrast to most natural islets near crannogs, holds the remains of some seven structures, including chapels. This reuse of Eilean na Comhairle in Loch Finlaggan during the Medieval Period indicates both symbolic and pragmatic motivations. As control over much of Atlantic Scotland was contested in the centuries

following the MacDonalds rise to power, crannogs would have served not only as pragmatic boltholes during periods of unrest, but as centres of political power and control by virtue of the reoccupation of ancient places in the landscape. In this regard, as the MacDonalds were the last in a long line of descendants from the obscure Somerled MacGillebrigte in the twelfth century, these seemingly obscure crannogs today in the Inner Hebrides actually served as a centralized location along the western Scottish seaboard from which to rule this maritime-based kingdom of Medieval Scotland.

While historical references to the islands extend as far back as the fourteenth century, by the late seventeenth century records indicate the dwellings were then in a ruinous state. (Celoria 1959). The 'castle' on Eilean Mor now survives as a substantial foundation underlying two later buildings, containing robust walling some 1.5 m in thickness (Caldwell 1993, 63). However, the choice of the smaller crannog Eilean na Comhairle as the site for the Lord's centre, as opposed to the much larger adjacent natural island is telling here, as is the location and limited access. This desire to occupy a place seen as apart and therefore exclusive readily highlights the notion that a rather humble crannog in Loch Finlaggan was in effect, the administrative hub of a far-reaching maritime kingdom. While not all crannogs were 'fit for a king', it is apparent during the mid- to late Medieval Period in Scotland that a growing number of crannogs were occupied by persons of at least some status, such as landholders (Gaelic *Lairds*) or the growing class of 'fear-taic' or tacksmen. This societal stratum consisted of middle-ranking men who rented *taic* or a plot of land from the freeholder (i.e. Scottish *Lairds*) and subsequently sub-let it amongst their immediate kin or close clansmen. To this end, tacksmen appear to have been the primary occupants of many island dwellings, particularly in the Hebrides, during the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods (Raven 2005).

Ultimately, Loch Finlaggan stands as a notable exemplification of a Post-Norse return to prehistoric crannogs. The underlying importance stressed here is the association of crannogs with royalty and regional control on a scale previously unseen in Scotland through the archaeological record alone.

Buiston

Moving to the Scottish mainland, another example of reuse after extended abandonment is represented at Buiston, Ayrshire, which was initially excavated by the antiquarian Munro in the late nineteenth century (Munro 1882) and again in 1989–90 by Crone (Crone

2000). An important aspect of the later excavation was the application of dendrochronological dating, which has supplemented the radiocarbon results from the site. This data provide two discrete windows of activity: initial construction in the late first and early second centuries AD, followed by much later rejuvenation and reoccupation during the sixth to mid-seventh centuries AD with tree-ring dates falling between AD 520 and 668 (Crone 2000, 55, 160).

From a diagnostic standpoint, the later assemblage at Buiston included sherds of Continental E-ware, part of a crossbow mechanism (nut), eight knife blades and three spearheads amongst other metal objects. Notably, this artefactual evidence did not yield any material that would bridge the gap between construction and secondary reuse during the Early Historic Period, creating a gap of roughly three and a half centuries between these phases. If the occurrence of weapons such as spears, and the crossbow nut were intended for more than hunting, these artefacts suggest that crannog occupation by the early Medieval Period had perhaps taken on an increasingly defensive nature. Whether this perceived shift in use simply reflects a bias in the recovered material culture, in contrast to more benign, domestic assemblages from prehistoric occupation (i.e. quernstones, wooden vessels and lithics), it nevertheless suggests an expansion in the role of islet use beyond simple households or seasonal settlements.

Ederline and Loch Awe

Crannog reuse and reoccupation is again visible at Loch Awe in Perthshire, the first loch to be systematically inspected for crannogs by divers in 1972. This massive effort resulted in the documentation of 20 artificial islets (McArdle *et al.* 1973) which provides a clear indication of the intensity in artificial islet activity within several of the larger Highland lochs. One of the sites examined was Ederline crannog which exists as a seasonally submerged, sub-circular mound measuring some 37 m by 27 m and *c.* 2.5 m in height at the southern end of Loch Awe (McArdle *et al.* 1973; Cavers & Henderson 2005, 285). Initial radiocarbon samples produced an Early Iron Age date of 790–520 cal. BC (SUERC-20205) from an oak pile, yet rather than finding prehistoric artefacts, excavation in 2004 by Cavers & Henderson instead revealed sherds of E-ware from the sixth or early seventh centuries AD (Cavers 2006, 290). A reference in the Irish Annals indicates that *Etarlindu*, believed to be Ederline, was the site of a pitched battle between the Picts and the Scotti in AD 736 (Lane & Campbell 2000, 25) providing additional support for the reuse of prehistoric crannogs as contested places in the Early Historic Period.

Returning to (un)familiar places

While space prevents a detailed narrative of the sites briefly discussed above, the archaeological and historic records underscore a number of motives behind crannog reoccupation, ranging from the intentional reuse of a well-known structure to perhaps coincidental opportunistic reoccupation of an existing islet. The prominence of islet settlements is another aspect that lends itself to notions of control in the landscape – if not in the purely political sense – one of control over the surrounding arable land (Morrison 1985, 78). Occupied islets are visible from great distances in comparison to many ‘terrestrial’ sites. This suggests that the residents sought to reoccupy crannogs as an impressive and easily defended form of settlement, one which may have previously existed as a ruin and known in local memory for countless generations yet was renewed to its apparent former glory once again. Given the practicalities of living on crannogs, especially in rugged areas such as the Scottish Highlands or the Western Isles, many islets located within the larger Highland lochs would have also served as important nodal points in the landscape, because of their situation within water-based arteries of communication and travel.

One pragmatic aspect of crannog reuse is that reinvigoration or maintenance of the site, even after centuries of abandonment, would have required less effort in contrast to the laborious initial construction phase. Today, this is evident when one considers the number of crannogs which still survive above the loch level despite episodic periods of flooding or severe storms. The thick vegetation which commonly covers these sites helps to consolidate the core of the crannog mound, while waterlogged timber piles retain much of their original strength which further prevents the mass from slumping. Therefore, a site that has ‘only’ been abandoned for several centuries, could become inhabitable once again with a brief but intensive spate of repair. As driving new timber piles into stone mounds is impractical, if not impossible, this new occupation phase would often involve enlargement of the crannog mound itself, at which point timbers could then be readily inserted into the silty lochbed along new margins (*cf* Harding 2000, 305).

Specific motives for crannog reuse range from the opportunistic, short-term reoccupation of existing sites during periods of political insecurity, to more opaque considerations of ancestry, legacy, tradition and identity (Lenfert 2012, 39). The reuse of sites which already contain an associated legacy would provide a convincing display of authority not easily dismissed by others. As Cavers (Cavers 2006, 146) states: ‘occupation of ancient islet sites must have been a very deliberate

undertaking, designed to create a tangible connection to the past’. On a similar level, other scholars have argued that ‘that all prehistoric societies orientated their actions in the present with the past in mind’, making ‘a distinction between genealogical history, where the past is created through links to known ancestors, and mythical history, where a less well-known past is evoked’ (Gosden & Lock 1998, 2). Therefore, conceptual stimuli such as legitimacy via reoccupation, symbolism and status can be viewed as key drivers behind the longevity of the Scottish island dwelling tradition. By incorporating these non-tangible factors into narratives regarding crannogs, a more meaningful discussion of the tradition as a whole becomes more readily available. Conversely, more traditional, pragmatic explanations behind crannog use – primarily as defensive strongholds – can now be at least partially deconstructed in favour of deeper, underlying motives for reoccupation. As with many similar archaeological debates, there is no neat, singular explanation as to why Scottish crannogs were constructed and occupied (and subsequently reoccupied) over such a tremendous timespan. However, when the wider spectrum of motives discussed above are presented within a site-specific context, such as Dun an Sticer or Loch Finlaggan, the transposition of legacy through the occupation of ancient places becomes much more apparent.

In closing, despite a lengthy history of scholarly interest in Scottish island dwellings and crannogs, the reality is that crannog studies have been neither consistent in nature, nor well-developed in a regional sense, while still reliant upon many interpretations first cultivated in the nineteenth century. These issues may leave many modern archaeologists with a mottled view of this phenomenon. Lack of investigation is still a primary issue given the hundreds of sites which have largely gone unnoticed, while finding the funding and sustained commitment required to send trained archaeologists diving in Scottish lochs remains another formidable barrier, despite the proven abundance of high-quality finds that results from underwater archaeology here. Typical drivers of new archaeological discoveries such as commercial development play virtually no role in islet studies, unless located in a drained loch. Therefore, the impetus is upon research-driven archaeology to advance our current understanding of the Scottish crannog tradition. In this regard, the author is committed to building upon his research in the future to carry out more investigation, particularly in a Neolithic Hebridean context. With that said, the brief case-studies presented above will hopefully form one element from which to develop and expand new theoretical approaches to the remarkable longevity, reuse and memory contained which typify the Scottish island dwelling tradition.

Chapter 7

Remembering *Nuraghi*: memory and domestication of the past in nuragic Sardinia

Mauro Perra

A fierce debate has developed in Sardinia between orientalist, that is scholars of Phoenician and Punic archaeology, and protohistorians about the complex subject of the political and social structure in nuragic communities when they came into contact with the first Phoenician prospectors. This is because of both a constant lack of reliable archaeological sites excavated in the past and a blunt divergence between traditional dating, based on the presence of geometric Greek pottery, and the latest radiocarbon dates recorded at Carthage and in the Iberian peninsula (Nijboer 2002, 2004; Arruda 2003; Mederos Martin 2003). The debate has branched out into strictly connected themes such as the dating of the famous bronze figurines, of the stone statues of Mont'e Prama (Cabras) and of the stone and bronze *Nuraghe* models found in various Sardinian sites. The debate has recently seen echoes in the volume *I Nuragici, I Fenici e gli Altri: Sardegna e Mediterraneo tra Bronzo Finale e Prima Età del Ferro*, Sassari 2012, edited by Paolo Bernardini and Mauro Perra. In brief, while the orientalist are inclined towards more recent dates (not earlier than the ninth century BC), protohistorians consider the ninth century BC to be a *terminus ante quem*, therefore the date of the final phase of such production.

The archaeological data

While research in the key site at Mont'e Prama cannot yet be considered definitive, and despite the fact that most finds of *Nuraghe* models are, with a few exceptions, occasional and accidental, the recent acquisitions from excavations in nuragic sanctuaries allow us to date the first examples of bronze figurines, generally ascribed to the Early Iron Age, minimally to the initial and intermediate phases of the Final Bronze Age (Campus *et al.* 2010). The most recent phases of such artefacts do not come later than the eighth to sixth centuries BC,

particularly the bronze boats found in Italic and Etruscan sanctuaries, amongst which the sanctuary of Hera Lacinia in Crotona (Spadea 1994; Lilliu 2000a) and recently tomb 74 of the necropolis in Monte Vetrano (Salerno) (Cerchiai and Nava 2008–2009)

Between the Middle and Recent Bronze Age, settlements were characterized by a polycentric layout with nuragic towers at their centre, surrounded by large hierarchical territorial systems which extend to over 100/150 sq. km. Within these systems, one can distinguish both upper and lower order centres reflecting the hierarchy of society. As shown by the latest research, single-towered *Nuraghi* overlook unavoidable fords and mountain passes, but they also command, together with more complex *Nuraghi*, the road network which connects them. In short, all of them together control the territory and its resources. The ostensibly egalitarian communal burial in megalithic tombs apparently contrasted with such a strictly hierarchical socio-economic organization, leaving one with a suspicion that the power of the elites was anything but stable, and where it could actually be challenged by subordinate groups with a deeply egalitarian ideology (Perra 2009).

This pre-existing historical picture entered a crisis as early as the beginning of the twelfth century BC, at the onset of the Final Bronze Age, when 60 per cent of *Nuraghi* showed signs of dismantling, while the few remaining *Nuraghi* which escaped this fate underwent a phase of visible restoration (for example at Su Nuraxi di Barumini, Lilliu 1955). Already from about the eleventh century BC, no new *Nuraghi* were built. Whereas, in some cases, limited occupation can be observed during the Early Iron Age, in other cases the sites were still visited, but were turned into cult sites (Perra 2012). This is a period during which the ancestor cult in collective burials became weaker, while new structures employed for a strictly religious purpose, such as Well-Temples, Spring Fountains, 'megaron'

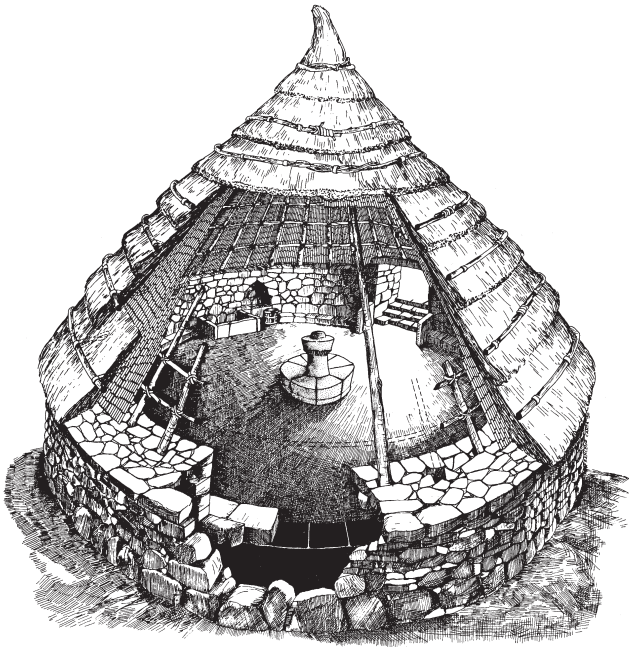


Figure 7.1. Alghero, Nuraghe Palmavera: the reconstruction of the reunion hut (after Moravetti 1992).

Temples and Round Temples were constructed and utilized at a higher rate. The surge of religious activity which can be detected in these structures stems from the nuragic elites' need to overcome a systemic crisis. The power system has become unstable under challenge from entropic forces, leading the elites to try to subject the community to a brand new cult that legitimized social inequality (Perra 1997a; 2009). During the most recent phase of this period, the first few individual tombs started to appear. This is also the moment in which specially distinct structures called *Capanne delle Riunioni* (Meeting Huts), round-shaped and equipped with benches, niches and also *Nuraghe* models, were used in the largest settlements such as those of Su Nuraxi di Barumini and of Palmavera in Alghero (Fig. 7.1) (Lilliu 1955, Moravetti 1992), but also near Well Temples like the one of S. Anastasia in Sardara (Ugas & Usai 1987).

Through an analysis of the recently examined sanctuary sites and *Capanne delle Riunioni*, it has become clear that during the rites a number liturgical artefacts were employed at the same time: *Nuraghe* models, votive swords, bronze or stone anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines (Campus 2012). In the light of this fact, we cannot separate nor study ritual instruments out of context, that is purely according to style or typology, otherwise we would risk misunderstanding their true meaning and, worse, be led into inevitable interpretative mistakes.

Models of *Nuraghi*

Nuraghi models have been studied by various authors, who have considered their typological and interpretative features (recently Blake 1997; Leonelli 2005, 2012a, 2012b; Perra 2017). The models have been generally analyzed as miniature reproductions of the typical Bronze Age monument of Sardinia. The reproductions of nuragic towers are in stone, bronze, pottery; they differ in size ranging from the large-scale models enclosed in altars, such as the ones at Su Mulinu in Villanovafranca (Ugas 1989–90) and at Su Monte in Sorradile (Fig. 7.2) (Santoni & Bacco 2005, 2008), to the bronze miniatures, such as the four-towered *Nuraghi* from Camposanto at Olmedo (Lilliu 1966) and Serra Niedda in Sorso (Rovina *et al.* 2002) or the stylized reproductions on buttons and bronze boats (Lo Schiavo 2012a & b). The four-towered bronze model of Serra Niedda is matched with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic bronze figurines. In the well-temple of Santa Vittoria in Serri, numerous fragments of stone *Nuraghe* models with crenellated friezes, stone bull heads, votive swords and bronze figurines are also found together (Taramelli 1909, 1914, 1921, 1922,

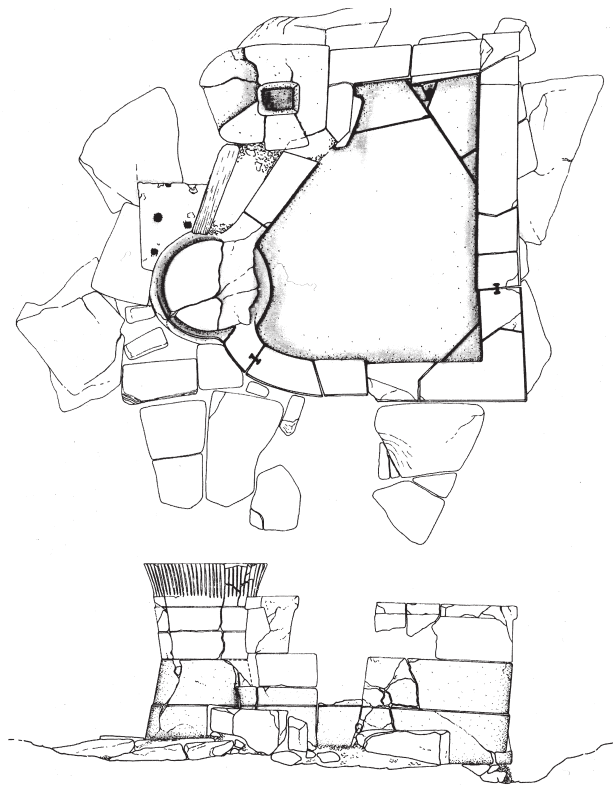


Figure 7.2. Sorradile, Su Monte, the reconstruction of the altar and the *Nuraghe* model, view from top and side (after Santoni & Bacco 2008).

1931). In room 'e' of the complex site of Su Mulinu, the altar with a single-towered model surmounted by a crescent is surrounded by bronze votive swords with 8-shaped and flabellum-shaped hilts. Here, in around the eleventh to tenth centuries BC, cathartic rituals and offerings of first fruit, scented oils and suckling pigs were performed.

According to Emma Blake, we ought to make a distinction between the representations of complex *Nuraghi* and of single-towered ones, with the first signifying 'a particular mythical *nuraghe* [...], the house of a god or hero [...] or perhaps [...] the standardisation of an ideal of success, a productive social unit', and the others representing '[...] a conservative image, a reification of the past and, by extension, a sign of discontent with the present situation [...]' (Blake 1997, 161). From my own point of view, it would be more useful to make a distinction between the large scale models enclosed in wide altars like the ones in Su Mulinu and Sorradile, which were themselves instrumental to the ritual, and the bronze miniatures to be interpreted instead as offerings. Moreover, the single-towered models are characterized by noticeable battlements, whereas excavations around single-towered *Nuraghi* have in no instance yielded any collapsed shaped ashlar that could be linked with such architectural features. It appears all too evident that single-towered miniatures are meant to represent a part of a whole (the central tower of a complex *Nuraghe*), thus they would have the same semantic value in the nuragic people's imagery.

Other votives

As Fulvia Lo Schiavo (2005) states regarding votive swords (Fig. 7.3): 'it is now beyond doubt that they are votive objects. The metallurgical analyses have now been joined to the archaeological assessments, showing how, rather than being of bronze, they are of an alloy of copper with a very small quantity of tin, totally unsuitable, on account of its flexibility and fragility, for use as a weapon, having been anyway rendered almost useless by the two sides not being perfectly symmetrical.' In those religious sites in which they were found in their original placement, they stand either in the higher parts of the shrine, or on top of partition walls in circular buildings. In all these instances the base of the swords are embedded in castings of lead at the base and with their tips always pointing upwards (recently Campus 2012). This is obviously a clear manifestation of weapon worship. As a matter of fact, there are very few swords among those found in nuragic contexts that can be considered as true weapons; moreover, during the archaic phases of the nuragic civilization, traces of war and warriors are not detectable within

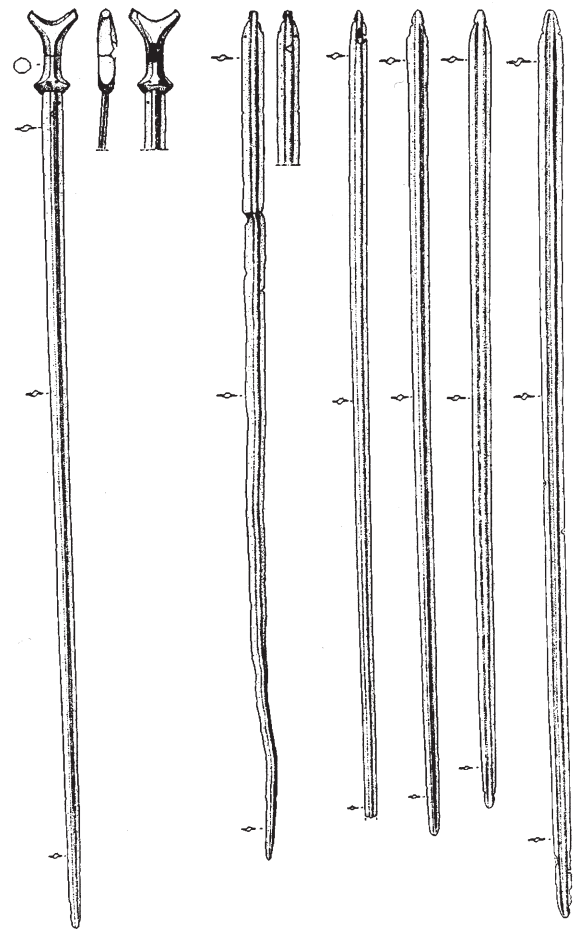


Figure 7.3. Villazor, hoard of Su Scusorgiu: votive swords (after Lo Schiavo et al. 2005).

Nuraghi from an archaeological point of view, and even less so in collective graves. The practice is an evident manipulation and falsification of the past in order to transform it to present-day advantage (Assmann 1997).

The votive context

As for the association of *Nuraghe* models with anthropomorphic statuettes, one can observe the exceptional narrative power of the three-towered *Nuraghe* reproductions from Cann'e Vadosu, near Cabras and from Paulilongu in San Sperate, in which the human figure in relief stands out against a complex *Nuraghe*. The model recently found at Serra Is Araus near San Vero Milis (Usai 2012a), showing a calf beside a human figure in relief, must be added to those two miniatures. (Fig. 7.4). Despite the fact that they were all chance finds lacking context, they still tell the same stories observed throughout all ritual centres of nuragic Sardinia and especially at Mont'e Prama.



Figure 7.4. *San Vero Milis, Serra Is Araus: Nuraghe model (after Usai 2012a).*

Sword-carrying warriors, in many cases carrying a votive sword, stand out among the collection of anthropomorphic bronze figurines. There are also numerous archers, whereas figurines of boxers ought basically to be considered irrelevant, despite the numerous specimens found at Mont'e Prama (Perra *et al.* forthcoming). Votive swords are in any case quite frequently represented in bronze figurines and it is worth mentioning that fragments of these were already found in the most ancient bronze-hoards of Sardinia dating from non-final phases of the Recent Bronze Age. The considerable amount of armed bronze figurines is not only evidence of a defined social group portraying their role as warriors; it is also indicative of the meaning underlying the exhibition of swords and the representation of the *Nuraghe*, which was probably strictly interpreted as a defensive structure.

Moreover, in nuragic sanctuaries one can observe a considerable amount of zoomorphic figures represented both in large scale stone statues (for example at Santa Vittoria in Serri) and in bronze miniatures. They are for the greater part images of cattle and rams, but there is also an abundance of deer, wild boars, foxes,

etc. There is an evident need to represent the wealth of the community ranging from cereal production to cattle, sheep and goat livestock. The presence of such imagery as the deer and the boar, but also the mouflon, should not surprise us given the great importance of hunting in nuragic cuisine (Perra 2018a). As for the zoomorphic figurines, their possible role as substitutes for real animal offerings in religious rituals has already been mentioned (Lo Schiavo and Manconi 2001).

Once the inseparable archaeological and semantic link among the different liturgical objects of nuragic rituals has been determined, the interpretation of the large and famous necropolis of Mont'e Prama near Cabras is probably less laborious (Tronchetti 2005, 2008; Bedini *et al.* 2012; Minoja and Usai 2014). This nuragic funerary sanctuary has been, and still is, an object of hot debate among scholars. In the 1970s, 33 pit graves were excavated, each one containing an individual burial, 27 of which belonged to male individuals and 6 to females, all strictly related to each other (Tronchetti *et al.* 1991). Only tomb 25 contained the remains of grave goods: various necklace beads and a scaraboid seal, possibly crafted in the East, dating, on typological grounds,

from the twelfth to tenth centuries BC (Stiglitz 2012b). The wells were covered with a layer of rubble which yielded a large amount of Final Bronze Age (eleventh to tenth centuries BC) nuragic ceramics (under study by G. Bacco), Phoenician and Punic pottery dating to the fifth to fourth centuries BC and 5,200 fragments of 28 life-size nuragic statues featuring 16 boxers, 6 archers and 6 sword-carrying warriors (Fig. 7.5), at least 16 stone models of *Nuraghi*, 8 of which are multi-towered, and several baetyls like the ones of Oragiana in Cuglieri. According to Carlo Tronchetti, the archaeologist who led the excavations of the necropolis, and to other scholars, there is a strong connection between the graves and the statues, which they dated to the eighth century BC, that is to an important transitional phase in the island's history. This is the period in which close contact between nuragic locals and Phoenician prospectors was established, at least in the regions of Sulcis, Sinis and Nurra (Alghero). In accordance with this interpretation the tombs, the statues and the models are a clear sign of hybrid practices or hybridization, according to some scholars (Tronchetti & Van Dommelen 2005) or evidence of cross-breeding from other perspectives (Stiglitz 2010; Bernardini 2011a, 2012a, b). New research of the necropolis has been extended to the external part of the line of tombs, leading to the discovery of other structures which seem to be related to a sanctuary (Usai & Vidili 2016). The most recent radiocarbon dating reveals that the burial area was used from the Final Bronze Age (twelfth century BC) until the Early Iron Age (first half of the eighth century BC). It is therefore evident that, if we do wish to consider the statues of Mont'e Prama contemporary to the tombs, their dating ought to be placed within this entire time period.

Moreover, the whole apparatus of the sanctuary, pit graves, *Nuraghi* models and statues, clearly reproducing the iconography of the anthropomorphic bronze figurines, can be fully ascribed to the nuragic tradition which, with the baetyls, can even be dated as early as the Recent Bronze Age. Indeed the baetyls from Mont'e Prama belong to the same typology as those found in several nuragic megalithic tombs of Sardinia dating from the Middle Bronze Age. A fragment from a statue's finger was found in pit grave 28 (Tronchetti 2012a, 227), which clearly indicates that the statues were already in pieces at the moment when the grave was built and that the destruction of the statues should be linked to the internal social and political dynamics of the nuragic community in Sinis and not to contact with the *Phoinikes* from Tharros.

Thus, Mont'e Prama can be placed as a typical nuragic sanctuary dating back at least to the Final Bronze Age, or even to the Recent Bronze Age, as



Figure 7.5. Cabras, Mont'e Prama: warrior (after Bedini et al. 2012).

shown by other Sardinian ritual sites, and lasting at least as late as the eighth century with various reuse episodes. The graves themselves are not dissimilar at all from other nuragic pit graves found in other places of the island, such as the sanctuary of Antas in Fluminimaggiore. So, should models and statues be considered as 'entangled' objects? Are they properly a sign of 'hybridization'? This could be the case, if we mean that all craft objects are entangled or that all cultural manifestations, especially the ones of the Bronze Age Mediterranean, are hybrid practices, but the precise connection with the Phoenicians cannot be

demonstrated. The cause is a memory geographically close at hand, not from an exotically induced knowledge from a distance.

Conclusion

Nuraghi models, bronze figurines, votive swords and shrines are inextricably entangled in meanings that are historically linked with a terminal, though not declining, phase of the nuragic civilization and that do not reveal anything unique nor anomalous if studied in a context seen as unitary. These meanings should be related to a historical phase which, starting from the final Recent Bronze Age marks a crisis amongst the *Nuraghe* as a political and social model, a crisis to which nuragic hegemonic groups respond by intensifying religious rituals in native sanctuaries, appealing to a deep monumental history. These sanctuaries, especially those located in the inner regions, retained

their political independence and economic welfare at least until the Orientalizing phase. Far from being an expression of aristocratic individuals, whose existence is elsewhere archaeologically well demonstrated by their tombs and monumental residences (at Murlo in Tuscany for example), such sanctuaries were the product of hierarchically dominant groups in a resolute search for a legitimation of their unequal social position in comparison with other subordinate groups and chose to emphasize their power by drawing on deeper memories (Perra 2009). The symbolic language employed for this aim is the one of a mythical age when the *Nuraghi* builders and the hero-warriors guaranteed peace and economic prosperity for a long time in a not too distant past, allowing the whole community to grow and evolve along the centuries before colonial contact with Phoenician people who brought great, but different, innovations to Sardinia, that is urban civilization, state organization and writing.

Chapter 8

Revisiting Glenelg a century after Alexander O Curle: reconstructing brochs in treeless landscapes

Tanja Romankiewicz & Ian Ralston

In memoriam Euan W. MacKie

The Glenelg area in the northwestern Highlands of Scotland is an archaeologically rich landscape, including at least five brochs and related structures. In one of its glens, Glen Beag, a series of three brochs sits along the river valley. The two best-known ones, Dun Telve and Dun Troddan, are in sight of each other, with Dun Grugaig further east towards the head of the glen (Fig. 8.1). The description and interpretation of these three monuments and their particular setting deserve a full consideration; however, this chapter concentrates on a much more specific problem concerning Dun Troddan.

Dun Troddan has been of central significance for interpreting the use and layout of brochs and for informing reconstructions of these monuments. It owes its importance not simply to its good preservation, but to the excavation of the site in the 1920s; and the interpretations of these excavations have since shaped our understanding of brochs. Alexander O Curle's discovery of the first post-ring within a broch interior – more than 90 years before the fieldwork reported here was undertaken – has now become part of our collective memory of this category of sites. While Curle's conclusions follow logically from his evidence, field visits by the present authors in 2010 and 2012 questioned the reliability of what Curle reported regarding the primary characteristics of this broch (Romankiewicz & Ralston 2013).

Our research highlights the importance of the physical record which survives at this site as evidence of its own building history and the subsequent changes to it. It also underlines how carefully and sympathetically any subsequent alterations or similar works at such a monument should be planned, given their potential impact on the preservation and presentation of the monument. By extension such modifications impact on our collective understanding and memory of the site.

Curle's excavations

In 1919, Alexander O Curle was the Director at the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh. Workmen of the Ministry of Works were undertaking consolidation works, also intended to improve public access, at the Glenelg brochs, first at Dun Telve in 1914 and, until 1920, at Dun Troddan (National Archives of Scotland NAS MW1/573 and MW1/1136). By October 1914, Curle, in his capacity as the keeper of the national archaeological collection, had been told about the finds made at Dun Telve and claimed most of the artefacts for that collection (correspondence in NAS SC 22918/2A in MW1/573). He must have also been informed about the subsequent phase of works at Dun Troddan, but exactly why Curle visited the works there in their final stages remains unclear from the readily accessible documentation. In his 1921 publication, Curle records that he only visited the site when the scheme of works neared completion in the late summer of 1920 (Curle 1921, 84, 87).

On arrival at Dun Troddan, Curle was puzzled with the findings made by the workmen. Contemporary photographs, held in the National Collection (HES A 47978 to A 47981) and presumably taken by Curle himself, show that the workforce had fully excavated the entrance passage into the broch, and from there had seemingly chased the wall footings along the inner wall face, as was typical practice at the time (e.g. by Tress Barry in Caithness, Anderson 1901). The trench following the curvature of the inner wall was perhaps intended to test the character and stability of the lowest wall courses. This wall trench had already been backfilled with clean gravel prior to Curle's arrival. The gravel band edging the inner wall faces can be clearly seen in the historic photographs and still survived in 2012, when the fieldwork reported here was undertaken.

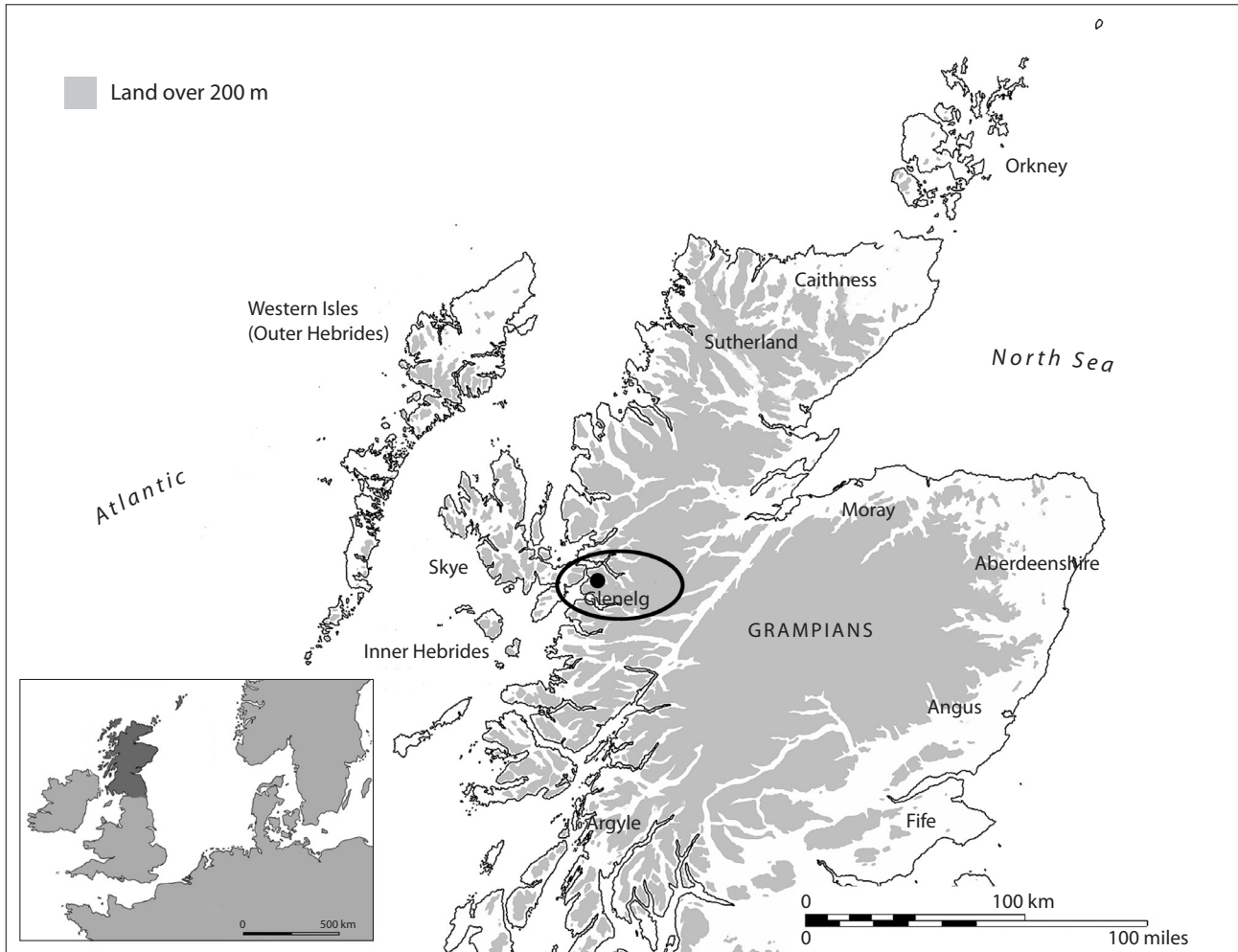


Figure 8.1. Map of Scotland showing location of Glenelg (drawing by Tanja Romankiewicz).

The central area of the broch interior, however, had been left untouched and an area 'measuring some 9 feet by 7 feet' (Curle 1921, 88) stood proud. Curle noted that this 'accumulated mass' survived 'about 4 feet deep' (1921, 87) and he offered further details:

Immediately to the north of this, and between it and the entrance to the stair, there had been laid bare on the very bottom, on the gravel subsoil, a well-formed rectangular oblong hearth measuring 4 feet 6 inches by 3 feet, paved and neatly surrounded by kerb-stones (Curle 1921, 88).

Curle's impromptu investigations of the workmen's discoveries revealed two further and stratigraphically later hearths in this area, and a series of overlying deposits and rubble. The stratigraphic sequence outlined in 1921 suggests successive phases of occupation

and collapse in this central area (see Fig. 8.2: schematically drawn section on the basis of Curle's description in 1921, 88–90). Below these deposits, Curle uncovered the first of a series of pits, lined with stone slabs:

In order to settle a question regarding the original levels at the inner end of the entrance passage, I had the inch or two of discoloured soil removed which was covering the top of the gravel subsoil within the court. In the course of this operation I observed, as the gravel surface was cleared, [...] a small pit with a diameter of about 2 feet, lined with four slabs and filled with wet discoloured silt. [...] on the bottom, 1 foot 9 inches below the surface, lay other two slabs, one on the top of the other. These lay on a clean gravel bed 2 feet 1 inch below the surface (Curle 1921, 90).

Although puzzled by this at first, Curle then described an eureka moment ‘after a night’s reflection’ (Curle 1921, 90; cf. Ralston 2003, 12):

I returned to the broch, found the centre, took a radius from there to the pit, and drew out a circle [...]. On this line, [...] we located ten others [pits]. [...] in one hole, No. 6, which had been sealed on the surface by a large stone, the remains of decayed wood, recognisable [sic] by its fibrous character, were still visible. (Curle 1921, 90).

Curle had found a ring of post holes within the broch, at a time when such earthfast, negative features, although long known from Roman sites, were not yet the recurrent feature of Iron Age field archaeology they were subsequently to become. This post-ring was roughly concentric with the inner wall face of the broch, but the individual posts were not truly aligned along the circumference of a circle and were not very regularly spaced. However, Curle was clear in his description that the post-ring had been cut into natural subsoil and sat within the lowest occupation level within the broch. For him, the post-ring was thus part of the original configuration of the broch. In his further interpretation of the evidence, Curle did not go so far as to reconstruct Dun Troddan as a fully roofed structure, but suggested a lean-to timber arrangement supported against the inner wall face, with a possible upper walkway surrounding a central open courtyard (Romankiewicz 2011a, 124–5, illus. 164, drawing by Elizabeth Mulqueeny).

Curle’s excavation report (1921) and his seminal paper in *Antiquity* (1927) inspired a new generation of scholars. When, for example, Gordon Childe and Wallace Thorneycroft (1938) identified two posts and charred timbers at Rahoy, a small vitrified broch-like structure in Morvern on Scotland’s west coast, Childe (1946, 88–9) subsequently interpreted this also as a possible post-ring, or the rafters from a conical roof. It is from such ideas that our shared reconstructions of brochs have developed – as very much elaborated multi-storey versions of timber roundhouses, the typical domestic structures of British prehistory, in the case of the brochs set within a thick drystone wall (Romankiewicz 2011a, 125, illus. 166, drawing by Alan Braby).

The translation of the post-ring typical of timber roundhouses into broch architecture implies the provision of the necessary quantities of structural timber. The wider consequences of reconstructions of brochs founded on Curle’s insight become apparent through the results from environmental analyses: by the Iron Age, many of the landscapes of Scotland

were essentially treeless, in particular in those parts along the Atlantic coastline where brochs were built in abundance (Tipping 1994, 24–5). Scholars have since struggled to explain from where the broch builders would have obtained the substantial timbers required for such reconstructions (summary in Romankiewicz 2011a, 142–3; cf. Fojut 2005). In fact, the use of large quantities of timber in landscapes largely denuded of trees has been presented as one aspect of what is extraordinary about broch architecture: the apparently conspicuous consumption of a scarce resource (Armit & Ralston 2002, 49): the erection of a broch, seen as a symbol of status, required not only large quantities of suitable stone and skilled labour to construct the outer wall, but also substantial timbers for the structural woodwork, including the post-ring, the upper floor (or floors) and the roof.

The archaeological evidence for post holes within brochs reconsidered

It is worth revisiting Curle’s discoveries and interpretation of the Glenelg evidence because we consider that these laid the bases for such hypotheses as detailed above. Dun Troddan thus retains both a general archaeological significance, and a specific significance for the history and memory of our discipline.

The evidence from the site, although now grassed over, appears to be still preserved more or less in the same condition as when Curle left in 1920. The excavation photographs and his account of the works can be easily compared with the general condition of the site when the fieldwork reported here was undertaken in 2012 (Romankiewicz & Ralston 2013). These works, comprising a field visit in 2010, and a site survey by the authors in 2012, revealed small-scale differences in the topography across the site that complicate any reading of Curle’s interpretation. There was, notably, a significant difference between the ground level within the entrance passage in 2012, the lowest point of the broch, and the apparent altitude of the post holes Curle encountered and which were set within the higher ground still present within the monument. This difference is emphasized by the modern retaining planking at the inner margin of the entrance, present at the time of our survey. As a result, we can question whether the investigations Curle recorded had reached primary levels over the broch interior. Re-reading Curle’s 1921 account confirms that he realized this discrepancy between these heights, but no further explanation was offered. Curle described ‘some special circumstances [that] controlled the arrangements of the posts in the neighbourhood of the entrance’ (Curle 1921, 91), which appears to correspond to an arrangement leading from

the entrance into a lower vestibule (cf. MacKie 2007b, 857, 860) and into a corridor that opens into the central area. It might be postulated that this height difference was negotiated by a short flight of steps up from the entrance passage. Although Curle describes this as a possible arrangement satisfactorily to account for the height differences at the inner end of the entrance passage, investigations at other sites have shown such stairs to be a highly unusual feature in original broch architecture.

A reconsideration of the stratification of the mass of soil in the interior of the broch, as described by Curle (Fig. 8.2), in relation to the lower altitude of the entrance passage leads to the conclusion that he encountered the internal post holes at a level stratigraphically higher than that of the original floor in the entrance. Survey in 2012 demonstrated this difference to be about 0.85 m, as measured between the still exposed hearth stone in the centre of the broch visible on Curle's photographs, and the level of the inner end of the entrance passage as then visible – assumed to have been excavated to the original ground level (Romankiewicz & Ralston 2013). The 2012 profile recorded across these features, when superimposed onto Curle's section (Fig. 8.3), illustrates the order of magnitude of the difference

in height between Curle's internal post-ring and the level of the entrance passage. Although Curle claimed that the lowest hearth to which the post holes were related was built at the level of the natural gravel subsoil, it seems more likely that the hearth and post holes visible in 1920, and shown on the contemporary photographs, were in fact set into substantial deposits that must already have accumulated above the original floor during use of the site. The conclusion from our new observations is that the post holes identified by Curle could not have been a primary feature of the broch; however, only an invasive investigation could now clarify this.

A comparison between photographs taken in 1920 and 2012 highlights the problem of the height difference between the level of the entrance passage (where the workman was standing in 1920) and the position of the central hearth described as lying 'on the gravel subsoil' (Curle 1921, 88; Fig. 8.4). Whilst the monument was constructed on a natural hill-slope, this seems far from sufficient to explain the difference in height that is apparent. This 1920 photograph was not published in Curle's 1921 account; had it been, others may already have questioned Curle's interpretation. The tops of the post holes as they survived are visible

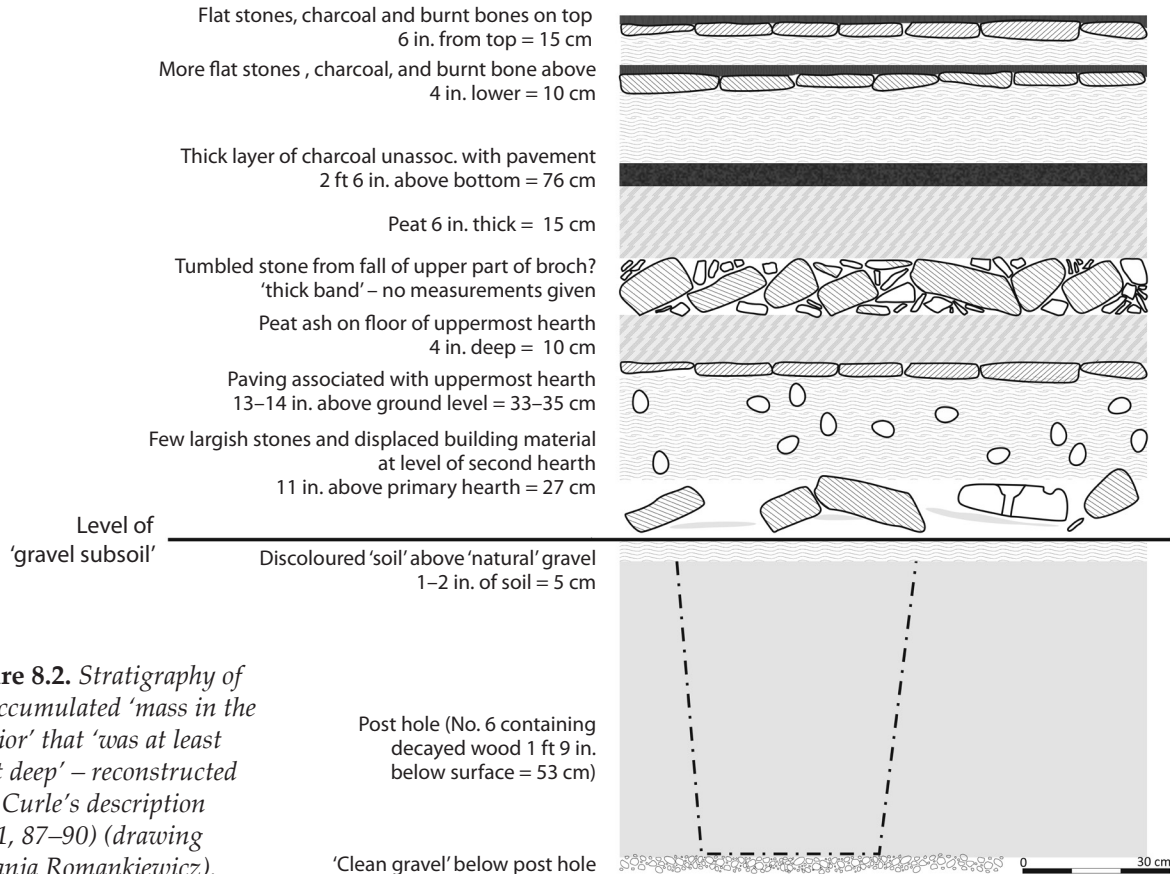


Figure 8.2. *Stratigraphy of the accumulated 'mass in the interior' that 'was at least 4 feet deep' – reconstructed after Curle's description (1921, 87–90) (drawing by Tanja Romankiewicz).*

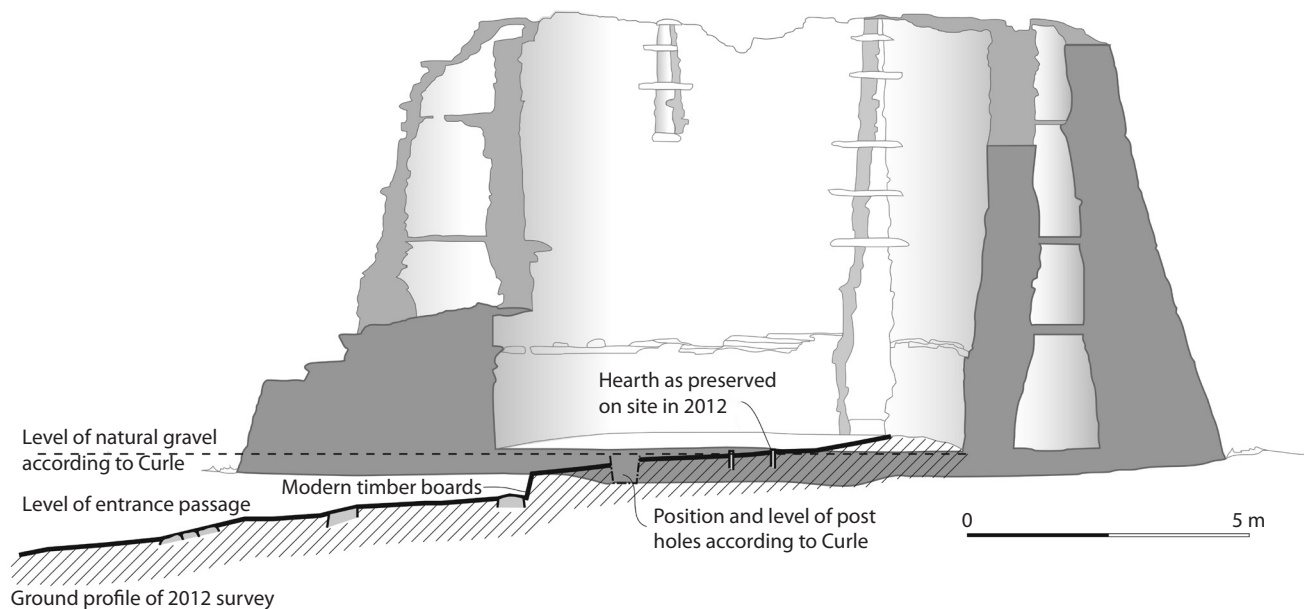


Figure 8.3. Profile of the interior of Dun Troddan, field survey by Romankiewicz & Ralston September 2012 (drawing by Tanja Romankiewicz).

in Curle's pictures. The likelihood is that they were cut down from an unknown point above. Given that the recorded depth of the post holes was 0.5–0.6 m, and given the difference in altitude between them and entrance passage, it is clear that the bases of these stone-lined post holes regarded by Curle as a primary feature of the broch and lying 'on a clean gravel bed 2 feet 1 inch below the surface' (Curle, 1921, 90), are floating approximately 0.3 m above the level of the entrance passage, as projected into the broch interior. A post-ring for a substantial timber construction – even if only for a lean-to structure as Curle suggested – cut into gravel fills and adjacent to a sunken vestibule towards the entrance, appears to the writers to be an unsound structural arrangement to have acted as a foundation for substantial timber fitments. Interpreting these post holes as primary features supporting one or more upper floors and the roof is thus problematic in structural terms; and we are of the opinion that it is highly unlikely that these post holes were part of the original broch construction.

If this key example of a primary post-ring within a broch is now in doubt, what of other sites of the class? In fact, evidence for other post-rings within brochs is rare, in part because excavation may rarely have attained the primary floor level within such sites. In an analysis of 148 brochs that retain appropriate details of architectural complexity, only four sites could be put forward as preserving evidence for a concentric post-ring contemporary with their primary occupation:

these are Tor A' Chorcain at Langwell and Rhiroy, both in Sutherland, Leckie in Stirlingshire and Scalloway on Shetland (Romankiewicz 2011a, 125). Two of these, Tor A' Chorcain and Rhiroy, would not even be included as brochs if strict criteria for this monument category are applied (cf. MacKie 2007b, 617, 766). The evidence for vertical posts at Scalloway was interpreted by the excavator as internal partitioning, being considered too insubstantial to have supported a roof (Sharples 1998, 39), but they may have been sufficient to hold up some form of an upper floor. Evidence for post holes within brochs and cognate structures elsewhere is more ambivalent. At Hurly Hawkin in Angus for example, the post holes did not form a circle concentric with the inner face of the enclosing wall; others were placed immediately along this inner face and were interpreted as indications of a series of huts built against the inner wall. Their integrity with the original use of the broch itself is unclear (Taylor 1983, 220). Other possible examples of post-rings include Ousdale and Carn Liath, both in the northern Highlands, Buchlyvie (Stirlingshire) phase 2, as well as Clickhimin on Shetland, although the post-rings in the latter three in particular seem to have been associated with either earlier – and thus pre-broch – or later secondary occupations (Romankiewicz 2011a, 125). Of the 148 investigated brochs considered by Romankiewicz (2011a & b), a total of 68 have seen some form of intrusive investigation, but of course not all were excavated down to primary levels (Romankiewicz 2011b). Many of these were also examined before



Figure 8.4. *Curle's photograph from late summer 1920 (left) compared to the situation as extant in September 2012 (right). Image on left: Crown Copyright. HES. HES images are excluded from the terms of the CC-BY-NC-ND copyright licence. Image on right: photograph Tanja Romankiewicz.*

Curle's identification of the Troddan post-ring, and thus their investigators would have been unaware of the possible presence of an internal post-ring (e.g. at Ousdale, Caithness; MacKay 1892, 354). We therefore emphatically do not discount that further evidence for primary post-rings may come to light in new or ongoing investigations of brochs, but note that for the time being confirmed examples in Atlantic Scotland remain remarkably infrequent.

If then we assume, as present evidence suggests, that very few brochs included a primary timber post-ring, we would need to put forward other carpentry techniques to reconstruct the relatively complex roof and floor constructions often envisaged within brochs, for example by utilizing ties, collars or ring beams (for examples see Fojut 2005, 193–5; Romankiewicz 2011b). The feasibility of roofing certain of the greater spans encountered in these sites with such traditional roof constructions is questionable; and these would also consume a large quantity of substantial timbers.

Timber sources in deforested landscapes – the environmental record

If Scotland's north and west are envisaged as being substantially devoid of trees by the Iron Age – as reconstructed by environmental data discussed in more detail below – only three options as to where the timber could have been obtained for broch construction are realistic (cf. Fojut 2005, Romankiewicz 2011a, 142–3). Although the presence of driftwood has been recognized both archaeologically and in environmental

research (Church 2000, 125; 2002, 68), its structural stability as a constructional material has not been scientifically tested (although its use in buildings is known elsewhere); meantime at least archaeological evidence for its use as structural timber in the corpus of brochs is rare (Romankiewicz 2011a, 142 for overview). Models based on the accumulation of driftwood as a building material also raise questions as to the control of shoreline access, and the nature of storage arrangements until sufficient quantities of driftwood had been gathered to allow a broch building exercise to start (Romankiewicz 2016, 17–24)

Environmental evidence datable to the last quarter millennium BC indeed indicates a substantial reduction in woodland cover in the Southern Uplands of Scotland, notably around the Bowmont Valley (Tipping 2010, 182–3). A similar 'abrupt and near complete woodland destruction' of late Iron Age but pre-Romano-British date, has now been demonstrated for many sites in northern England and southern and central Scotland (Tipping 2010, 183). Tipping associated these clearances with the expansion of farmland in response to changes in demand for agricultural products; he also demonstrated that clearances for local building projects could not have had such a devastating impact (2010, 184, 186–7). As the trees were felled not burnt down, this might indicate the retention of timber as surplus, possibly to facilitate its exchange beyond the immediate locality; this, however, with the caveat that available technologies for transporting timber overland would have been very limited. A hypothesis advancing the possibility of timber imports

from beyond Scotland seems very difficult to sustain, as there is no other evidence for exchange of aspects of material culture with for example Norway at that time (Crone 1998, 162, *contra* Fojut 2005, 198–9).

Results from pollen analyses have demonstrated that it was possible to manage hardwood trees, for example oak, in sheltered pockets, even in the harsh and unforgiving climate of northern Scotland from about the third century AD (Tipping *et al.* 2006, 38–9). Research into Holocene palaeoclimatic conditions based on records of peatland surface wetness might help to clarify the environmental circumstances for Iron Age Scotland. For example, water tables as reconstructed from proxy records (testate amoebae) have been analyzed in a multi-proxy approach of ‘stacking’ and scientifically ‘tuning’ detrended records ‘to identify clear correlative events’ (Charman *et al.* 2006, 336). Based on the recognition of such events and their fixing by independent age markers, such records can be compiled and reconciled to allow finer chronological precision (Charman *et al.* 2006, 336–7, 339). By compiling proxy records from 12 different profiles in this way, large-scale, non-localized long-term climate signals can be identified ‘while minimising [sic] uncertainties associated with individual records and imprecision in the chronologies’ (Charman *et al.* 2006, 343, 345). Results of this work indicate that for northern Britain ‘the most consistent and significant wet shifts begin at ca [...amongst others] 2760 [...] cal yr BP’ (Charman *et al.* 2006, 345), very broadly at around the time when the earliest architecture cognate with brochs started to appear (Romankiewicz 2011a, 19). The results from fine-tuning the relevant palaeoenvironmental records within regions also ‘support the hypothesis that hydrological variability in northwest Europe is driven by solar variability manifested as changes in the location and strength of westerly storm tracks’ (Charman *et al.* 2006, 348). This can be read to imply a general and widespread trend towards the emergence of wetter and colder summers starting at around 750 BC.

From such palaeoclimatic research, a striking picture emerges of an environmental decline that would have broadly coincided with the emergence of massive-walled stone roundhouses such as Bu, Pierowall and St Boniface, all on Orkney, and generally identified as the early developmental stages of monumental broch architecture (overview in Romankiewicz 2009). This climatic decline must have resulted in trees growing under increasing environmental stresses, and in other factors hindering the re-establishment of woods after felling episodes. Such broad-scale phenomena would have been tempered by physical properties such as local topography, aspect and drainage, and indeed issues of ownership, unknown

in Iron Age circumstances, of surviving woodland. To argue, however, for the local development of an architectural style that is apparently characterized by the deliberate consumption of quantities of substantial timbers at a time of environmental stress seems at first sight difficult to sustain. Even if the earlier massive-walled roundhouses required fewer major timbers than the fully developed brochs, such as Old Scatness in Shetland, which dates to around the fourth century BC (Dockrill *et al.* 2006), it seems counter-intuitive to argue that a more complex architecture requiring substantial posts, rafters and other pieces of structural timber would have flourished at a time when these key woodland resources were becoming more and more difficult to sustain locally. The regional composite records for northern Scotland indicate that this period of high water tables lasted well into the third century BC, with an onset of drier summers seemingly not occurring before 250 BC (Charman *et al.* 2006, Fig. 4). Given that trees would take a further generation to grow to a usable size, it seems unlikely that substantial new-growth timbers could have been obtained in quantity and locally for any major set of broch building projects before approximately 200 BC. One related aspect in this context is also the sheer number of brochs present in Scotland, currently estimated at over 500 (Strat Halliday pers. comm.). While we may expect poor conditions for tree growth to have existed in the exposed northern and western fringes of Atlantic Scotland for much of the period when these structures were being erected, this environmental research also indicates comparably wet conditions for central Scotland and the Borders (Charman *et al.* 2006, Fig. 4). Their data for the composite water table for the Borders do not fall until the first century BC, while the record for central Scotland points towards a wet period continuing into the first millennium AD.

From these results it might be postulated that an excessive consumption of substantial timbers for broch building in Atlantic Scotland could not have been readily sustained, either by sourcing locally grown timbers, or through large-scale imports from areas further south. The environmental evidence pointing to lack of woodland is, however, only problematic if large quantities of timber for posts and beams to support upper floors and roofs were indeed required for Iron Age broch construction. Of course, individual pockets of better land and particular woodland management strategies may have been successful, up to a point, in furnishing the major constructional timbers that could have been required. It appears, however, to be more likely that the timbers envisaged by today’s archaeologists to be required for the elaborate broch reconstructions containing post-rings, upper timber

floors and substantial roof constructions, would simply have not been widely available across Atlantic Scotland and, where they were, their incorporation into broch architecture would indeed have represented the conspicuous consumption of this resource. It therefore seems difficult to argue *a priori* for the development of an architectural type which necessarily consumed large amounts of substantial timber at a time of environmental decline, when woodland growth would have been restricted. To say this is not to disallow the possibility that some brochs did indeed need substantial quantities of major timbers in their interiors, but to allow the contrary possibility – that some brochs did not.

Alternative reconstructions

An analysis of key broch dimensions suggests regional variation, which may correlate with the less-than-regular availability of structural timbers in different parts of the country. In regions where it is suggested that large trees would have been difficult to obtain,

such as Caithness, Shetland or the Western Isles, the internal diameters of brochs are comparatively small. Minimizing individual structural spans may thus have been an adaptation to the availability of only smaller individual timbers there. Where such trees cannot have flourished even under managed conditions, we may have to consider the use of alternative roofing methods such as grid shells rather than the typical rafter and purlin arrangements – and perhaps abandon the dominant perception of what a broch should have looked like (Romankiewicz 2011a, 163–5, also here Fig. 8.5). Such a grid shell would only have required small trees less than 0.1 m in diameter in its assembly, and would have eliminated the need for a supporting post-ring for the roof set into the underlying ground surface. Trees of the diameters necessary to build such grid shells could have been produced in sheltered locations in most of Atlantic Scotland and managed as part of a coppicing regime; here they would have flourished much more readily than major timber trees.

If we accept that at least some brochs could have been satisfactorily roofed by grid shells or similar

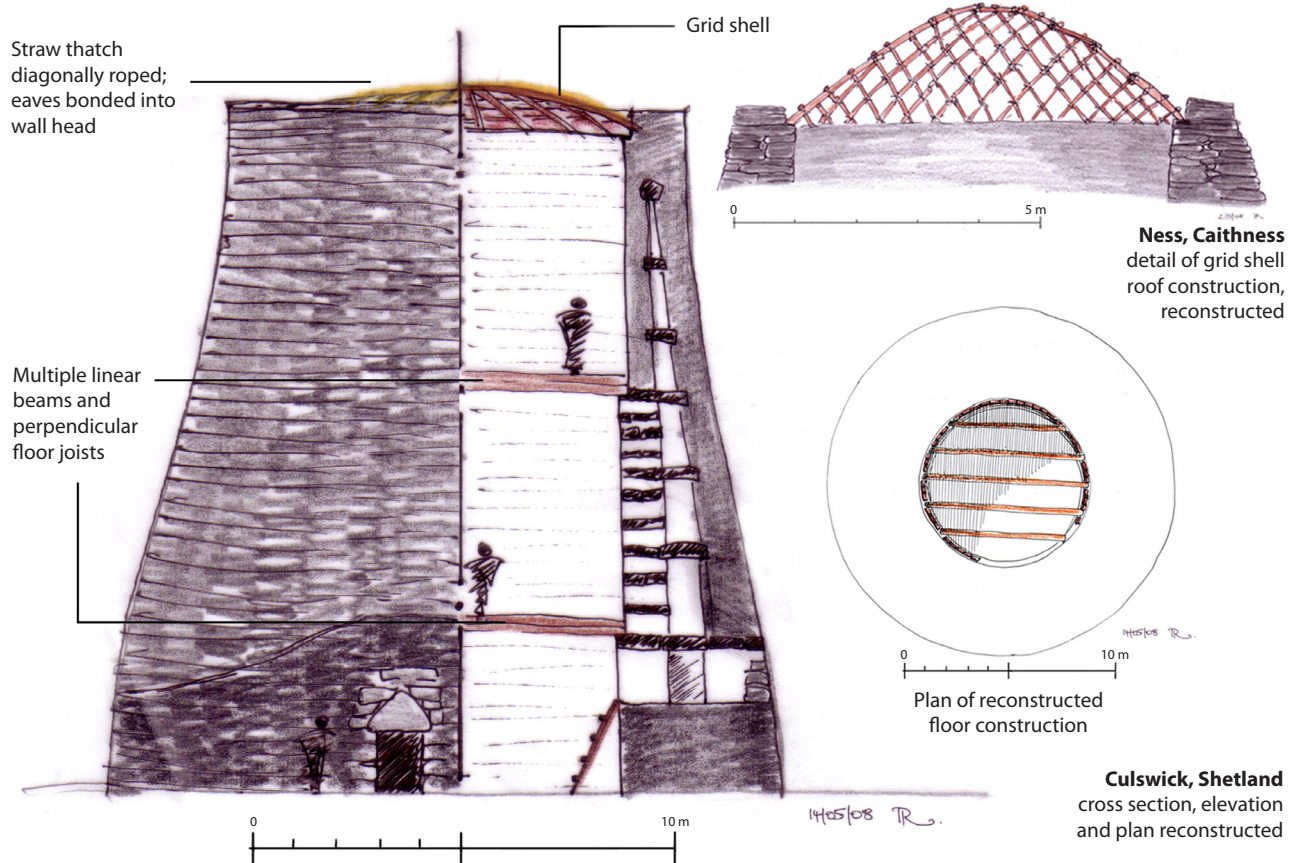


Figure 8.5. Upper floor and grid shell roof reconstructions for Culswick, Shetland, and Ness broch, Caithness (upper right detail) after Romankiewicz 2011b, 12, 147 (drawing by Tanja Romankiewicz).

constructions using slimmer-diameter wood, in such cases shorter substantial timbers would only have been required as upright posts to support an upper floor. Without the additional need to support the roof weight or to extend up to rafter height, these posts could have been constructed using timber of much smaller dimensions than previously estimated (cf. Romankiewicz 2011a, A-90-5 for calculations of timber dimensions for traditional and alternative constructions).

In the case of the smaller broch interiors, a post-ring would not even have been required to support an upper floor. For example, to construct a floor across the 8 m of internal diameter within the broch at Culswick, Shetland, would have required only five large beams laid parallel across the structure. The longest would have needed to be 8 m, but because of the circular geometry the rest would have been shorter – a total of well under 40 linear metres of timber. In the reconstruction proposed here these elements were laid tangentially, and supported on the inner scarcement ledge which is ubiquitous in these buildings (Romankiewicz 2011a, A-90, compare here Fig. 8.5).

In other cases, examination of architectural details suggests that the insertion of upper floors into particular brochs would have been problematic, and contrasts with the general level of accomplishment indicated by other aspects of these remarkable buildings. For example, at some brochs, the threshold of one of the upper openings in the inner wall face (believed to have permitted egress onto the upper floor) sits at the same level as the scarcement ledge (believed to have supported the said upper floor). Given the thickness of any floor construction, a step up onto the floor supported on the scarcement would have been required in these cases. At other brochs, the scarcement is set well below the upper opening, and a floor of considerable thickness would have had to be raised from the scarcement – or steps down provided – to negotiate such a large height difference (Romankiewicz 2011a, 151). These structural oddities, taken together with the postulated shortages of constructional timbers in some areas, might encourage us to abandon the concept of the insertion of upper floors altogether, in the case of some brochs at least, and the function of the scarcement could have been unrelated to upper floor constructions. Without the requirement for an upper floor, for instance, only some 100 pieces of wood each about 3–3.5 m in length would have been needed to construct a gridshell roof for Dun Torcuill (North Uist; Romankiewicz 2011a, A-94). If regularly coppiced trees each produced three or four stems of such a size, it would only need the product of 25–30 such coppiced trees to roof a broch.

The overall land-take for such woodland would be very modest and the success of growing such trees in sheltered pockets seems likely, even in generally harsh environmental conditions.

Local woodland management, often small-scale and protected in sheltered niches, might therefore offer the best-fit hypothesis to answer the questions regarding timber provision for broch construction. Such small-scale endeavours may be difficult to detect in environmental studies reliant on the catchment of particular sample sites. Archaeological evidence of pine and willow grown under stress survives from Dun Bharabhat and Dun Vulcan, both in the Western Isles, and seemingly confirms that only roundwood of relatively small dimensions was available there (Romankiewicz 2011a, 143; cf Church 2002, 72; Taylor 1999, 190).

From timber sources to models of social organization

If we accept the arguments brought forward that locally managed woodland provided the most likely source for the timbers required in broch construction, this would mean that woodland pockets must have been created, maintained and managed over generations. Wood, of course, would have been required for a range of other purposes from the hafts of tools to fuel for heating and cooking. In terms of the growing of timber for architectural purposes, however, there would have been a need to look after woodlands intended for the construction projects of future generations, which may imply that some longer-term security over land tenure was expected at the time. Such a conclusion suggests that patterns of inheritance existed, implying in turn that any given generation was looking after woodland resources earmarked for future architectural projects (for related aspects of inheritance cf. Armit 2005). Were these broch builders anticipating the need for future repairs to their recently built structure or might we even argue that they expected the succeeding generation to build another broch nearby? Or was there no such long-term management against future requirements, thus every broch project would have first involved growing the required timber before building works could start? These alternative strategies have deep implications for the management of resources and prehistoric concepts of time and memory.

It is in this context that questions concerning the timber resources consumed in broch construction might provide one route by which to investigate the social organization of broch-builders, as well as their patterns of inheritance and ultimately their

geographical and political stability (see Romankiewicz 2016). If we accept that locally grown and managed timber resources underpinned each broch project, this might suggest the existence of much more stable and enduring societies than the defensive character often read into the external appearance of brochs, and hence the prevalence of unsettled times, may lead us to believe. Societies which invested considerable labour and material resources in such substantial domestic building projects were arguably seeking to construct a physical memory within, and perhaps upon, a wider landscape (cf. Hingley 1992, 14, 17; Sharples 1984, 119–21). Adding the importance of the creation of memory to the nexus of factors involved in the construction of brochs that have been discussed elsewhere (Romankiewicz 2011a, 195–207) seems a profitable way to help our understanding of the erection of these remarkable structures in Iron Age landscapes.

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The fieldwork underpinning this chapter was undertaken in 2012, shortly before the ‘Gardening time’ conference was held. Since then, HES has undertaken minor improvements and interpretive work within Dun Troddan, but these do not materially impact on the hypothesis advanced here.

Chapter 9

Beyond the *Nuraghe*: perception and reuse in Punic and Roman Sardinia

Alfonso Stiglitz

Nuraghi play a pivotal role in the collective imagination of Sardinia. The large number of towers on the island means that there is practically no place without at least one of these great buildings in sight. We see them still standing on mountain tops, scattered in the plains, dotting the coast, safeguarding our homes and watching over fertile and mineral rich locations. In Punic (510–238 BC) and Roman (238 BC–AD 476) Sardinia, when more towers survived and were clearly visible, this presence would have been perceived in an even more significant manner. Unfortunately, the lack of written records and the unfamiliarity by Greek and Latin historians of the Sardinian world, does not provide us with direct evidence of how the later inhabitants of Sardinia perceived the *Nuraghi*. Among the rare quotations, only one gives a careful description of the *Nuraghi*:

In the island of Sardinia they say there are many beautiful buildings constructed in the ancient Greek style, and, amongst others, domes carved in remarkable proportions. (*De mirabilibus auscultationibus* 100)

According to Diodorus Siculus, who probably draws from the same source as the previous author (Chiai 2004, 122), it is Iolaus, nephew of Heracles, who arrived in Sardinia at the head of the Tespiadi:

Iolaüs, the nephew of Heracles, was in charge of the undertaking, and taking possession of the island he founded in it notable cities, and when he had divided the land into allotments he called the folk of the colony Iolaës after himself; and he also constructed gymnasia and temples to the gods and everything else which contributes to making happy the life of man, memorials

of this remaining even to this day (Diodorus Siculus V, 15.2 [Loeb translation])

The ‘gymnasia and temples’, named *daedaleia* after the architect brought by Iolaus, clearly refer to the towers and other nuragic buildings like the well sanctuaries and giants’ tombs, the collective megalithic tombs that were still clearly visible at the time of writing, even though they are attributed to the Greek world, probably influenced by an Athenian source (Chiai 2004, 120). The few other references that are known from written sources should be understood from the perspective of Roman colonialist ethnology that instead of offering a realistic description underlines the opposition between civilization and barbarism. In this way *Nuraghi* are reduced to caves, underground constructions, the last refuge of uncivilized people:

They live in caverns (Strabo V, 2, 7)

They also built themselves underground dwellings, and by spending their lives in such dug-out homes they avoided the perils which wars entail (Diodorus Siculus IV.30.5)

They dwelt in scattered groups, where chance found them a home in cabins or caves (Pausanias X.17.2)

This lack of knowledge about Sardinia is reinforced by the fact that the term *Nuraghe* is not mentioned in any source, even though the word belongs to the pre-Latin substrate of the Sardinian language (Paulis 1993) and almost certainly must have been in use. The only evidence is in fact two Latin inscriptions: the first on *Nuraghe Aidu Entos* of Bortigali (Fig. 9.1, 7). The inscription on the lintel above the entrance of the *Nuraghe* reads: *Ili(ensium) iur(a)le in / Nurac(-) Sessar (?)*.

It is the first appearance of the word and dates to the first century AD (Gasperini 1992, 303–6). *Ilienses* refers to one of the tribes that inhabited the island and who famously rebelled against the Romans (Mastino 2005). Beyond the legal interpretation, the inscription tells us the existence and use of the term *Nuraghe* in the Roman era: Nurac Sessar. The second, *nur(ac) Alb (-)*, is on a military diploma (AD 102) found near Posada, east Sardinia (Sanciu *et al.* 2013). In order to understand how the Sardinians perceived the *Nuraghi* during the Punic and Roman period and whether this perception influenced the reuse of the *Nuraghi*, we can only turn to archaeological data. Unfortunately, the lack of well-published stratigraphically significant contexts complicates the use of these data (Lilliu 1990; Pala 1990; Stiglitz 2005; Trudu 2010).

Examples of reuse of *Nuraghi*

I will illustrate the difficulties encountered in the ongoing investigations by analyzing some examples taken from across the island and discussed here in geographical order from north to south (Fig. 9.1).

Nuraghe La Varrosa (Sorso) is situated in the Romangia region in northern Sardinia at 7 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 1). This is a multi-tower *Nuraghe* that was reused from the second century BC onwards as a cult site until the first century AD. In the entrance corridor to the central tower, several square bases were erected and on top of one must have stood a bronze statue of which the arms have been discovered. The finds point to the cult of Hermes. Secondary uses of the area are discovered until at least the third century AD (Rovina 1997; Longu 2015).

Nuraghe San Pietro (Torpé) is situated in the Baronia region in northwestern Sardinia at an altitude of 17 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 2). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* was reused in the late nuragic period as a place of worship, as is indicated by the presence of finds like bronze figurines in the courtyard and in the central tower. The building seems to have been suddenly abandoned after a large fire. During the early Roman Empire (first to second century AD) tower F was reused as the communal granary of a local settlement. Containers of wood and cork, two wicker baskets, amphorae and a substantial amount of corn and beans have been discovered. After the roof collapsed during the Late Roman Empire, part of the *Nuraghe* was used for a small cemetery (D’Oriano 1984).

Nuraghe Santu Antine (Torralba) is situated in the Meilogu region in northwestern Sardinia at an altitude of 361 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 3). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* is surrounded by a village (Moravetti 1988). The finds of the old excavations seem to show a continuity of

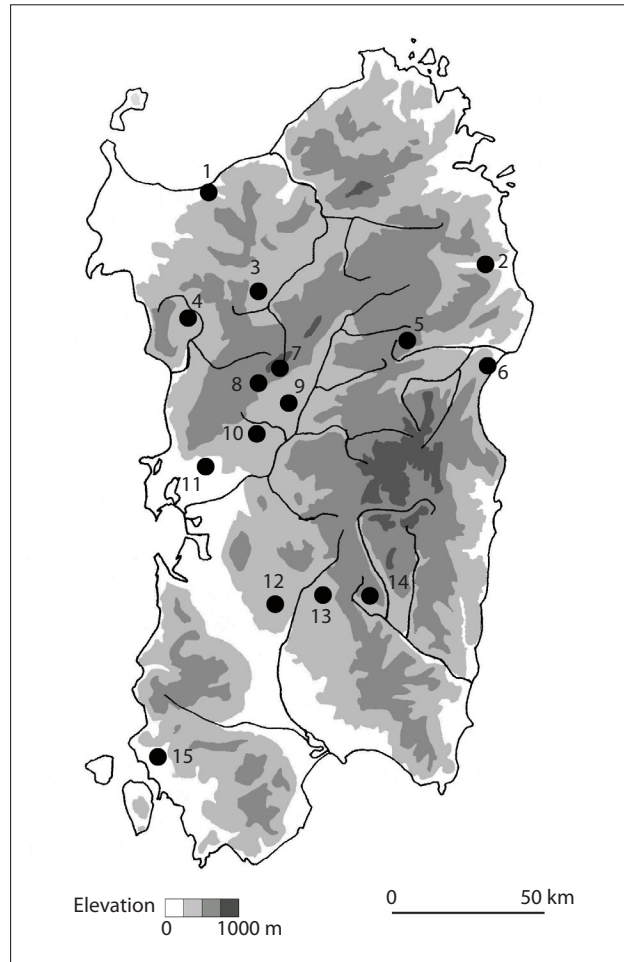


Figure 9.1. Archaeology of reuse: 1) *Nuraghe La Varrosa* (Sorso); 2) *Nuraghe San Pietro* (Torpé); 3) *Nuraghe Santu Antine* (Torralba); 4) *Nuraghe Sa Tanca 'e sa Mura* (Villanova Monteleone); 5) *Nuraghe Sant'Efis* (Orune); 6) *Nuraghe Mannu* (Dorgali); 7) *Nuraghe Aidu Entos* (Bortigali); 8) *Nuraghe Santa Barbara* (Macomer); 9) *Nuraghe Sanilo* (Aidomaggiore); 10) *Nuraghe Lugherras* (Paulilatino); 11) *Nuraghe s'Urachi* (San Vero Milis); 12) *Nuraghe Genna Maria* (Villanovaforru); 13) *Nuraghe Su Mulinu* (Villanovafranca); 14) *Nuraghe Orrubiu* (Orroli); 15) *Nuraghe Monte Sirai* (Carbonia).

habitation throughout the first millennium BC (Madau 1988) and up to the fifth to sixth century AD (Manca di Mores 1988b). Between the first half of the second and first half of the first centuries BC the nuragic village was restructured and subsequently abandoned to make room for a large structure, probably related to the Roman villa that lies southeast of the *Nuraghe* (Taramelli 1939, 65–6; Colombi 2010). The central tower has yielded numerous *dolia* fragments that

suggest it was used as a warehouse (Manca di Mores 1998b, 274).

Nuraghe Sa Tanca 'e sa Mura (Villanova Monteleone) is situated in the Meilogu region in northwestern Sardinia at an altitude of 400 m s.l.m, along the banks of the river Temo. At present, the site is flooded by an artificial lake (Fig. 9.1, 4). The excavation of the single-tower *Nuraghe* brought to light Middle and Late Bronze Age material. At the end of the fourth century BC, it was included in a medium-sized Punic farm which remained in use until the second half of the first century BC. The rural site looks like a well-articulated building, geometrically laid out, which also contains the reused *Nuraghe*. The discovery of several iron slag and glass points to industrial activity. It should be noted that there is no continuity of occupation between the Bronze Age and the reuse during the Punic period (Manca di Mores 1988a; Madau 1991, 1997).

Nuraghe S. Efis (Orune) is situated in the region Barbagia in central-eastern Sardinia at an altitude of 750 m a.s.l., (Fig. 9.1, 5). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* is surrounded by a village. During the Roman Empire a large building was constructed in the village that may have been a *mansio*, connected to the road to the interior of the island. Occupation does not seem to have continued between the nuragic and Roman periods (Delussu 2009a).

Nuraghe Mannu (Dorgali) is situated in the Baronia region in eastern Sardinia at an altitude of 180 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 6). The single-tower *Nuraghe* is surrounded by a village, dating from the Middle Bronze Age to the early Iron Age. After a long break the tower was reused as a warehouse during the late Republican period (mid-second century BC) until the early medieval period (sixth century AD) (Delussu 2008, 130). The nuragic village saw major restructuring, as the excavations brought to light square buildings that date from the late Roman Empire to the early medieval period (Delussu 2009b).

Nuraghe Aidu Entos (Bortigali) is situated in the Marghine region in central-western Sardinia at an altitude of 803 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 7). The corridor *Nuraghe*, was reused in the Roman period to indicate the boundary of the territory of the Ilienses with an inscription on the lintel above the entrance (see above) (Gasperini 1992, 303–6; Moravetti 1998, 237–8; Mastino 2007).

Nuraghe Santa Barbara (Macomer) is situated in the Marghine region in central-western Sardinia at an altitude of 648 m a. s. l. (Fig. 9.1, 8). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* is surrounded by a village. Occupation of the *Nuraghe* and the village continued from the Middle Bronze Age to the early Iron Age, after which large parts of the buildings were abandoned and collapsed. Reuse in the Punic period is shown by the presence of

a shrine in tower B and the finds of numerous *thymiateria* in the central chamber, the staircase and the slits. Occupation in the village continued during the Roman and medieval periods (Moravetti 1986).

Nuraghe Sanilo (Aidomaggiore) is situated in the Guilcier region of central Sardinia at an altitude of 350 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 9). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* is surrounded by a village. The area surrounding the *Nuraghe* was reused as a burial space during the Punic and Roman periods (Gasperini 1992, 310; Filigheddu 1994, 811).

Nuraghe Lugherras (Paulilatino) is situated in the Guicier region in the highlands of central-western Sardinia at an altitude of 329 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 10). The central tower of the multi-tower *Nuraghe* was used as a shrine in the late Punic age. More than 700 *thymiateria*, many oil lamps, coins and a fragment of a statue of Bes were discovered in the lower chamber of the central tower. There does not seem to be a continuity of occupation between the nuragic and late Punic periods (Taramelli 1910; Regoli 1991; Del Vais & Serreli 2014–2015).

Nuraghe S'Urachi (San Vero Milis) is situated in the Campidano of Milis in western Sardinia at an altitude of 4 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 11). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* is among the largest on the island (Fig. 9.2). The village was occupied without interruption from the Middle Bronze Age until the Roman Republican period. During the Punic period, at least since the end of sixth to fifth centuries BC, part of the *Nuraghe* was reused as a large cult site, which is yet to be excavated. The archaeological deposit is notable for the presence of clay statues (four of the god Bes (Fig. 9.3) and one of a black man (Fig. 9.4)), a clay matrix for votive breads (the bread of Ashtarte), terracotta moulds, and hundreds of *thymiateria* (Stiglitz 2012a, Stiglitz *et al.* 2015, Ibbá 2018).

Nuraghe Genna Maria (Villanovaforru) is situated in the Marmilla region of central-southern Sardinia at an altitude of 395 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 12). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* is surrounded by a village, which dates from the Bronze Age to the eighth century BC. After a break of several centuries, from the end of the fourth century BC, the central tower of the *Nuraghe* and the corridor in front were used as a cult place. Inside there were a large number of oil lamps, coins, *thymiateria* and a clay matrix for votive breads (the bread of Ashtarte). The presence of numerous lamps is peculiar. In the courtyard, the presence of ash and burnt bones of animals indicates a place of sacrifice. Here too, it should be noted there is no continuity of occupation between the nuragic period and the Punic period (Lilliu & Badas 1993; Atzeni *et al.* 1988).

Nuraghe Su Mulinu (Villanovafranca) is situated in Marmilla region in central-southern Sardinia at an



Figure 9.2. *S'Urachi, San Vero Milis (Foto Museo Civico di San Vero Milis).*

altitude of 286 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 13). The multi-tower *Nuraghe* was constructed in the Middle Bronze Age and was surrounded by a village. Very interesting is room e, already used during the late nuragic period as a cult place; from the eighth century BC, there was an altar in the form of a *Nuraghe* decorated with a half-moon and holes to hold votive swords. The presence of a large amount of oil lamps, vessels and furniture for worship indicates the performance of rituals. The room stayed in use as a cult place from the late Punic period (third century BC) until the Roman Empire. This second phase was characterized by the presence of lamps and reuse of the *Nuraghe*-shaped altar as well. Here again it should be noted that there was no continuity of occupation between the nuragic period (Middle Bronze Age and early Iron Age) and the late Punic period (Ugas 1989–1990; Ugas & Paderi 1990).

Nuraghe Arrubiu (Orroli) is situated in Sarcidano region in central Sardinia at an altitude of 513 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 14). At the moment, it is the largest *Nuraghe* in Sardinia with 21 towers (Cossu *et al.* 2003). The *Nuraghe* seems to have been abandoned at the end of



Figure 9.3. *S'Urachi, clay statue of Bes (Archivio Ilisso Edizioni, foto Pietro Paolo Pinna).*



Figure 9.4. *S'Urachi*, clay statue of a black man (foto C. Buffa, Soprintendenza ABAP della Sardegna meridionale).

the Late Bronze Age or early Iron Age. In the main courtyard, the layers of this phase are covered by *c.* 9 m of collapsed walls. On top of this rubble a workspace for the production of wine with tanks, the base of a press and a counterweight, was built in the second century BC. The structure remained in use until the late Roman period. A similar structure was built in the village. These two areas were associated with a series of domestic structures that are visible around the *Nuraghe* and may be part of an agricultural villa (Lo Schiavo – Sanges 1994, 75–7; Sanges 2001).

Nuraghe Monte Sirai (Carbonia) is situated in the Sulcis region in southwestern Sardinia at an altitude of 194 m a.s.l. (Fig. 9.1, 15). It is a single-tower *Nuraghe* around which a Phoenician settlement was built from 725 BC onwards. The *Nuraghe* was reused as a shrine within a temple structure that was probably dedicated to Ashtarte. Inside the tower, the cult statue was placed together with some anthropomorphic *bronzetti*. Then at the end of the late sixth or beginning of the fifth

centuries BC, in connection with the Carthaginian conquest of Sardinia, the temple area underwent an extensive transformation. The *Nuraghe* was destroyed and a new building was constructed on its remains. A final refurbishment of the temple in the mid-third century BC completely concealed the previous phases. The settlement was suddenly abandoned around 110 BC (Guirguis 2015, 24–5).

The archaeology of reuse

The known archaeological data reported above allow us to clarify the chronological correlations of each site and avoid generic discourses on the *longue durée*, which still deeply influences research on the island. We do not yet have an overall view of the phenomenon of reuse of *Nuraghi*, nor quantitative data that can be used for comprehensive analysis, although the examples are sufficiently representative of the whole sample as much as we can currently understand it.

Many of the *Nuraghi* show a break during the last stages of nuragic occupation. Reuse during the Phoenician period is rare. Reuse increases in the Punic and Roman Republican periods and reaches its peak under the Roman Empire, when most of the *Nuraghi* show traces of some form of reuse, both in the coastal areas and in the interior of the island. Especially interesting are the data from the interior of the island which is generally considered the most conservative part of the island and resistant to outside forces (Lilliu 1971). A recent examination of data, mainly from surveys, showed that of 246 *Nuraghi* that had been reused, 229 *Nuraghi* showed a break of occupation between the nuragic and Roman periods. The fact that 78.9 per cent of the *Nuraghi* are reused only from the Roman Empire onwards is even more compelling (Trudu 2010, 395–6).

These facts underline the more general phenomenon of a significant reduction in the number of settlements between the seventh and fifth centuries BC. Only areas in the vicinity of the Phoenician urban centres show traces of rural settlements that can be dated to the Phoenician period (van Dommelen & Finocchi 2008, 173), while at the same time evidence of nuragic presence seems to disappear at the end of the seventh century/first half of the sixth century BC. The reoccupation of the countryside takes place very quickly in the late fifth and fourth centuries BC (van Dommelen & Finocchi 2008, 172), at the time of the new territorial policy of Carthage in the western Mediterranean.

The data from the systematic surveys of the hinterland of some cities show different patterns. In the case of *Nora* and *Neapolis*, new Punic settlements in lowland areas closer to the city seem to prevail, while a reoccupation of old nuragic sites occurs in the more

internal areas (Van Dommelen & Finocchi 2008, 173). In the hinterland of *Tharros*, however, this difference is not noticeable (Stiglitz 2011, 363–8). A credible explanation for the apparent disappearance of people for several centuries and the sudden repopulation has not been found. Colonists from Carthage are assumed to have resettled a number of territories (eg. Rendeli 2005, 167; *contra* Van Dommelen Gomez & Bellard, 2008, 224), but this does not seem to be a sufficient explanation of the phenomenon as it does not explain the persistence of a community of clear nuragic descent even as late as during the Roman Empire. To this we must add our current inability to recognize proper nuragic evidence after the sixth century BC.

From this point of view, it seems interesting to note that the few cases of continuous occupation between the late nuragic and the Punic-Roman periods show that persons of nuragic descent continued to live in settlements that took on Phoenician and Roman connotations. Paradoxically, these places seem to be those that show the greatest detachment from the previous nuragic world and that are characterized by their full integration into the new world. This means that the inhabitants of those places were an integral part of the developments that took place on the island in this period and that they cannot be suggested to have led archaic lifestyles. Significantly, this fact is clearly visible at *Nuraghe S'Urachi* (San Vero Milis) and *Monte Sirai* (Carbonia), which played a key role in the relations between the coast and their respective hinterlands rich in resources.

In the case of *S'Urachi* (San Vero Milis), the settlement has ceramic material that is clearly identifiable as nuragic from the early Iron Age throughout the eighth century BC, when Phoenician material appeared by the end of the century. During the seventh century BC, local craft practices were increasingly influenced by new oriental technologies and morphologies and, starting from the sixth century BC, a clear Phoenician style can be discerned (Roppa 2012; Roppa *et al.* 2013). The votive deposit in the *Nuraghe* that can be dated to at least the sixth to fifth centuries BC, did not in fact display craft and cultural elements that relate to the nuragic world (Stiglitz 2012a, b) and this remains so until the Roman Republican period. In other words, the continuous occupation of nuragic sites seems evident only in areas that are related to the more productive territories and where the integration between the different elements of the nuragic and Phoenician world is at its height.

In areas further inland, as in the case of *Nuraghi* Genna Maria (Villanovaforru) and *Su Mulinu* (Villanovafranca), where an interruption of many centuries is clear, the reuse is in some ways similar to that of late

nuragic practice, although the types of craft used are totally Punic and Roman. The rituals of worship seem to show the continuity of nuragic traditions, such as the deposition of several lamps (Ugas & Paderi 1990, 482–6; Lilliu 1990, 435–7; Lilliu 1993, 20). The question remains whether, during this second phase of reuse, the altar in the shape of a *Nuraghe* that was still present and visible continued to be a powerful sign of the sacred, or whether it had lost its meaning and was used merely as furniture. Both possibilities are credible, but we are missing too many elements to reach a conclusion. The interpretation suggested by the excavators of the two *Nuraghi* (Ugas & Paderi 1990, 479; Lilliu 1993, 13) assumes the continuity of a community that held on to its place. Specific analyses of the contexts, however, allow us to say that there is no continuity of use by a community tied to its past, but by a newly settled community that reused the shrine after centuries of neglect. In the coastal areas, by contrast, in *Nuraghe La Varrosa* (Sorso) the reuse of the tower and the corridor as a place of worship took place in the Roman period, after nearly a thousand years of interruption and follows the Roman tradition of worship unrelated to the traditional nuragic world, as is illustrated by the type of cult statue (Rovina 1997).

Finally, the grandeur of the structures in itself do not have to recall ancestral values. For the Roman period for example, *Nuraghe Santu Antine* (Torralba) illustrates this point well. Its central tower was still very impressive at over 20 m in height, but the *Nuraghe* was reused as a utilitarian space for agricultural activities (Colombi 2010). For the Punic period, the case of *Nuraghe Sa Tanca e' sa Mura* (Villanova Monteleone) shows the same outcome. The *Nuraghe* was incorporated as an ancillary room in the rural structure. In the latter case, and perhaps in that of *Nuraghe Orrubiu* (Orroli), we may see the reoccupation of the sites by people who may come from Libya or mainland Italy in the wake of the colonial power (Acquaro 1996, 8; *contra* Ridgway 1989, 136; van Dommelen & Finocchi 2008, 194–6) and who, therefore, are indifferent to the history of the place.

The comparison of these cases makes it clear that we have different forms of reuse. This raises the question of a consistent pattern for regions within the island that are not necessarily linked to scales of identity. On the other hand, detailed analyses of archaeological data, where the excavation permits us to identify the precise forms of reuse, demonstrate that every place has its own specific history, which cannot be fitted in a single general model that is valid for every period; Sardinia shows, in fact, considerable variety in the way *Nuraghi* are reused in distinct areas and also within the same area.

Who reused the *Nuraghi*?

Behind the specific data addressed above, the central issue is the identity of those who reused *Nuraghi*: can they be neatly defined as nuragic people, Carthaginians and Romans? This question is not easily answered although some clues can be detected in the material and linguistic world.

It appears that in *Monte Sirai* (Carbonia), during the Phoenician period, the *Nuraghe* was reused as a place of worship by a community that comprised Phoenician and nuragic people. This is indicated by an object discovered in the sacred space within the *Nuraghe*: it is a small votive bronze figurine that dates to the eighth century BC, that is of an eastern type but with strong nuragic elements. In particular the pot held in the figurine's hand is of the well-known nuragic *askos* type (Guirguis, 2010, 24; Bernardini & Botto 2010, 51–4) and this can be seen as a sign of an integrated, hybrid community. The discovery of a contemporary necropolis shows evidence of a hybrid nuragic-Phoenician community as well (Guirguis 2010, 25).

Even more direct evidence is provided by funeral inscriptions from the *Nuraghi* in the central regions of Sardinia (Stiglitz 2010). Even though the majority of the inscriptions date to the late Roman Empire they are no less significant. I will limit my example to *Nuraghe Sanilo* (Aidomaggiore), from where three interesting inscriptions come that date to different periods and contain anthroponyms that provide useful information for understanding the complexity of the Sardinian situation. The oldest one dates back to the third century BC and contains the word *WG^C* written in Punic: it is a personal name that demonstrates the persistence of a strong palaeo-Sardinian substratum in the naming of people during the period of Punic and Roman domination on the island (Filigheddu 1994, 811). The second one is written in Latin and dates to the first century AD. It contains the text *URSETINERCAUNI*: these are two personal names, *Urseti* and *Nercaui* that are also known elsewhere and that are considered to be of nuragic origin (Gasperini 1992, 310).

A third inscription from the same *Nuraghe* and dating to the first century AD, contains the text: *qdabinel. / Dom (inus) fec (it)*. The name of the deceased, *Qdabinel*, clearly illustrates the *Punic* component of the Sardinian population (Gasperini 1992, 307–10), the name is, in fact, to be connected with the Punic *kbd^lln* – honor of the god, a common name in North Africa (Zucca 1999, 35–6). The three inscriptions show that, during the Punic and Roman periods, cultural components of various origins (nuragic, Punic and Roman) were still present and recognizable. They are not demarcated and

all belong to the same social reality, and sometimes the connections can even be seen within one family.

These finds challenge the traditional interpretation of the reuse of *Nuraghi* and other nuragic structures that emphasize the survival of traditional nuragic communities within the Punic or Roman societies, stuck in a conservatism without any contamination by the dominant official culture – which Giovanni Lilliu called the *costante resistenziale sarda* (permanent Sardinian resistance: Lilliu 1990, 1971). This interpretation is consistent with the primitivist views of some Anglo-Saxon scholars (Webster 1996; Rowland 2001; Dyson & Rowland 2007).

The visibility of the towers obviously played a role in the imagination of the people and, in some cases, certainly recalled the memories of their ancestors. But memory does not necessarily turn into ideological action. In many cases, the structures are seen as useful for domestic functions: durable existing buildings that could provide excellent storage space for foodstuffs. In other cases, however, the combination of the monumentality and the cave-like appearance did induce religious experience that led to the construction of cult places. In other cases, we are dealing with real persistence, or a renewal of ancestral worship, but should not be seen as a mere survival of what would by then have been dated archaizing elements, but as an actual interpretation of dynamic traditions.

Archaeological evidence has thus brought to light a more complex situation that is quite different from the conventional representation of the island based on nineteenth-century colonial ideology. It has in fact become clear because of the discontinuities demonstrated at many nuragic sites, their reuse cannot be interpreted as mere survival. When, after a break of many centuries, a reused site evokes traditional elements, it is no coincidence that this occurs at rural sanctuaries that can be seen as places of dialogue and integration between cultures.

The case of *Su Mulinu* (Villanovafranca) is particularly informative in this regard. During the early Iron Age, a space within the *Nuraghe* was perceived as sacred and furnished with what can be termed an altar that reproduces the *Nuraghe* within which it is located (Ugas & Paderi 1990, 478). The consecration, then, centres on the memory of the *Nuraghe*. Problematic, however, is the Punic-period reuse after several centuries of abandonment, because the similarity of offerings between the nuragic and Punic-Roman period, in particular the large numbers of oil lamps (Ugas & Paderi 1990, 477–9) suggests a revival of earlier traditions transformed by new artisan practices but not by the types of objects offered. This situation may thus perhaps be interpreted as the return of the

descendants of former residents (Bartoloni 1988, 346–7) or the resettlement by new groups to this place but, not necessarily from outside the island. In both cases, it is a new community that kept some features of the nuragic tradition and taken on new ones from the Punic and Roman traditions. This was demonstrably not a passive or residual community, but one able to handle and manipulate, consciously or not, the situation of their time (Stiglitz 2020).

Conclusion

It is important to draw the attention to the inhabitants of those places, the women and men who created their environment, and who were able to express their own culture, who were subaltern but not passive and capable of taking ‘a more or less explicit counter-hegemonic character in the form of subcultures or popular, often religious, movements [...] a specifically local response to colonialism’ (van Dommelen 1997, 309, 315).

The geographical, chronological and contextual distinctions briefly summarized in this article question the old dichotomy between colonial occupation and resistance that viewed the world in ethnic terms. Instead, I argue that the terms ‘nuragic, Punic or Roman’ lost their ethnic connotation and became mere labels to classify material culture. It also does not necessarily mean the replacement of the indigenous inhabitants with colonial outsiders (van Dommelen & Gomez Bellard 2008, 2–5, 202). The communities under Carthaginian and Roman political control seem to form new cultural features adapted to the new colonial situation and in line with the concepts of hegemony and subordination

as defined by Gramsci (van Dommelen & Gomez Bellard 2008, 237–8; Liguori & Voza 2009, *passim*; Stiglitz 2020), rather than in nineteenth-century colonial terms. Notions such as ‘survival, persistence and continuity’, which have long been used to analyse these situations, no longer seem to be able to provide the appropriate conceptual tools for interpreting these complex realities:

S’agit-il véritablement d’une catégorie historiographique recevable? Rend-elle compte de phénomènes homogènes ? peut-elle assumer le rôle de principe explicatif qu’on a voulu lui attribuer parfois? Le thème, on le voit, n’est peut-être pas d’un manie-ment aussi simple, aussi commode, ni aussi innocent qu’il peut paraître à première vue. (Benabou 1990, 7)

In the end, it comes down to exploring the role and impact of nuragic towers on their local setting place by place:

Memory and tradition alone do not preserve an object’s identity, it is the ongoing incorporation of that object into routinized practices that generates its meaning (Blake 1998, 68).

It is therefore the social practices of that reality that will clarify our ideas. In conclusion, the *Nuraghi* tell us a long story with a solid foundation, but that is also one with many twisted branches, rich in different narratives.

Chapter 10

The *Nuraghe's* life in the Iron Age

Carlo Tronchetti

It is not the intention of this chapter to discuss the function of *Nuraghi* in the Bronze Age, a topic that has been well covered by others (Depalmas 2009a, b, c). Coverage will be restricted to the Iron age, that is from 900 BC onwards. Excavations, mainly those carried out in the past ten/fifteen years, and the research that has emerged from them, have pointed out clearly that Sardinian society was going through a critical stage during this span of time (Perra 2012; Usai 2012a). The abandonment of many *Nuraghi*, and the change in function of some others, displayed a shift in territorial organization, most probably, that is almost certainly, in response to social and economic changes (Tronchetti 2014).

The changed use of *Nuraghi* in the Iron Age

New *Nuraghi* were not built in the Iron Age and their original function was no longer relevant. The defensive role became redundant. In some cases, the large perimeter revetments, constructed from larger stones were overthrown. The ruins were superimposed by new smaller dwelling places, sometimes of rectangular shape; sometimes new huts had their walls of small stones placed on the remains of the massive defensive walls. However, the *Nuraghe*, even if of changed function, retained its role as a focus of aggregation, continuing to play an important role in the life of the community.

Where we can observe continuity of use, in most cases, the main structure of the *Nuraghe* became a place of worship. Unfortunately, many excavations occurred in the first decades of the twentieth century AD, and many data were lost. Thus we can only base our observations clearly on the finds of more recent excavations, and from this evidence we are able to link some pottery shapes to cult practice. By inference, we can reasonably also identify some old excavated *Nuraghi* as places of worship.

The best data nevertheless come from the recent excavations and publications of some *Nuraghi*, villages and sanctuaries (Fig. 10.1). We find some common elements in *Nuraghi*, sanctuaries, and in the *capanne delle riunioni* (meeting-huts), namely large huts distinguished by long benches along the walls. In almost all these buildings and in most sites we notice the presence of a stone model of a *Nuraghe*. In *Nuraghe* Su Mulinu (Villanovafranca) (Ugas 1989–90), there is a big and elaborate stone altar, with a large basin and a high model of a nuragic tower. The upper part is shaped in the form of the enclosure of the *Nuraghe* terrace. The cult place, or small shrine, in Sorradile, Su Monte, has a very similar altar (Santoni & Bacco 2008) (Fig. 10.2a). The excavators dated both altars to the Iron Age, to be precise, to the eighth century BC.

It is no surprise to see such an increase of places of worship places at this time. A recent study of nuragic sanctuaries by Nicola Ialongo (Ialongo 2010) has clearly and convincingly proved that the *floruit* of the most important, as well as the smaller, sanctuaries began in the early Iron age. These sanctuaries were always linked to the cult of water, shown by the pit-temples in their precinct. The altars from Villanovafranca and Sorradile are actually large water basins with a model of a nuragic tower, once again demonstrating the presence of a cult of water.

A big hut in the sanctuary of S. Anastasia in Sardara has a stone altar of nuragic tower shape (Fig. 10.2b), another model comes from the district of San Sperate near Cagliari (Fig. 10.3b), and the sanctuary of Serra Niedda has several models of stone and one of bronze. The late sanctuary of Santa Vittoria di Serri has another stone model. The meeting huts of *Nuraghe* Palmavera (Alghero) and Su Nuraxi di Barumini (Fig. 10.2b) have stone models. Many others were found in other sites, but the precise context is rarely recorded. Paulilongo, San Sperate has two amazing models: the

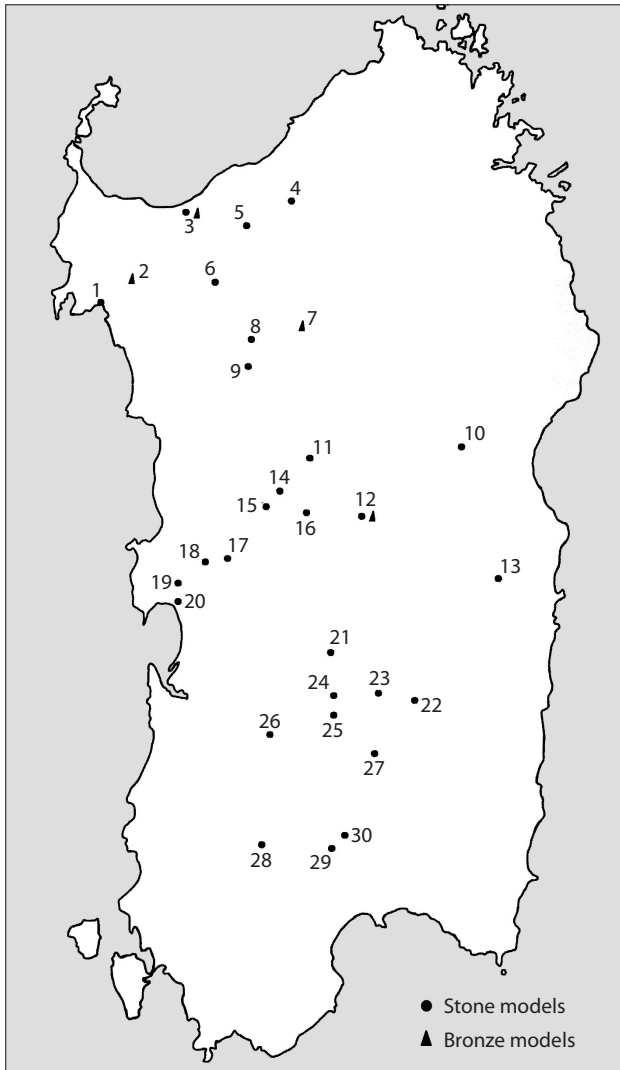


Figure 10.1. Discovery sites of Nuraghe models (except for the masts of small ships and the pottery ones): 1) Alghero, Palmavera; 2) Olmedo, Camposanto; 3) Sorso, Serra Niedda; 4) Perfugas, Predio Canopoli; 5) Nulvi, Irru; 6) Florinas, Punta 'e Onossi – Giorrè; 7) Ittireddu, Località ignota; 8) Torralba, Santu Antine; 9) Chermule, Località ignota; 10) Oliena, Lanaito – Sa Sedda 'e sos Carros; 11) Noragugume, Sa Tanca 'e Mesu; 12) Teti, Abini; 13) Villagrande Strisaili, S'Arcu 'e is Forros – Sa Carcaredda; 14) Norbello, Orconale; 15) Abbasanta, Losa; 16) Sorradile, Su Monte; 17) Bauladu, Santa Barbara; 18) S. Vero Milis, Pauli Crechi – Serra 'e is Araus; 19) Nurachi, Sa Manenzia; 20) Cabras, Mont'e Prama – Cann'e Vadosu – Fondo Camedda; 21) Genoni, Santu Antine; 22) Orroli, Arrubiu; 23) Serris, Santa Vittoria; 24) Barumini, Su Nuraxi; 25) Villanovafranca, Su Mulinu – Tuppediti; 26) Sardara, S. Anastasia; 27) Suelli, Piscu; 28) Vallermosa, Matzanni; 29) San Sperate, Sa Bia 'e Decimu – Paulilongo; 30) Monastir, Monte Zara.

first model is said to come from *Nuraghe Cann'e Vadosu* (Cabras), but is actually from Mont'e Prama (Fig. 10.3a); the second model came from Serra 'e is Araus (San Vero Milis). Both are notable for the link between the architecture and the human figure. The figures on the last two are clearly linked to ritual action: in the first, we recognize a worshipper raising his arms; in the second a man is leading an unidentifiable animal to sacrifice. Furthermore, we have a few bronze models, showing a high tower presiding over a wall with four smaller towers (Fig. 10.3d). Finally small models are recognized in bronze 'buttons' and in the mast of some bronze small ships (*navicelle*) (Fig. 10.3c).

Recently, Campus and Leonelli (2012) edited a book on *Nuraghe* models, where it is possible to find the full bibliographical references to all the models discussed. However, whereas the catalogue is comprehensive, they make the claim that most activity ended with the Final Bronze Age. For them, Iron age Sardinia is a land without creativity. This is most emphatically shown by their chronological table which shows a gap between 900 and 720 BC, when Phoenician culture is presented as predominant and the only force on the island. This view contrasts with the archaeological data from the most recent excavations and studies, and with the well-grounded chronological data obtained from the contexts with Sardinian objects found outside Sardinia. The book is really useful as a data source but must be read with this fundamental correction.

The *Nuraghe* as a symbol of memory

Read in its proper chronological context, the *Nuraghe* was now a symbol of memory, a territorial focal point and an object of worship, both as a cultic object and an altar. Following the suggestion of Alessandro Usai, the *Nuraghe*, regarded as a cult place, is also the place where the properties of the community were collected under divine protection. In the Sardinian Iron age, we can reasonably argue that some large families, let us call them aristocratic families, because of their military power and pre-eminence in the religious hierarchy, played a strong political role in the late nuragic communities.

In the site of Mont'e Prama (Cabras) in central west Sardinia, we have amazing remains that support this ideological hypothesis, involving the *Nuraghe*. Here there is an Iron age necropolis, with pit tombs. The tombs of the later phase (second half of the eighth century BC) are monumentalized with large limestone cover slabs, accompanied by big limestone statues, portraying archers, warriors and boxers covering their head with a shield, most likely people acting out sacred games (Fig. 10.5). Together with the 28 reconstructed statues there are 16 limestone models

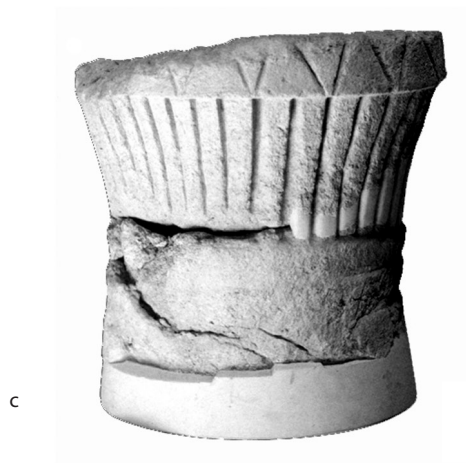
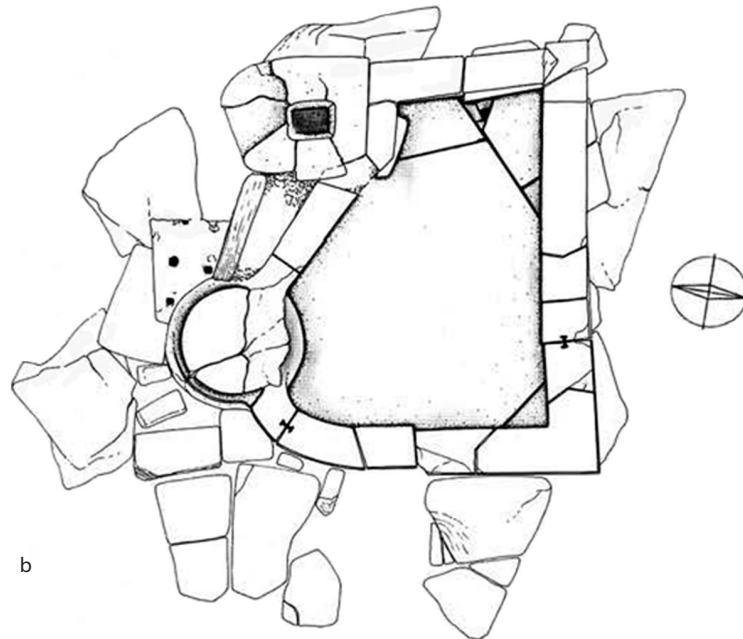
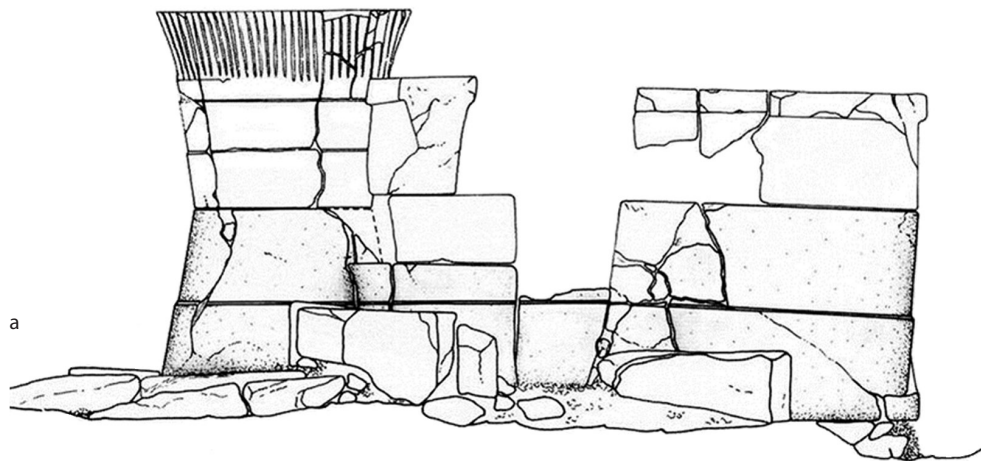


Figure 10.2. Nuraghe models: a) Sorradile, Su Monte; b) Sardara, S. Anastasia; c) Sorso, Serra Niedda; d) Barumini.



Figure 10.3. Nuraghe models: a) Cabras, Cann'e Vadosu; b) San Sperate, Sa Bia 'e Decimu; c) Vetulonia; d) Furtei.

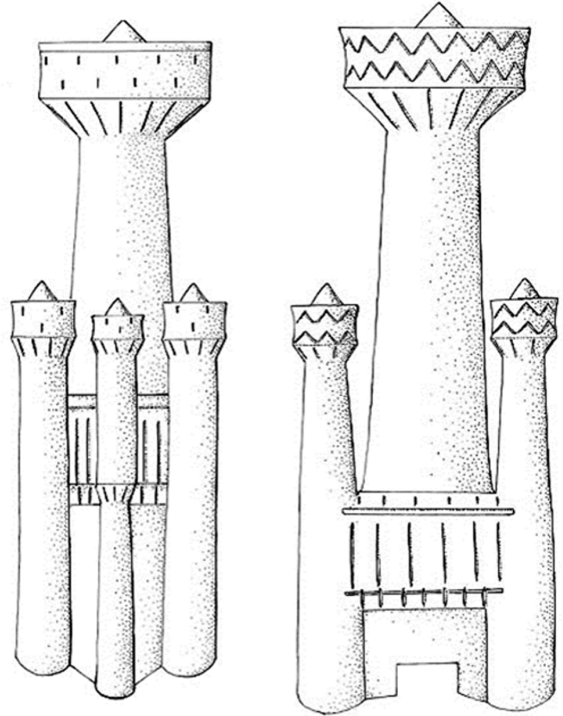


Figure 10.4. Nuraghe models from Mont'e Prama, Cabras.



Figure 10.5. Reconstruction of the necropolis of Cabras, Mont'e Prama, with statues and models of nuraghe.

of *Nuraghi*, mostly of a high tower surrounded by a containing wall with four smaller towers (Tronchetti 2012a) (Fig. 10.4).

Such an outstanding display illustrates this new ideology. The family (anthropological analysis proves that most of the deceased were members of one family group) displayed to the community their core values: military, religious, and consequently political, by means of the models of *Nuraghi* that combined all these values. In the necropolis, some more ancient betyls have also been found, stylistically linked to the memory of Late Bronze Age Giant's tombs; another reference to the mythical ancestors who ruled the country and built extraordinary superhuman monuments like the *Nuraghi*. The *Nuraghi* had been transformed into materialized memories, articulated through the plethora of models that represent them (Tronchetti 2012b).

Conclusion

The *Nuraghe* models are located in peculiar buildings in the nuragic villages, that is in the so-called meeting huts: larger circular structures than the normal huts, with a bench along the walls and a model of *Nuraghe* in the centre or a niche, always in a prominent position. This is a clear reference to the symbolic social and political value of the *Nuraghe* within the community.

The models of *Nuraghe* also find their place within the sanctuaries, where they are sometimes connected to tanks containing water, used in rituals. The water cult is found from the Late and Final Bronze Age in the well temples; in the Iron Age it is located in both the huts with benches and a basin, evidently linked to private and even public cult practices as shown by the structure found at Sa Sedda and sos Carros (Salis 2013).

The presence of numerous models of *Nuraghe* in the monumental necropolis of Mont'e Prama is extremely important for understanding the meaning attributed to the models. Members of undoubtedly elite family groups symbolized in their values are buried in the tombs: political, in the ostentation of the weapons that qualify them as defenders of the community; religious in the attitude of 'boxers' engaged in ritual games.

The *Nuraghe* models combine both features, and, with the statues, compose a complex in which the construction of memory takes place, inserting the dead in a chain that links them to the ancestors, real or mythical.

The model of *Nuraghe*, therefore, referred to a still easily perceived past, a symbol of 'built memory', whose function was to affirm and strengthen the cohesion of the social body around the elites who guided it (Perra 2017).

The life of the *Nuraghi* in the Iron Age was different from the life in the Bronze Age, but not one of declining value or force. The *Nuraghe* remained the very ideological, and often materialized, centre of the community, combining religious and political values, and the memory of the past times, deeply linking the current generation to the old mythical ancestors and the descent groups that connected one to the other.

Chapter 11

Monumentality and commemoration at a Late Neolithic henge site in Scotland

Rebecca K. Younger

It seems that archaeologists sometimes implicitly assume monuments are memorials. The word ‘monument’, as Richard Bradley notes (1993, 2), comes from the Latin *monere*, ‘to remind’. Interpretations of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age in Britain have traditionally been dominated by an interest in monuments, sometimes to the detriment of other aspects of Neolithic life, as some have pointed out, because of the high visibility of monuments in the archaeological record (Garrow 2006, 3; Pollard 1999, 90). Large earthwork or stone monuments can also remain highly visible parts of today’s landscape, and therefore we understand them to be enduring parts of the landscape, testament to the past; and there seems to be a tacit acceptance amongst archaeologists that monuments therefore have an abstract mnemonic quality because of their existence as ‘old things’ in the landscape. The perceived longevity of monuments means they are often understood to be places in the landscape which make tangible reference to the past (e.g. Tilley 1994). Since this is how we understand monuments, there is a tendency to assume that this is what they were intended for and how they were understood in the past.

We cannot be certain that this was the case however, and therefore in this chapter, it is suggested that a slightly different approach to understanding the memorial aspects of monuments might be fruitful. Rather than assuming monuments to have been intended as permanent reminders of the past, here it is suggested that greater consideration should be given to the particular ways in which people used monuments to remember – for example, the use of monuments as places of commemoration. This is discussed in relation to henge monuments, earthwork monuments of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age in Britain, but the concepts of commemoration explored in the chapter will have relevance to other times and places. First, however, it will be useful to outline some of the pitfalls

of assuming prehistoric monuments to be memorials as we understand them in a contemporary context.

Monuments, memory and archaeology

Considering monuments to be mnemonic, because we think of them as permanent references to the past implies that understandings of memory, the past and the meaning of monuments have always been similar to our own contemporary Western perspective. It also assumes that monuments are static entities, unchanging representations of the past in the landscape. This is not the case however, and a growing body of research into monuments has demonstrated that they were commonly ‘reused’: remodelled and rebuilt at different times, used for different purposes and interpreted in different ways throughout their histories (Bradley 2002; Driscoll 1998; Hingley 1996; Holtorf 1998). Monuments were not always preserved unchanged – or necessarily seen as things of ‘the past’, but were reused in the present. In fact, the very concept of ‘the past’ might have been different to our own. The perception and concept of time is not a constant between different cultures (Gell 1992), and a person living during the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age would have conceptualized their past very differently from us. The same distinctions between history and myth may not have existed (Gosden and Lock 1998), and so the ways in which existing monuments were interpreted would have been different. Indeed, it is possible that they might not have been interpreted as humanly made constructions, and the distinction between culture and nature, if a distinction was made, would likely have been drawn along very different lines to our own (see Tilley 1996, and Bradley 1998a). People may therefore have interpreted and remembered the past differently from our own concept of memory.

Traditional concepts of memory used in archaeology also tend to treat memory in abstract terms.

Seeing monuments as memorials implies that they possess a mnemonic quality which would function in the same way regardless of human interaction with, and interpretation of, the monument. Alasdair Whittle has pointed out that, while memory has been something of a fashionable topic in archaeology in recent years, human agency has not always had a major role in these debates (Whittle 2010, 35), meaning that the significance of the active *creation* of memory in the past has sometimes been overlooked.

Perhaps this is partly because of the fact that many discussions of memory and monuments in archaeology have focused on the monument after it is finished, and sometimes only after it has gone out of use. Despite it being considered that the purpose of monuments is memorial, this is often linked with later reuses of the monument rather than its original use – what Bradley (1993) terms the ‘afterlife’ of monuments. Dušan Borić has suggested that archaeologists have used ‘memory’ as an ‘umbrella term’ for thinking about ‘the past in the past’ (Borić 2010, 3). If we are to consider how and whether monuments functioned as memorials, it is necessary to think about their construction and use, rather than only thinking about the finished monument as a memorial. Bradley has suggested that the ‘project’ of constructing monuments may have been more significant than the finished monument (Bradley 1993, 1998b). While sites such as henges might have been memorials because they were places where the past was monumentalized, the ways in which people deliberately altered existing monuments could also be significant. Memory cannot be seen as an inherent or self-evident quality of a monument, but something that has to be created. Ruth Van Dyke and Susan Alcock describe the creation of memory, and particularly of social memory, as an ‘active and ongoing process’, constructed as people choose what to remember or forget (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003, 3). The act of forgetting may be as significant as remembering, and suggests a deliberate interest in reinterpreting the past. If we are to consider any of these aspects of memory, we need to move beyond a traditional concept of monuments being static memorials to the past, and to think instead about how monuments might have been used to engage actively with, and renegotiate, alternative concepts of the past. One way of doing so might be to consider the construction and use of monuments as a commemorative practice.

Henge monuments in Scotland

The construction and use of henge monuments might be one such example of a commemorative practice, and of monuments which might have been used to

engage with the past. Henges are circular earthwork monuments, usually comprising an external bank and internal ditch, with one or two narrow breaks in the earthworks forming ‘entrances’ into the interior space defined by the earthworks. Henges are found throughout much of the British Mainland and Orkney, and are traditionally dated to the Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age, c. 3000–2000 BC (Harding 2003). Over 80 henges are known in Scotland, many of which have been discovered as cropmarks through aerial survey (Barclay 2005, 84).

Although generally defined in the terms outlined above, henges form a somewhat heterogeneous monument type, and vary in size, date and form. The henge category includes sites which range from small ‘mini-henges’ or ‘hengiforms’, as small as 5–6 m in diameter, to large ‘henge enclosures’ such as Avebury and Durrington Walls in the south of England (Harding 2003). In Scotland, the largest henges are about 100 m in diameter, although most are smaller, about 30 m diameter (Barclay 2005, 84). Recent research by Richard Bradley has also extended the chronology of henge monuments in some regions, dating the construction of some mini-henges in the northeast of Scotland into the mid-second millennium BC (c. 1600–1400 BC) (Bradley 2011). Henges have traditionally been associated with Grooved Ware pottery, a style of Late Neolithic decorated pottery which, like henges, supposedly originated in Orkney around 3000 BC (Harding 2003). Henges have therefore often in the past been characterized as archetypal Late Neolithic monuments – a ‘hallmark of their age’, as Harding and Lee (1987, 66) described them. Henges are usually interpreted as ritual or ceremonial monuments.

When excavated, henges are usually found to be multi-phase monuments. Although the term ‘henge’ describes the bank and ditch, henge sites are often associated with a range of other features, including timber or stone settings, and burials. In the past, this has led to attempts to classify henges on the basis of morphology and internal features (e.g. Burl 1969; Catherall 1971; Wainwright 1969; Clare 1986, 1987). The interest in understanding the architecture of henges has been such that at times, other aspects such as the use and purposes of henges, or their relation to the landscape, have been overlooked, as Aaron Watson (2004) has argued. The interest in defining and classifying henges – and other monuments – has also perhaps meant that we overlook the extent to which such monuments have been reused and reworked over time. The henge earthworks are often only one phase in the use of a site, and not necessarily the first or last monument to be constructed in a particular location (Barclay 2005, 92–3; Thomas 2001, 132–3). The other

monuments and features found at henge sites are often found to pre- or post-date the henge earthworks, sometimes by hundreds of years. Pre-henge activity is often characterized by deposition (e.g. of pottery), pit-digging, burial, or the construction of timber circles. Where timber circles are found in association with henges for example, the timber monument is always found to pre-date the henge earthworks (Gibson 2005). Post-henge activity often involves burial, sometimes in large cists, or cairns. Similar trajectories of use have been demonstrated at several excavated henge sites, such as North Mains in Perth and Kinross (Barclay 1983), and Cairnpapple, West Lothian (Piggott 1948; Barclay 1999). Some 27 henge sites have been excavated in Scotland, and all of these have been found to be multi-phase sites, where the henge earthworks were neither the first nor last element to be constructed on site. Henge sites were often used (perhaps sporadically) over millennia.

Given the multi-phase nature of henge sites as places which are reused, henges are interesting sites for considering memory. They were sites which were returned to repeatedly over many generations, but were not preserved unchanged. Most henge sites were significantly remodelled at some point in their 'life', and change and innovation were evidently important at henges, as well as memory and tradition. Henge sites were places where the project of monumentality was reimagined in new ways at different times. Change was played out over centuries and while the same site was returned to repeatedly over generations, these were also places where innovation was the norm. So while henges may have been 'memorial' in that they did refer to the past, they were not places where the past was memorialized in unchanging, static form (Younger 2016).

Can this understanding of henges as places which changed over time be reconciled with our concept of monuments as memorials? Henge sites were different things at different times. This is somewhat at odds with a traditional understanding of monuments being permanent, unchanging memorials. It is this relationship between memory and change, and what insights it might lend us into memory in the past, which will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

Commemoration

The use of monuments such as henges over generations may be more than simply a memorial to the past, but this does not mean that memory was unimportant at these places. Our contemporary concepts of memory as an abstract quality of monuments which endure unchanged in the landscape might be faulty when

applied to the past, and indeed do little to explain why monuments would be used again and rebuilt long after their initial construction. (Re)using such places, redolent of the past, was, however, clearly important to people in the past, even if they were not used in accordance with our contemporary ideas of memorialization. Perhaps such practices can be better understood as commemorative rather than memorial.

The use of the term 'commemoration' is not intended simply as an alternative word for memory, but rather refers to a distinct practice, and to a specific kind of remembering. While archaeologists may tend to think about memory in abstract, a focus on commemoration may allow greater consideration of past human experiences of remembering, and of the role played by monument construction (and not only finished monuments) in the active interpretation and negotiation of memory. The definition of commemoration adopted in this chapter is based on philosopher Edward Casey's (1987) phenomenological account of remembering. The significant aspects of the practice of commemoration as described by Casey include that it is communal, relying on collective engagement with the past (Casey 1987, 235–6). Commemoration can therefore be a way of remembering events in the distant past, rather than memories based on personal experience (Casey 1987, 216–18). Commemoration might also be ritualized, and might be tied to a particular place (Casey 1987, 218–19, 221, 245–6). These features of commemoration make it relevant for thinking about the use of monuments such as henges – 'ritual' monuments, probably built and used by large groups of people, and used over a long time period, beyond the span of an individual's memory.

Commemoration is also useful for thinking about the memorial aspect of monuments because Casey argues that by referring to the past, in a particular location, commemoration makes the past 'present' in a certain place (Casey 1987, 218–19). Commemoration does not only refer to the past however, but also to the future, being a way of actively preserving and 'passing on' the past to future generations (Casey 1987, 256). While commemoration might revolve around a particular place or monument, the monument itself is not the agent of memory. Rather, the key aspect of commemoration as a way of referring to the past, 'presencing' the past and passing it on, is that it is enacted by people. Commemoration also allows for the active (re)negotiation of the past; it is not the existence of finished monuments, but the *construction* and *use* of monuments, which are important in making them places of memory.

It is particularly this emphasis on the construction and use of monuments which is helpful in understanding henges as commemorative places. The repeated

construction of monuments in the same location – a location which had a long history of use and of monument construction, as is the case at most henge sites – would require people to engage with their past. In building monuments which by their location refer to the past, but would endure into the future, henge sites might have been places where the past could be actively reinterpreted. People's understanding of, and relationship to, the past could be renegotiated by building a new monument on the site of an existing structure. By doing so, they make a statement in the present, but also for the future. Henge sites, as places of commemoration, may therefore have been places where time and 'history' could be reinterpreted in ways which were not necessarily possible in everyday life.

In bringing together references to the past, present and future in one location, henge sites may even have been places where time could be considered to 'flow' in a different way. This is an idea which will be explored further below. A traditional concept of memory would not necessarily help to explain the significance of why henge sites were repeatedly changed and reused. If it is understood as a process of commemoration however, then it is possible to reinterpret this tradition of rebuilding monuments on the same site as an effort to actively engage with, and renegotiate, the past. The rest of this chapter will discuss how this commemorative process might have played out at one particular site, Forteviot in Perth and Kinross.

Forteviot

Forteviot is the site of a remarkable complex of monuments, revealed as crop marks during aerial survey in the 1970s (St Joseph 1976, 1978). The crop marks represent a group of ritual monuments dating from the Late Neolithic to the early medieval period, roughly the third millennium BC to the first millennium AD (Fig. 11.1). The main group of monuments is situated on a terrace above a tributary of the River Earn, to the south of the modern village of Forteviot. The Gask Ridge lies to the north of the site, and the terrace is overlooked by the Ochill Hills to the south. This chapter will focus on the prehistoric monument complex.

The prehistoric monument complex at Forteviot comprises an enormous palisaded enclosure. This large timber enclosure has been radiocarbon dated to 2926–2467 cal. BC (95 per cent confidence) (Noble & Brophy 2011, 793), and encloses an area of about 6 hectares (Gibson 2002, 18). The palisaded enclosure surrounds several other monuments, not all of which are contemporary. These include a henge; a small 'hengiform' monument; and timber circles. The palisaded enclosure had a narrow entrance avenue, and

was made of timber posts, probably oak (Noble & Brophy 2011, 791–3). Outside the timber enclosure were more monuments, including another two henges, and a circular enclosure with a double palisade, with an internal triple cist burial (Fig. 11.1) (Noble & Brophy 2011). The Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot project (SERF), led by Glasgow and Aberdeen universities and largely funded by Historic Scotland, carried out excavations at Forteviot from 2006–10. The discussion in this chapter focuses on Henge 1 (Fig. 11.2), inside the palisaded enclosure, which was excavated over two seasons in 2008–9. Like other henges excavated in Scotland, Henge 1 at Forteviot had a long and complex 'life history', and although the same site was repeatedly returned to, it was used in innovative ways, and changed greatly over the time it was used.

Amongst the earliest activity on the site of Forteviot Henge 1 was a Late Neolithic cremation cemetery, dating to 3090–2638 cal. BC (95 per cent confidence) (Noble & Brophy 2011, 790). 9 cremation deposits were discovered (some representing more than one individual), within the area which would later be enclosed by the henge earthworks (Noble & Brophy 2011, 790). The cremation cemetery may have been marked by a standing stone or stone setting, although this was later destroyed (Noble & Brophy 2011, 790). The site of the cremation cemetery was transformed, possibly soon after the cemetery went out of use, and the emphasis of the site changed from deposition to enclosure. The first element of this was the huge palisaded enclosure. The posts of the enclosure may have been as tall as 6 m above the ground (Noble & Brophy 2011, 793). Constructed during the same period as the palisaded enclosure, a smaller timber circle was built inside it, enclosing the immediate area around the cremation cemetery. Although smaller than the palisade, the timber circle was still a substantial construction, also made of large oak posts, forming a circle roughly 45 m in diameter (Noble & Brophy 2011, 795).

After the construction of the timber enclosures, the cremation cemetery was enclosed by a henge. The ditch of the henge was built inside, and concentric to, the timber circle, while the outer bank may have incorporated the earlier timbers. The lowest fills of the henge ditch have been radiocarbon dated to 2468–1938 cal. BC (95 per cent confidence) (Noble & Brophy 2011, 795), giving an approximate date for the construction of the henge earthworks. Although these earthworks were substantial – the ditch was as much as 10 m wide in places – the area enclosed was relatively small, approximately 22 m in diameter, with only one entrance (Brophy & Noble 2012, 26). Around 2199–1977 cal. BC, the way in which the site was used changed again. A stone cist with a dagger burial was

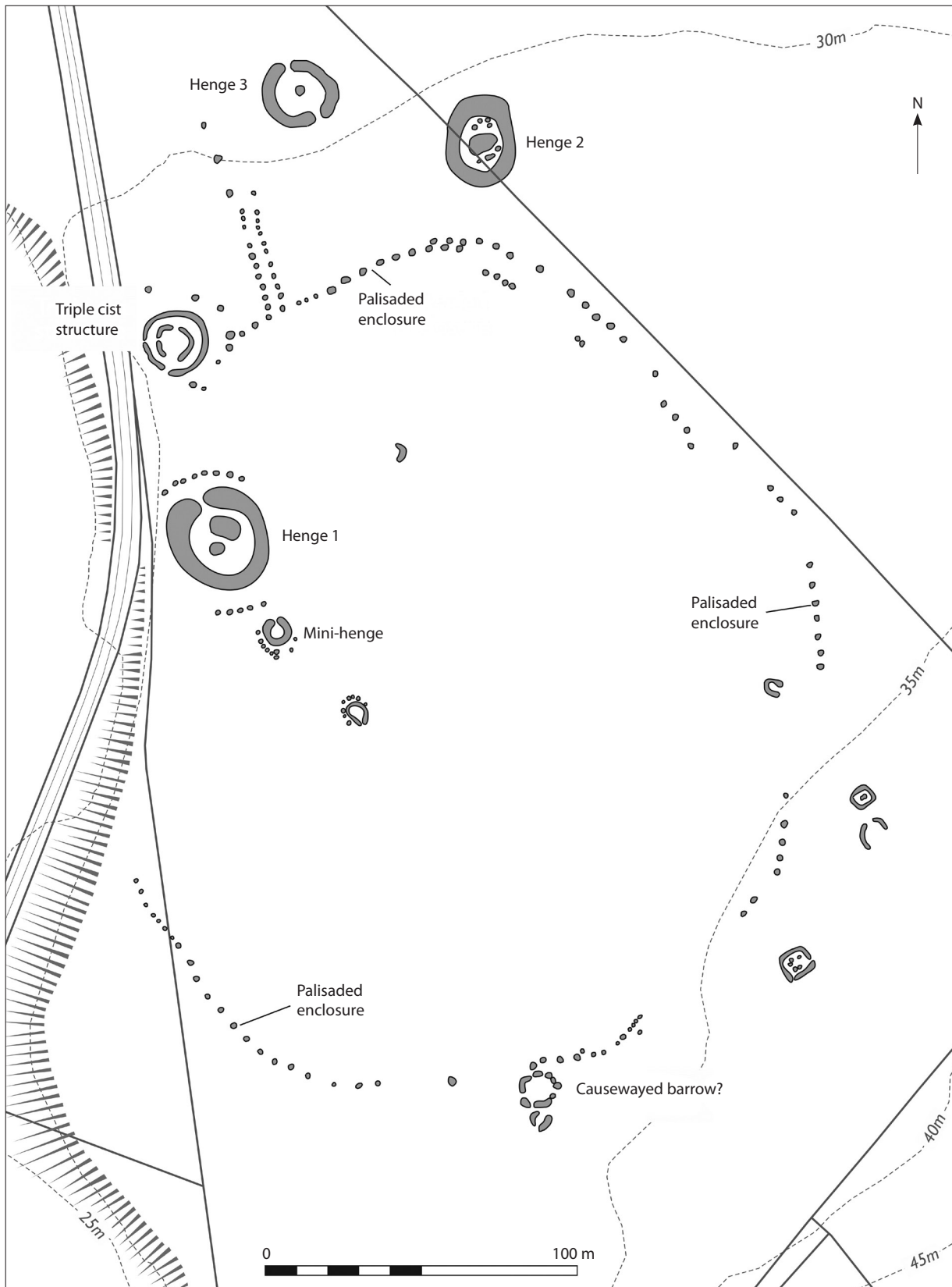


Figure 11.1. Transcription of cropmarks of prehistoric monument complex at Forteviot. SERF project.

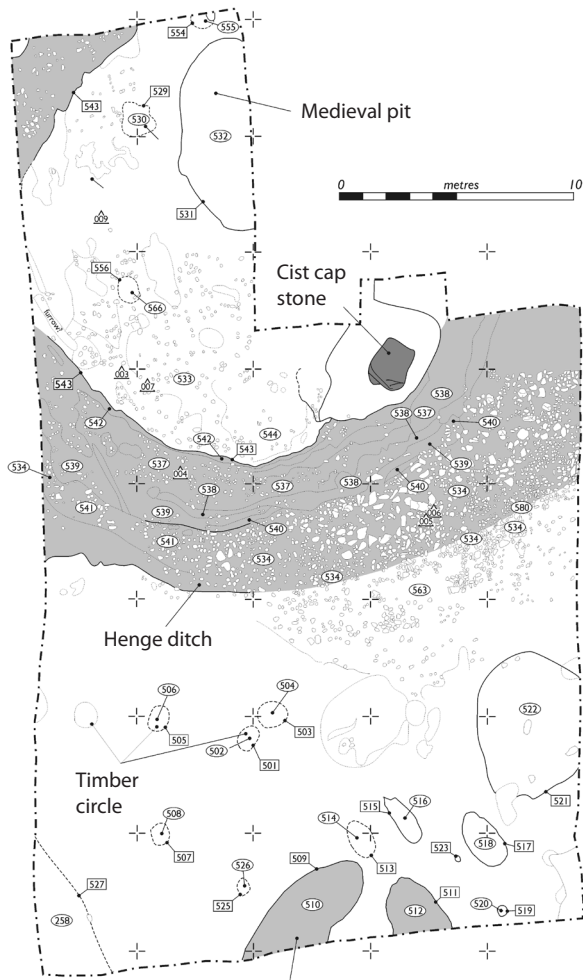


Figure 11.2. Plan of Forteviot Henge 1. SERF project.

constructed in the southeast of Henge 1, overlying the henge ditch. By the time the cist was built, the henge ditch had partially silted up. Gordon Noble and Kenneth Brophy have suggested that the cist was probably sealed under a cairn, as the stony upper fill of the henge ditch may represent cairn material, perhaps ruined at a later date (Noble & Brophy 2011, 798). Henge 1 continued to be reworked during later prehistory and the early medieval period, during which time parts of the earthwork may have been levelled. The site may have been used for metal- and glass-working, before a large pit was dug in the centre during the early medieval period (Brophy & Noble 2012, 26).

Heterotopias and imagined landscapes

Henge 1 at Forteviot, like other henges, was far from being a 'permanent', unchanging monument. It was a place which underwent a long process of change from the third millennium BC onwards – a process

which spanned a millennium or more. It was a place where the 'project' of monumentality (Bradley 1993, 1998b) was reimagined, and played out in different ways at different times. A diversity of activities and architectures manifested in this one location suggest that the tension of continuity and change, of tradition and innovation, and of permanence and transience, were significant aspects of the ways the site was used and understood throughout prehistory.

Change was visibly important at Forteviot over centuries. Forteviot was transformed from an open cemetery site, to a place enclosed by a succession of massive timber and earth structures. Movement and visibility were reduced, or rather increasingly controlled, over time. Brophy and Noble have suggested that parts of the Forteviot complex may have been blocked or mounded over at some times, sealing off parts of the site, and making access in and out of these parts of the site difficult (Brophy & Noble 2012, 32). References to the past were thus made physically manifest in the way each successive monument used the space occupied by its predecessors, but were not necessarily easily accessible; and each new kind of monument also changed and transformed the site. Perhaps it was this transience and innovation which made the site commemorative; it would be as much in the construction of a monument, as in visiting a complete monument, that people might engage with their past. It was therefore the act of *transforming* a place, rather than lithifying memory in a physical monumental form, which is commemorative. Transforming the site would have involved engaging with the past, renegotiating it, and making links between the present place and the past; a new generation reimagining their past by building a new monument.

The reasons for, and outcomes of, this commemoration might also have changed over time. At Forteviot, as at other henge sites, the enclosure of space becomes an increasingly prominent aspect of how these sites are defined over time. Henges have a distinctive architecture with an external bank and internal ditch. Warner (2000) has suggested that Iron Age hengiform monuments in Ireland, which share this arrangement, may have been intended to contain, and defend against, places which were considered magical, dangerous or 'otherworldly'. Gordon Barclay (2005, 89ff.) has suggested that henges might therefore also have been intended to contain a threat. Similarly, this has led Alex Gibson to put forward the idea that henges might have functioned as 'ghost traps', and that, by enclosing sites of earlier activity, henges were intended not only to enclose, but also to *contain* (Gibson 2008).

Whether henge earthworks could have kept such dangerous forces at bay or not, they would have

served as an unambiguous demarcation of the space inside. In this sense, the aspect of commemoration or memory is also important. As Julian Thomas (2010, 11) writes, 'The digging of henge ditches did not so much erase their contents as establish a distance between them and the lived landscape'. Commemorating these places by building new monuments was therefore a way to remember, and to control and contain, a powerful place. This might not have been so much a desire to establish a physical distance, rather henges might have been intended to separate things from the present-day: to create a temporal distance between the lived-in world, and the things enclosed by the henge. As places which built on and referred to the past, which reused already 'ancient' sites, these monuments were places which referred to timescales other than those of the day-to-day rhythms and routines of life. They keyed into timescales beyond the quotidian and even seasonal, to recall the activities of other generations and even of times beyond individual memory. Henges were places where *other* time(scales) were referred to: 'temporal heterotopias'. Just as Michel Foucault describes heterotopias as places which are liminal and removed from the everyday world (Foucault 1986), so henge sites might have been places which were *temporally* liminal, outside the normal flow of time. This could be understood as an outcome of their use as commemorative places, since commemoration, in making simultaneous reference

to the past, present and future, could have made these very potent places. They were powerful places, and removed from the everyday, because time and the past could be revisited and transformed. The desire to enclose and separate these sites may have been a way of controlling this power of reinterpreting the past, and of adding an aspect of mystery to it. Controlling access transforms henge sites into 'imagined landscapes' (Fig. 11.3). This is a phrase used by Laura McAtackney (2007) to describe Long Kesh/Maze prison in Northern Ireland. Although often depicted in murals, and an important part of people's consciousness, relatively few people actually had access to the prison or first-hand experience of it. This 'imagined quality', as McAtackney describes it, was an important part of the experience and perception of the prison (McAtackney 2007, 44–5). Perhaps the long-term use of a site for enclosure (by timber circles and by henges) was a way of transforming a site into an 'imagined landscape': a place where the past was contained, only to be controlled and accessed by certain people. The monument itself was highly visible and prominent in people's consciousness; the 'imagined' interior, not personally experienced or understood, kept out of sight (but certainly not out of mind) for the uninitiated.

Conclusion

At Forteviot, and perhaps also at other henges and other monuments, commemoration involved revisiting the past and engaging with ancient places; but it also involved reimagining these places, controlling and containing them, and building new monuments. Engaging with the past at henge sites was perhaps a more dynamic kind of remembering than we might readily associate with monuments as 'memorials'. Commemorating the past through the project of building monuments was perhaps also a volatile, powerful act. It involved carefully considered strategies, ways by which people marked and drew attention to the traces or sites of earlier events or monuments; or concealed and controlled access to places associated with their past. Monuments might be memorials to the past, but the past is not stable or monolithic; and neither are monuments, as people return to them and rebuild them over centuries.

Perhaps the significance of monuments such as henges lies not in the fact that they were timeless memorials to the past; but rather in their use as places of commemoration; places where deliberate effort was made not to conserve the past, but to recreate it and remember it in different ways. Such monuments were places where this reinterpretation, and

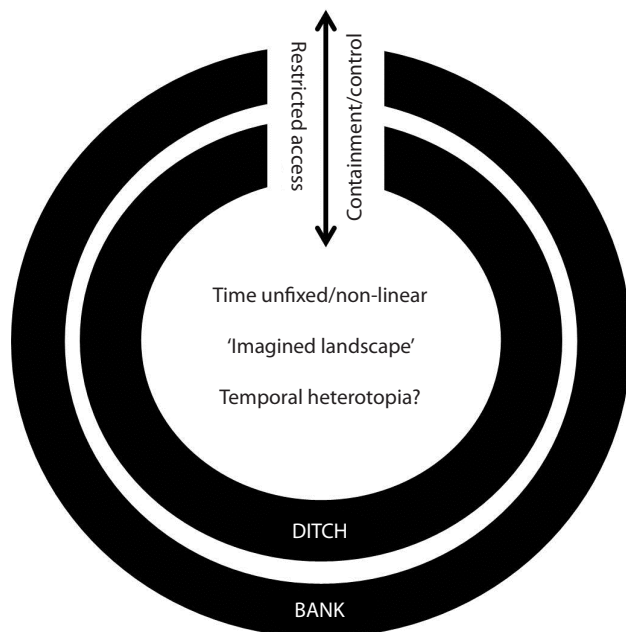


Figure 11.3. Schematic diagram showing henge monuments as temporal heterotopias.

the transformative renegotiation of memory, was contained and controlled. Memory, however, is not only rooted in place and architecture, but in lived experience, mediated through the body and the senses. Rebuilding monuments would be an important way of creating memories because the construction process would itself be memorable. Lesley McFadyen (2006) has vividly described how some Neolithic building practices would be very visceral, creating relationships both between people, and between people and materials. McFadyen (2006, 132) suggests that these relationships were memorable, and a means by which people 'actively chang[ed] their worlds'. The commemorative process of monument construction makes henges landscapes of imagination, but also landscapes of the reimagination of the past. Commemoration can be seen as a creative strategy by which certain people

or versions of events are remembered, while others are forgotten; the creation of monuments is one facet of this, and a means by which we can consider the mutability and contingency of interpretations of the past, in Neolithic Scotland and beyond.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to the organizers of the *Gardening Time* conference, Isabelle Vella Gregory and Simon Stoddart, for the opportunity to speak at the conference. Thanks to Louisa Campbell for feedback on the original conference paper, Kenneth Brophy for discussions on some of the ideas in this chapter, Tessa Poller for access to SERF illustrations, and Lorraine McEwan who prepared the SERF illustrations. This chapter was written during doctoral research funded by the AHRC.

Part II
Landscape time

Chapter 12

Walking across the land of the *Nuraghi*: politics of memory and movement in central-western Sardinia during the Bronze Age

Giandaniele Castangia

The *Nuraghi* of Sardinia (Fig. 12.1) (Usai this volume; Depalmas this volume) have represented a long-term landscape marker and a symbolic and mnemonic reference point for Sardinian communities. To date, archaeological research on *Nuraghi* has privileged matters of relative chronology based on pottery seriation and monument typological classifications; there is a significant gap in our knowledge of what they mean from the lack of a cultural-historical perspective.

The original use of the monuments is still a matter of debate among archaeologists, although the ‘military’ interpretation that saw them as some sort of medieval castles, very popular during the twentieth century, has recently given way to a myriad of different hypotheses – temple, poly-functional building, astronomically related structure, and so on (Usai 1995; Depalmas 2006). Moreover, archaeological research still struggles to give a specific territorial meaning to the phenomenon *Nuraghe* (Vanzetti *et al.* 2013), whose development should instead be related to the *interpretation* of a new ideology that started somewhere in Sardinia around the seventeenth century BC and eventually became a symbol to be used within traditional and ancient territorial structures in order to invigorate them.

Nuraghi were – and are – active agents in the *relationship* between human communities and their landscape. The way space is socially structured in landscapes through and by agents as the *Nuraghi* implicates the study of the relations between these elements, and the ways in which they interact with each other. In particular, I believe that a monument ‘acts’ through *visual perception* and *movement*.

As a matter of fact, beyond every cultural difference and bias, the relationship between human communities and monuments may be universally defined as *mediated throughout (visual) perception* and *experienced by movement*. Therefore, the meaning of

monuments lies in the primary investigation of these relationships, and of the way they changed through time – as part of an historical process, in which many actors are involved: people, other things, natural features or processes and so on. In these processes, the construction of memory and place play their part.

To investigate the role of *Nuraghi* as active agents in the landscape of Sinis, I have used GIS technology to analyse both visual perception and movement, simulating past situations in relation to *Nuraghi*, to reconstruct the prehistoric landscape and the role of monuments in it. In this analysis, my two questions were: 1) ‘what is visible from *Nuraghi*, in terms of monuments and territory?’; and 2) ‘were *Nuraghi* located specifically close to artificial or natural routes which were already established in the landscape?’

In the following paragraphs, I shall illustrate first the archaeological monumental sample, then describe the GIS analysis and present the results.

Bronze Age evidence in the Sinis region

The Sinis region is a flat coastal area (Fig. 12.2), a wide peninsula of 220 sq. km, located in central-western Sardinia. It represents a geographical and historical macro-unit, a closed landscape context with an internal homogeneity. It is enclosed by clear natural boundaries: the Sardinian Sea to the north, west and south, a series of salt lakes and lagoons to the east, and the dune desert of Is Arenas to the northeast. It is mainly flat, and is very rich in humid environments and salt lakes, from which salt has been extracted since at least the Roman period.

Some 98 *Nuraghi* have been identified in this territory (Fig. 12.3): 24 simple (single-towered), 41 complex (multi-towered and/or connected with courtyards), 28 unfinished monuments (called *nuracheddus*, which means ‘little *Nuraghi*’ because of their small size) and



Figure 12.1. Nuraghe *Losa of Abbasanta*, one the best-preserved and excavated towers.



Figure 12.2. *Sinis landscape, Sardinia.*

five destroyed examples (Sebis 1998; Tore & Stiglitz 1987; Usai 2014). The monuments belong to two main territorial clusters, a northern one around the lake of Sa 'e Proccus and a southern one located between the lake of Mar'e Pontis and the sea. All of them have been built using local stone – sandstone and limestone in the northern area, sandstone on the coast, basalt and some sandstone in the southern area). No *Nuraghe* has been excavated so far.

Sixty Bronze/Early Iron Age settlements have been recorded in the region (Sebis 1998; Usai 2014). Two of them have been partially excavated – Su Murru Mannu and Conc' Ailloni – and the rest are known from surface collections of pottery and a typical lithic industry. Their occupation began during the Middle Bronze Age (seventeenth to fifteenth centuries BC), yet the number of settlements increased between the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age (tenth to ninth centuries BC): 47 settlements were occupied before the Iron Age. Some 32 settlements are associated with a nuragic tower, 28 of them are not.

Three 'giants' tombs – the typical nuragic monumental burials – have been identified in Sinis, and they can be dated to the Middle/Recent Bronze Age phases (seventeenth to thirteenth centuries BC). Furthermore, some bones from Neolithic rock-cut tombs (Is Aruttas) have recently been dated to the Recent Bronze Age (Lai *et al.* 2013), which means that, in funerary contexts, old tombs may have been reutilized. In Sinis, sandstone outcrops have always been associated with burials since the Neolithic, and this tradition was still alive during the Bronze Age, for only one of the three giants' tombs was built using basalt (tomb of Matta Tramontis). The *Nuraghi* are usually located at some distance from these funerary areas: the nearest one – unfinished – is 265 m away from the nearest tomb (*Nuraghe* Riu Urchi), but in the other cases the distance is more than 300 m.

GIS analysis

I used ArcGIS v. 10.4 software to perform two analyses on the Sinis Bronze Age landscape: *cumulative viewshed analysis* and *least cost-path analysis*. As said, the aim was to investigate relations of perception and movement between *Nuraghi* and the rest of the landscape, in terms of both monuments and territory. As a raster base for the calculations, I used the official DTM available on the official web geo-repository of the Sardinian Region (www.sardegnageoportale.it), obtained from both contours and a number of official elevation points collected all around the island's territory by the regional administration, with a horizontal resolution of 10 m and a vertical resolution of 1 m.

Table 12.1. *Cumulative viewshed analysis results (in number of Nuraghi).*

Site categories	Visible from n. of <i>Nuraghi</i> (absolute mean)	Visible from n. of <i>Nuraghi</i> (percent mean)
All sites	11	16%
Cultural sites	7	10%
<i>Nuraghi</i> (no nuracheddus)	11	16%
<i>Nuraghi</i> (with nuracheddus)	11	16%
Settlements (no <i>Nuraghi</i>)	9	13%
Settlements (with <i>Nuraghi</i>)	10	14%
Prenuragic funerary	7	10%
Nuragic funerary (with EIA)	7	10%
Nuragic funerary (Bronze)	8	11%

Cumulative viewshed analysis (Wheatley 1995) reveals spatially perceptive relations: it shows the general level of inter-visibility in the whole area through an algebraic sum of two or more binary single viewshed maps. To perform the analysis, I used the VISIBILITY tool provided in the software ArcGIS v. 10.4. As observer points, I simulated the view of a person with a height of 1.6 m (value obtained considering both male and female Bronze Age average heights and calculating the average value of those – Germanà 1995) standing on the hypothetical terraces (10 m) of 70 towers (*nuracheddus* have been excluded from the calculation). It means that the observation point was set at exactly 11.6 m above ground level. The maximum radius of the observation was set at 3 km. I did not consider vegetation cover, because of the lack of data.

The output of this analysis consists of a raster layer (Fig. 12.4), from which I have extracted the visibility values for every site, *Nuraghe*, settlement and funerary spot. Finally, I calculated the percentage of *Nuraghi* from which every site per category was visible (Table 12.1).

First, these values show a great level of inter-visibility between monuments in the area. Every monument is visible from an average of 11 *Nuraghi* (16 per cent). *Nuraghi* are the most visible typology of monument from other towers (as widely expected), with every one of them visible again from an average of 11 towers (16 per cent), followed by settlements (even if not associated with a tower) and funerary monuments, especially the ones dated to Bronze Age phases. Furthermore, the graphical results of the

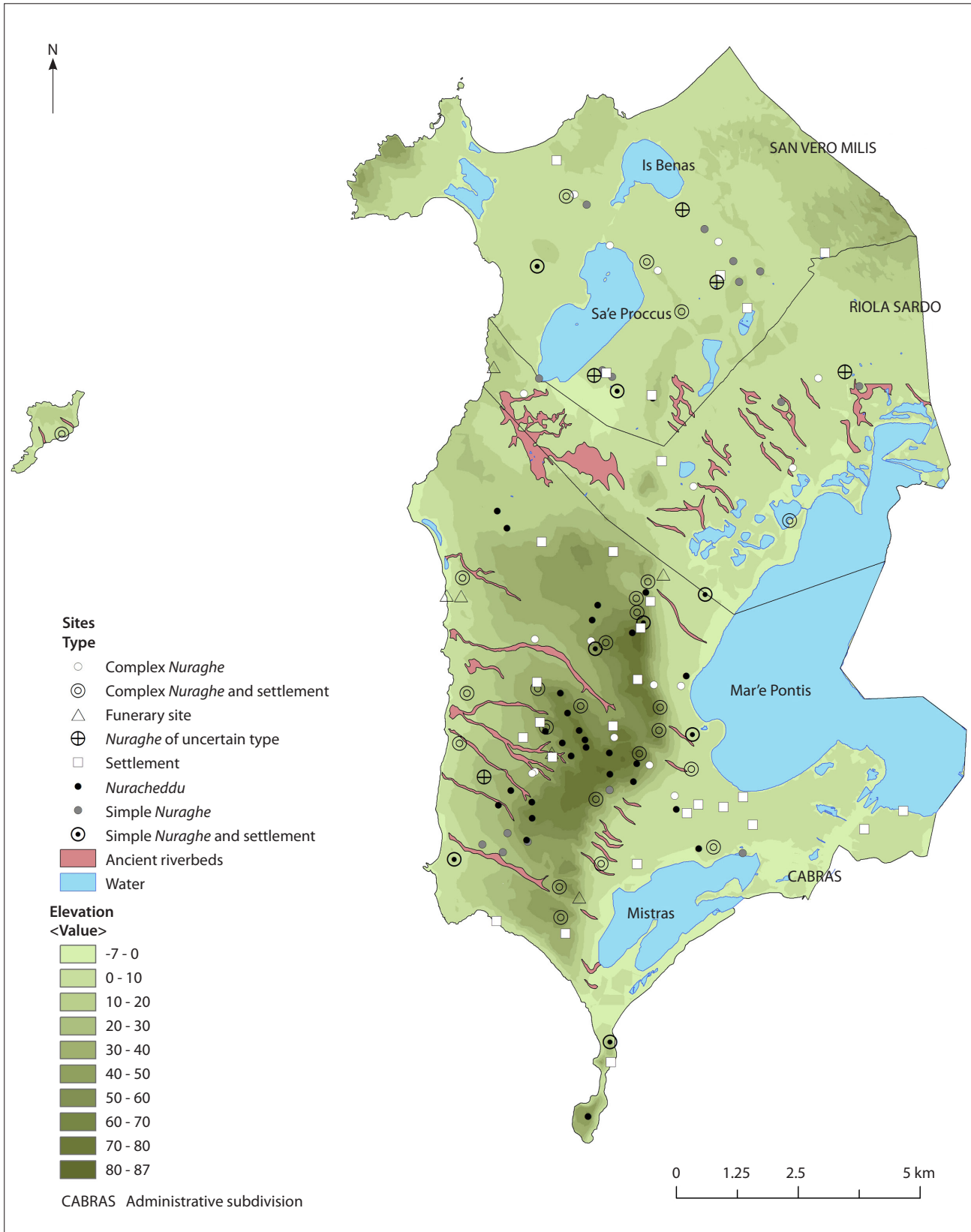


Figure 12.3. Nuragic sites in Sinis.

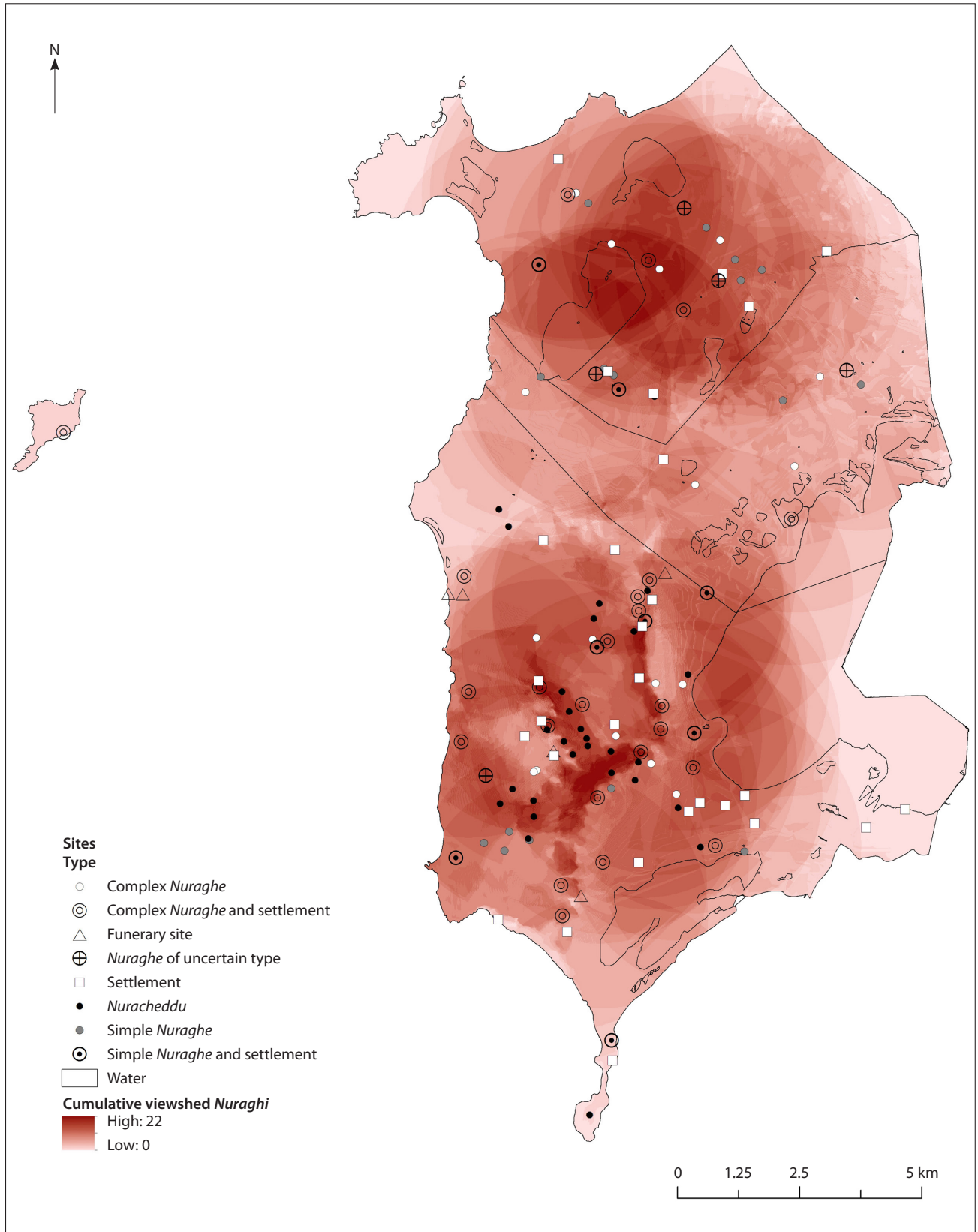


Figure 12.4. Cumulative viewshed analysis results – darker areas indicate higher inter-visibility

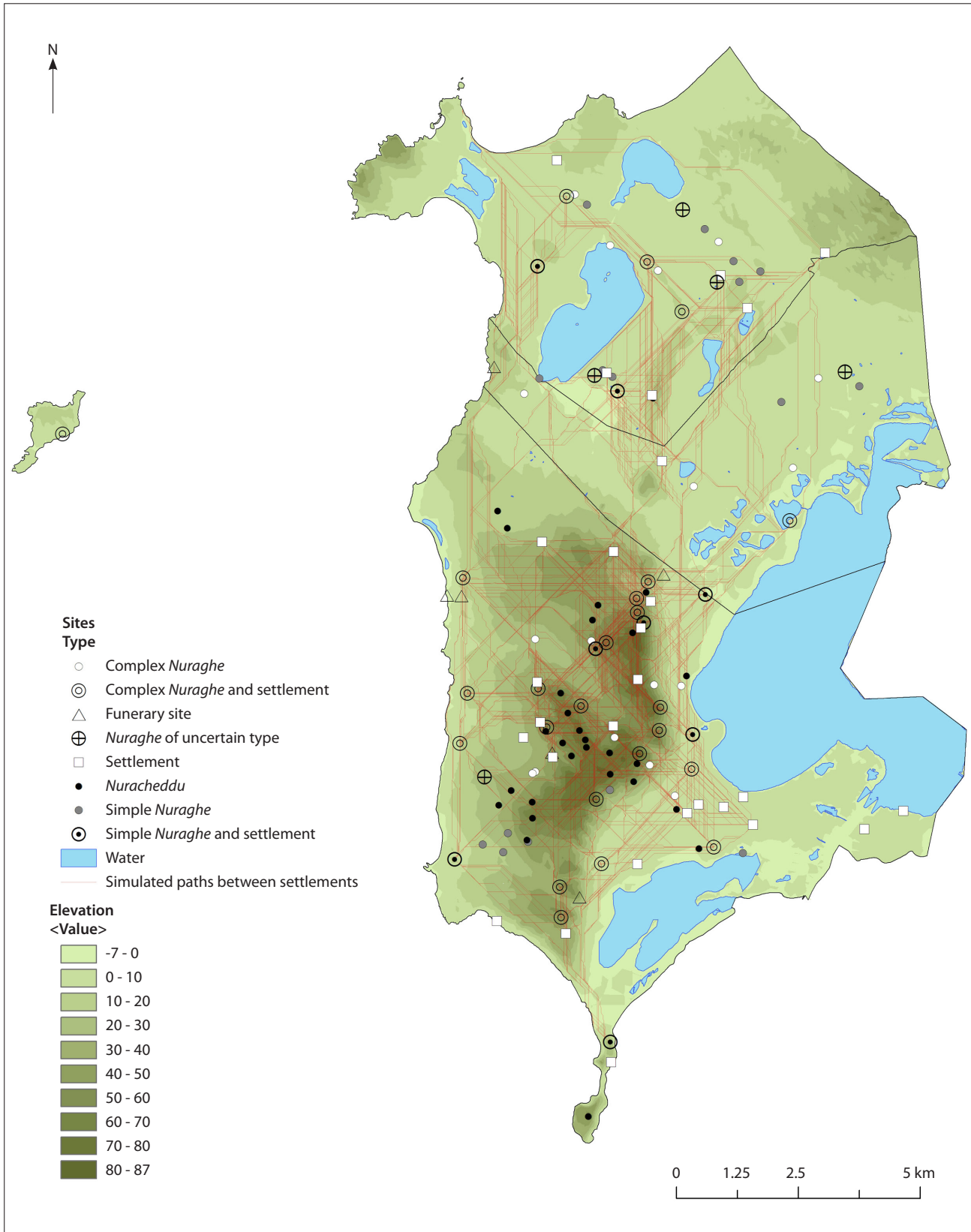


Figure 12.5. Cost-path analysis results.

simulation indicate that the higher inter-visibility areas on the ground (darker in Fig. 12.4) are located in close correspondence to the two main territorial groups of monuments, precisely looking towards the interior of the two territorial groups. Finally, they seem to highlight the main natural routes that allow movement from the lakes to the coast and back again.

The cost-path analysis reveals spatial dynamic relations: it investigates the relationship between the *Nuraghi* and the potential preferential routes that human actors created and travelled across, in the region, to carry out their daily activities, in particular those between settlements. Least-cost paths are intended to be ‘generic relative least cost evaluations’ (Howey 2007, 1837), so they represent the best routes in terms of efficiency, given the parameters used to create a specific cost surface – which in my case have been geology, slope and water. Holocene alluvial deposits in the region, indicating rivers and ponds nowadays disappeared, were considered as actual watercourses in the period the *Nuraghi* were built.

To perform the analysis, I used the tool COST PATH. I considered all settlements associated or not with a nuragic tower, except for those that started during the Iron Age, as sources – meaning that every one of them was considered as the destination of a number of paths starting from every other settlement. At this point, I created ten ‘random *Nuraghi*’ map layers, based on the average data on elevation and distance from water of the actual sample of *Nuraghi* of the area, to be used as a comparison with the actual monuments, in order to understand whether the results on the relationships between *Nuraghi* and paths can be interpreted as structured. Euclidean (linear) distance was then calculated for every monument. The following values were obtained from the data resulting from

these operations: Minimum value, Maximum value, Mean value, Standard Deviation. The final results are reported in Table 12.2.

The paths resulting from the simulation (Fig. 12.5) are closer to the actual *Nuraghi* than they are to the simulated examples: maximum distance is one third, mean distance is almost the half, and standard deviation circa one third. This indicates that *Nuraghi* had a close relationship with natural routes between settlements, some of them probably in use before the erection of the first monuments.

Concluding remarks

The analysis of relations of visual perception and movement seems to show a couple of interesting facts about *Nuraghi* in the region of Sinis: (1) visual perception from the towers was ‘directed’ towards specific points in landscape, which represented a symbolic connection to the land for the surrounding communities, and (2) the *Nuraghi* were also strictly related to movement across the landscape, following natural routes and paths that in some cases were there before their erection. We can also argue that the results of both the analyses illustrated and discussed in this chapter seem therefore to indicate that *Nuraghi* clearly had a strong territorial value in terms of placement, related more to close than long distances.

In particular, the analysis of visibility patterns from the terrace of *Nuraghi* seems to suggest that, from a visual point of view, they were highly connected to the landscape they were part of, in terms of settlements, monumental evidence and land, and that the focus of such visual connections was directed towards the internal space of every territorial group of towers. Visual control of internal areas, instead of boundaries, could indicate that defence – or ostentation towards the stranger – was not the first concern of these communities, which were probably more engaged instead in some sort of ‘identity narrative’.

The calculation of least-cost paths between Bronze Age settlements also indicates that the *Nuraghi* were built upon a specific pattern of movement that was – at least in part – already established in the region before their erection, and follows natural routes within the landscape. The presence of towers along *traditional* routes contributed solid reference points in the Sinis landscape, where these monuments seem to occupy and highlight places that were part of a former solid social and physical network, into which a new ideology created the need for monumentality and ostentation.

This situation can be compared to some patterns recently highlighted on Rapa Nui, where several Moai that were thought to have been abandoned

Table 12.2. Cost-path analysis results (in metres).

Sample layer	Min	Max	Mean	ST Dev
Random 1	0.9	1935.7	139.7	359.4
Random 2	0.4	8563.8	268.7	1066.4
Random 3	0.5	9063.8	328.2	1141.1
Random 4	0.3	2057.0	228.8	440.3
Random 5	0.7	826.2	110.3	147.4
Random 6	0.4	1431.0	149.3	301.9
Random 7	1.5	1745.3	131.4	292.7
Random 8	1.3	8744.2	289.4	1081.5
Random 9	0.8	1813.4	148.9	279.3
Random 10	1.3	8893.8	439.4	1473.8
Random AVE	0.8	4507.4	223.4	658.4
Real <i>Nuraghi</i>	0.8	1589.8	124.1	252.6

in the middle of nowhere have been shown to be placed precisely on traditional paths and boundaries instead (Shepardson 2005). The analogy lies in the fact that, in terms of investigating the territorial value of

monuments, the relationship with paths of movement in the landscape – rarely considered in Sardinian pre-history – could reveal new relevant insights on matters of meaning and function.

Chapter 13

Memory as a social force: transformation, innovation and refoundation in protohistoric Sardinia

Anna Depalmas

The protohistoric phase in Sardinia is noteworthy for the archaeological phenomenon that is usually called the ‘nuragic civilization’. As is well known, this civilization was characterized by significant architectural structures, such as the *Nuraghi*, collective tombs and cult buildings. When one considers that, at present, there are estimated to have been some 7,500 *Nuraghi* (Contu 1997, 476) (although other researchers believe that there may have been more than 8,000, Le Lannou 1941, 85; Contu 1994, 113), one can well understand why these structures have given their name to an epoch and a culture.

From the Middle Bronze Age, there was a single type of social and political organization in the whole of Sardinia, with a consequent homogeneity both in the principal architecture and in the production of cultural artefacts. Local variations from the norm only occurred for certain limited periods (Depalmas 2009a–c; Depalmas & Melis 2010).

Until a few decades ago, reconstruction of the development of the cultural phases of the Bronze and Iron Ages suffered from the lack of chronology. This was not only because of the scarcity of definite dates, but also because of the absence of greater knowledge about elements of the cultural material. Thus, it appeared for a long time that there was not enough cultural material available to help us to understand the development over time of the nuragic culture and the changes which must naturally have occurred over an arc of about a thousand years. It is, however, surprising that even in this century some of the international literature on the topic still cites out-of-date information, such as that *Nuraghi* continued to be built until the third century BC (Boardman 2008, 12)!

The archaeological data show that beginning in the Middle Bronze Age, in about the seventeenth century BC, truncated conical towers of various complexity, or, in other words, *Nuraghi*, began to be constructed, as

well as collective tombs – the so-called ‘Giant’s Tomb’s’ (Depalmas 2009a, 127–30) (Figs. 13.1, 13.3). During the long period of development of the nuragic age, or ‘*La bella età dei Nuraghi*’ as Giovanni Lilliu loved to define it (Lilliu 1988, 356), a large number of constructions of different classes, types and functions were built, using different techniques. Common denominators were the use of drystone and the prevalent monumental nature of the buildings, which can be seen both from their use of large stones and their remarkable height.

At a relatively early stage, in the Middle Bronze Age, there was widespread use of refined techniques for squaring off and smoothing the stone blocks (Depalmas 2009a, 129) (Fig. 13.3b, c). This helped to characterize the refined majestic aspects of first the funerary monuments and then later, in the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages, the cult buildings. Though the oldest *Nuraghe* are the corridor *Nuraghe* (of which there are about 350), the most common type is the *tholos Nuraghe*, whose construction began towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age and continued into the Recent Bronze Age.

Villages with circular huts also began to be constructed in the Middle Bronze Age. These usually had wooden roofs, although on rare occasions they had stone ones. They had a perimeter wall which was between 0.8 m and 1.5 m tall. They were sometimes built round the *Nuraghi*, although they can often also be found without a central *Nuraghe* (Fig. 13.2b). This process of the development and spread of the characteristic features of the nuragic civilization can be found throughout Sardinia, with no significant major differences. Overall, the elements of cultural material and the classes of the monuments are the same all over the island. Nonetheless there are accentuated differences in the density of monuments (Depalmas & Melis 2010, 180–1). One must remember that there are great differences in the geology, geomorphology and

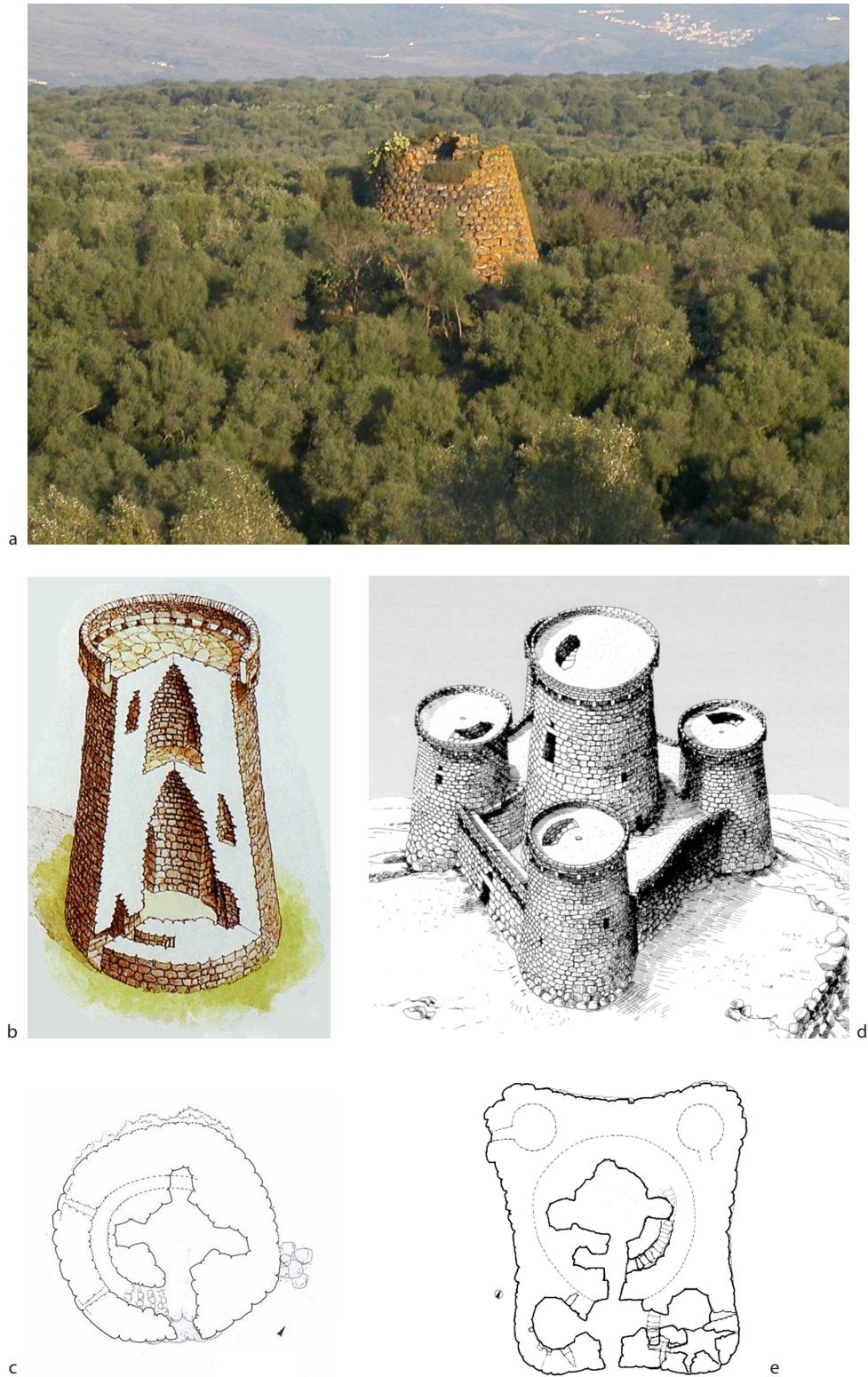


Figure 13.1. *The single tower tholos Nuraghe of Crabia – Paulilatino (a); an idealized section of a single tower two-storey tholos Nuraghe (b); plan of single tower Nuraghe Solene – Macomer (c); an idealized reconstruction (d) of complex four towers tholos Nuraghe and plan of Nuraghe Santa Barbara – Macomer (e) (after Tanda 1990; Moravetti 1998a).*

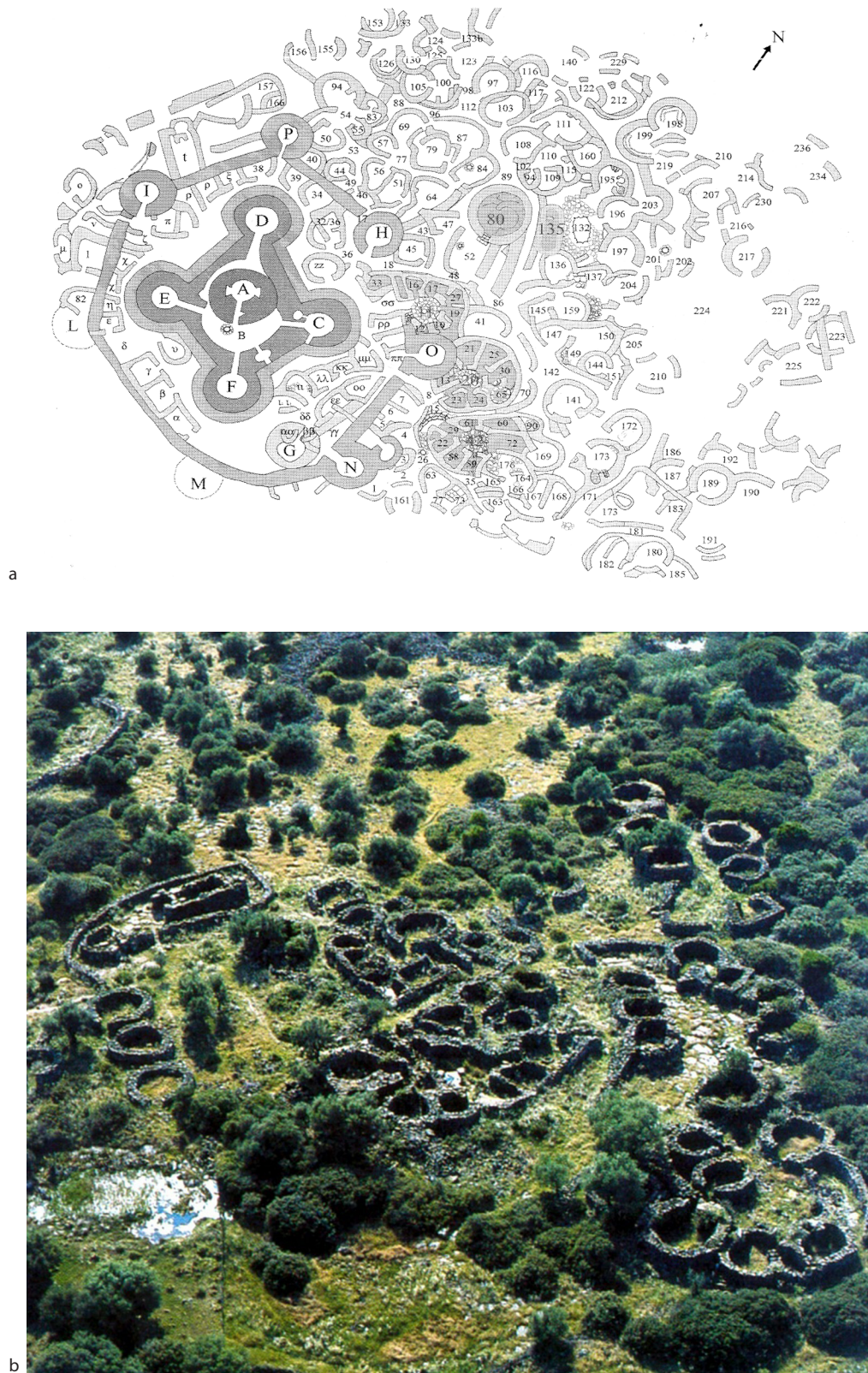


Figure 13.2. Plan of village Su Nuraxi di Barumini (a); the Nuraghe village huts of Serra Orrios-Dorgali (b) (after Mibac-Progetto Mirabilia; Moravetti 1998b).

soil profiles in different parts of Sardinia, and it seems that the nuragic people were in some ways connected to the physical characteristics of the particular areas.

As previously stated, it is now clear that the characteristics of the *Nuraghi* changed substantially in the Final Bronze Age (1150–950 BC). At present, there is discussion about whether ‘nuragic age’ should be also used for the period of the Final Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, i.e. after the time span when the *Nuraghi* were constructed. The persistent use of this definition – which has its origins in the classification proposed by Lilliu (1982, 12–13) – may, however, lead to misunderstandings on the part of those who ignore the changes in nuragic society, and therefore I believe that a chronological extension of the definition is wrong. It would be better to use for the Final Bronze Age and the Iron Ages the respective names of the Final Bronze Age of Sardinia and the Early Sardinian Iron Age. The progressive weakening of the settlements that used the *Nuraghi* as a reference point reflected a true change in the society, as can be seen from the simultaneous renovation and consolidation of the hut villages, including those that were far distant from the *Nuraghe*.

The houses of the Final Bronze Age and Early Iron Age were both circular and of other shapes, with entrances through a connecting central courtyard, so that the buildings formed a compound (Fig. 13.2). In the villages, there was also a large circular hut with seats around the interior, which is called ‘the meeting hut’ (Fig. 13.4e). Sometimes there was also a perimeter wall around the village. In the Final Bronze Age, villages often developed around the *Nuraghe*, sometimes overlapping the ruined walls or invading the courtyard and reusing stones which had fallen from the upper parts of the towers, and thus creating living spaces on top of the ruins (Depalmas 2009c, 147–9). At Nuracraba–Oristano a phase of abandonment after the Recent Bronze Age is well documented; the site was reoccupied in the Iron Age (Sebis 2008, 493–4). There are not enough data available to state whether or not this phenomenon occurred in other parts of the island.

In spite of these changes, *Nuraghi* remained the main structures on the island and although there was probably no intensive maintenance of the buildings, they continued to be used, and the internal areas of the various *Nuraghi* were adapted for the new lifestyles and had different functions, such as stores for resources or as shrines or votive altars, often inside the courtyards of the *Nuraghi*. Thus, the *Nuraghe* became of importance for the cults while still maintaining their social function.

The continuity of occupation in various cases can easily be interpreted as evidence of the presumed

incorporation of the *Nuraghe* into the property ownership of the emerging oligarchical classes. Additionally, there is increasing evidence of how strongly the new society which developed among the ‘ruins’ of the *Nuraghe* was firmly rooted in the past. Thus, one notes in the pottery artefacts that while there were numerous innovations in form and technology, there were also many which clearly belonged to the Recent Bronze Age, albeit with different proportions and of different types. These traditional forms can be found in different contexts which will be presented in turn: funerary, religious ceremonial and iconographic.

The funerary context

Religious sites during the phases of the ‘nuragic civilization’ (Middle and Recent Bronze Age) seem to coincide with those reserved for burial rituals and for ancestor worship, as is suggested by the erection of symbolic standing stones. The *exedra* of the tombs were the spaces where offerings were left and where the communal ceremonies took place. In common with the *Nuraghi*, new Giants’ Tombs were not constructed in the Final Bronze Age, but rather reused, and their continued use is well documented. Apart from significant burials in the tombs of their ancestors, another element of continuity can be seen in the construction of corridor tombs with rows of squared stones. These are either on the surface, as at Motrox ‘e Bois in Usellus, half-buried as at Su Fraigu in San Sperate or covered by tumuli as at Brunku Espis in Arbus, following a custom which had already been partly adopted in the Recent Bronze Age (Depalmas 2009c, 148). Inside the tombs, there is also evidence of deposits of a material which was closely connected with the past. Flakes of obsidian, sometimes retouched and sometimes not, have been found at Motrox ‘e Bois and at Su Fraigu. Such artefacts have also been found in the oldest Giants’ Tombs, from the start of the Middle Bronze Age. Particularly indicative of the sense of links with the past is the use of the artificial neolithic rock-cut tombs. These are found all over the island and are called ‘domus de janas’.

Even during the initial phase of the nuragic period, when the first Giants’ Tombs were constructed, these hypogea continued to be used as tombs, as well as excavated following new plans and with significant hybrid additions. An example of this can be found in the province of Sassari, where a stele is carved on the facade of the rocks of the entrance (Melis 2010) (Fig. 13.3a).

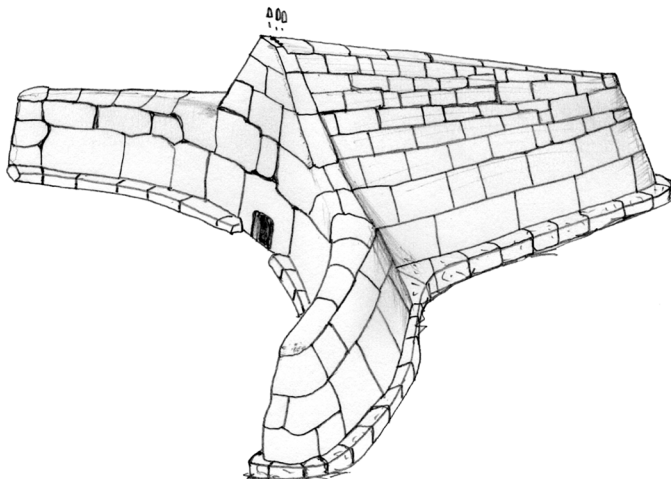
Later, there is evidence of other links with the past. One significant example of this can be seen in Sedilo. Here, in the partly ruined cell of the rock-cut



a



b

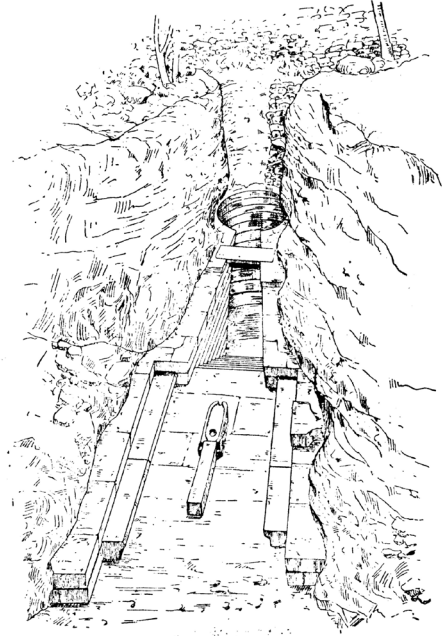


c

Figure 13.3. Nuragic rock-cut tomb of Molafà – Sassari (a); Giant’s Tomb of Iloi (Sedilo) (b); Giant’s Tombs: reconstructions of Middle Bronze Age type (c); (after Atzeni et al. 1981; Tanda 2003).



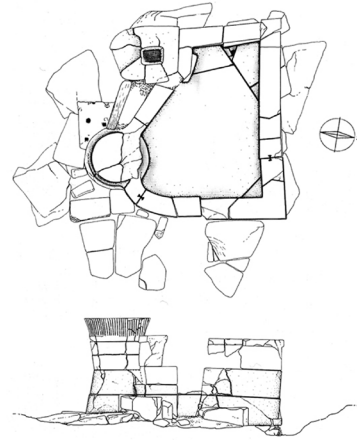
a



b



c



d



e



f

Figure 13.4. Sacred spring of Su Tempiesu – Orune (a), sacred well of Predio Canopolo – Perfugas (SS) (b); model Nuraghe reproduced on altar in S'Arcu 'e is Forros – Villagrande Strisaili (c) and Su Monte – Sorradile (d); hut (e) with central Nuraghe model (f) in Palmavera – Alghero (after Fadda 1988; Santoni 1985; Fadda 2011; Santoni & Bacco 2008; Moravetti 1992).

tomb 2 of Iloi-Ispiluncas, a small stone cist was constructed between the Final Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. Inside the cist, there was a carinated bowl with burnt vegetal remains. The most plausible explanation for this seems to be that it was part of a ritual connected with the burial of the ancestors of one of the groups (or one part of a group) of the area's inhabitants, perhaps from the village of Iloi which lies above it (Depalmas 2000, 23, 26, 73, 185).

The religious and ceremonial context

The strong uniformity of the post-nuragic culture (i.e. Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages), despite its wide area of coverage throughout the island and the new modes of settlement of the population, suggests that there were centres of political and religious coordination. These may have been linked with large cult complexes, which by this interpretation are also defined as federal sites (Lilliu 1982, 175–6). Examples of these are Gremanu in Fonni, Sa Sedda 'e Sos Carros in Oliena, and Funtana Coberta in Ballao. The changes made in the Late Bronze Age seem to indicate that the full development of the sanctuaries began in the Final Bronze Age and continued particularly into the Early Iron Age (Depalmas 2009c, 148; Ialongo 2010, 349).

In the new structuring of the landscape, where villages occupied the most important role, communal cult structures seem to have become of particular importance (Depalmas 2005a, 41). These took the form of sacred wells (Fig. 13.4b), springs (Fig. 13.4a), rectangular structures such as 'megaron temples', and structures with right angled or circular walls, although places dedicated to cult have also been found inside the villages and *Nuraghi*. Dwellings grew up around the temples, and these seem either to have been of a temporary nature or at least to have had close links with the celebration of the communal festivities.

In the Middle and Recent Bronze Ages, the sacred architecture did not appear to be well defined, even though there are notable finds from this period of rectangular buildings which may be identified – albeit with caution – as cult structures (such as *megaron* temples), and also of sacred springs and wells. A constant element is the presence of older finds – dating at least from the Recent Bronze Age – in and around the cult complexes and sanctuaries (Ialongo 2010, 349). In some cases – such as the well temple of Cuccuru is Arrius – there is some doubt as to whether the older material which was found next to the building from the Final Bronze or Early Iron Age was really part of an earlier cult building from the Recent Bronze Age (Sebis 1982). In many other cases, finds of older ceramic fragments may be the result of the area being used

before the building was constructed. The position of the sacred monumental complexes could have been determined by the pre-existent holiness of the *topos*, which in many cases were found near springs or water sources. It would, indeed, be too simple to argue that the springs were considered places suitable for cult ceremonies only from the Final Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, when the temples were constructed.

Stone models of *Nuraghe* are often found inside the *sacellum* of the so-called 'megaron temples' and also in the circular structures with perimeter benches, as well as in other spaces used for communal and ceremonial activities (Fig. 13.4e, f). These stone models may depict either simple *Nuraghe* or complex ones, with four peripheral towers added, ending with a small towering cupola and a protruding balcony that forms a terrace (Webster 1996, 190, fig. 78) (Fig. 13.5, b). These models are of particular importance for archaeologists as no surviving *Nuraghi* have complete upper storeys. Sometimes the model is at the centre of a pedestal in the centre of the complex, and this strongly indicates how this element was the fulcrum of, and the reason for, the building where it was found (Fig. 13.4e). In other cases, the model *Nuraghe* form part of functional objects, such as basins which contained liquids, or altars (Fig. 13.4c, d).

Apart from similar small bronze models, the towers of the *Nuraghe* are also reproduced as a logo or icon in other bronze figurines, in boats (on the handrails, the masts and the fore peaks) (Fig. 13.5f), on the buttons of clothes (as in Abini, Palmavera and Furtei) or also on utensils of different materials such as the soapstone smoothing tool found at *Nuraghe Santu Antine* in Torralba (Contu 1997, tav. CXLVII). The *Nuraghi* are also used to decorate clay objects such as standing lanterns or cylindrical vases and amphoras (Leonelli 2005, 51, 60–3, 117–21).

These cult objects in communal spaces are clearly connected to the celebratory and ritualistic practices, and show that at the period after to their building one, the *Nuraghi*, *albeit no longer under active construction*, were large structures with great importance as totems of identity, and testimony to the great work achieved by the ancestors of the existing population.

The importance of the images is clear from their recurrent association with furnishings and functional cult elements such as vases, altars and lamps. They are an indication of the primary role assumed by the elite in managing and controlling the religious and cult environment. One example, made of sandy limestone, was found inside a hoard in the back of the temple of S'Arcu 'e Is Forros in Villagrande Strisaili. It was of medium size and seems to have been used for placing offerings, as the upper part had seven elliptical holes

which contained traces of lead, which are signs that they were used for inserting offerings (Fadda 2011).

The *Nuraghi* are the most evident elements of the built environment, and allude to the grandeur of the past, which the new society chose to exalt to reinforce the power of the dominant group and to legitimize their presence in the area, in the wake of past glories. The repetitive and excessive use of the representations is clear testimony to the centrality which the exaltation and cult of the *Nuraghe* had assumed for the people of the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages. They had become a fundamental part of their own identity.

Iconographic information

The bronze figurines are clear signs of how much the elite celebrated their own power.

As is well known, these are products of high artistic and historical value, and they reproduce, in miniature, women, men, animals and objects of ordinary life (Lilliu 1966). Attention is undoubtedly focused on human figures and they provide a detailed iconographic archive of the types, roles, clothing and attitudes of the society that the Sardinian craftsmen wished to represent. They were presumably produced precisely for use as offerings or as part of the cult.

The offerings of bronze figures are almost exclusively found in cult buildings, although some are found as burial offerings in buildings used for community purposes.

The most important finds are from near sacred springs and wells, and were placed inside sacred areas, usually without surrounding walls, connected to a meeting place with one or more fences, and to a settlement. In general, the offerings are found inside buildings, thus at the bottom of wells or inside the stone basins of the springs, or otherwise left in a hoard dug out of the earth inside the perimeter wall which surrounded the space around the temple. The bronzes were also placed, although less frequently, in other cult buildings. Such offerings have also been found in the rectangular temples, the so-called 'megaron', and near certain circular *sacella*, which in recent years have been called 'rotunda'.

Nuragic sculptures were originally – in the Bronze Age – aniconic and developed their realism in later periods, although this did not mean that the associated symbolic elements were eliminated. This corresponded with the profound changes in the wealth of the society. An intended manipulation of collective reality through image can be detected. This was achieved by the proposing or imposing of symbols with strong ideological connections to the thinking of the dominant hegemonic group in society. The

development of the use of human forms in bronze sculptures was the fruit of the development of the social dynamics inside proto-Sardinian society and was an idealistic representation of it.

These developments seem to have proceeded in tandem with the 'aristocratization' of the social structure. The human representations can be seen as typical expressions of a new epoch, signifying the exclusive hegemony of certain families or family groups, who were the custodians of political and religious power. The ostentatious emblems and symbols of military power seem to have been typical of and exclusive to the warrior elite, with the characteristic images showing the rank and the social roles of the persons in the sculptures (Fig. 13.5e).

One may note that the typical dress was probably used for ceremonial events. An example of this is the long horns on the helmets of the archers, which were probably parade helmets. The particularly elaborate armour, which would probably have been of little practical use on the battlefield, employed in typically ritualistic contexts, emphasizes the symbolic importance of the images. One must not forget in this context Mont'e Prama in Cabras which was clearly a celebration of the power and force of the elite. It consists of 27 sandstone figures which are more than 2.5 m high (lastly Minoia & Usai 2011; Bedini, Tronchetti, Ugas & Zucca 2012). The group consists of archers and boxers (Fig. 13.5a). The designs follow the same scheme as those of the bronze figures and seem to be intended to copy almost precisely the same iconography.

The warriors were found in association with the stone models of sometimes single tower but usually complex *Nuraghi*, some thirteen of which have been reconstructed but many of which are still in fragments (Fig. 13.5b). They seem to have been designed to convey an explicit message of the connections between the two. Lilliu proposed an overall interpretation of all the memorial monuments as a kind of Sardinian saga, in which the human sculptures would have been a representation of heroic godlike ancestors from the past, in a pan-Sardinian 'national' sanctuary: in other words using the language of sculpture to give the ancestor theme a sacred, epic and heroic dimension (Lilliu 1982, 201–2; 1988, 549). The images of the boxers have been seen as related to the athletes who took part in games connected to the cult or to burials, from a perspective which saw the antagonistic attitudes of the boxers as being closely related to religious action.

The commissioners of Mont'e Prama might have been members of a family or group of aristocratic families, who alluded to their ethnic and cultural importance through the particular arrangement of the necropolis, the presence of symbols (the models



Figure 13.5. Stone statue of boxer (a) and complex Nuraghe model (b) from Mont'e Prama; bronze female figure from Santa Vittoria-Serri (c); stool – tintinnabulum from Ponte Rotto – Cavalupo (Vulci) (d); bronze warrior from Senorbì (e); bronze boat model from Pipitzu – Orroli (f) (after Minoia & Usai 2011; Lilliu 1966; Atzeni et al. 1981; Depalmas 2005).

of *Nuraghi*), the ostentatious exaltation of religiosity and the warrior values of the group, and thus at the same time emphasized their deeply rooted ascendancy within the area. The role of the *ghenos*, evoked through the military values in the representations of the warrior ancestors, in association with the burial of high-born people, legitimized a new form of social supremacy.

The conspicuous presence of archers at Mont 'e Prama is a reminder that this was a specifically aristocratic activity. The bow could also, without great difficulty, be connected to hunting, which might have also had a celebratory or symbolic value and have been a reserved activity, open only to members of elite families, at least for certain prey such as large animals. Hunting scenes are also well documented in the bronzes, for example on the little buttons showing deer hunting from the Cuccurada *Nuraghe* in Mogoro (Atzeni *et al.* 2005, 227–31, 270) and in the hunter from Esterzili (Fadda 2006, 73). In particular, there is the theory that the domestic and wild animals on the Meana boat, but also and more particularly on the Vetulonia boat, are representative of hunting scenes – perhaps mythologized – in which hounds worry the throat of the bust of a deer and are seen attacking a hedgehog, a weasel and a wild boar (Lo Schiavo & Manconi 2001). It could take between five and ten years to make a composite bow in laminated wood and horn because of the seasoning time necessary. Great handicraft skills were necessary for this work, and they would have been very expensive (Drews 1993, 110). Such weapons would not have been available for everybody to own or use. The statues of Mont 'e Prama hold quadrilateral shaped composite bows in their fists (Lilliu 1978, 132–3). The ostentatious display of the weapons may be an indication that they were symbols of wealth and prestige and were status symbols.

The bronzes also include figures of warriors who are different from the canonic images. These seem to belong to a mythical or fantastic world but may also have been magical offerings. They seem to symbolize, through the multiplication of the physical attributes of the figures and the instruments that they held, the potential force and power of the subjects. An example of this is the well-known warrior with four arms and four eyes from the sanctuary of Abini in Teti and other similar statues with multiple anatomical parts – such as arms or eyes – with also other additions like swords and shields (Lilliu 1966, n. 104). Here, more than in other cases, one is certainly dealing with figures which portrayed a precise message which may have been intended to evoke an image of force and power which transcended reality and referred to a mythical cosmology whose themes and

protagonists are unknown to us. Figures such as that of the 'Minotaur' of Nule, which is incorrectly described as half man and half bull, may also belong to the same mythical and fantastic world. The figure has the head and raised arms of a man and an animal's body with four hooves and a curved tail. The interpretation of the figure as being that of a man dressed in a ritual animal costume would not be in conflict with other archaeological finds which have indicated that the Sardinian protohistoric culture included a complex magical and religious heritage (Depalmas 2012, 5).

It is worth recalling that there are strong links to the prehistoric pictorial traditions of Sardinia in these images of men combined with animals and especially bulls. Figures with horns (presumably shamans) are also found in images from the Neolithic (Melis 1998) and Chalcolithic periods. It has been suggested that by masquerading as animals in a ritual context, the men were mystically and momentarily transformed into animals and they assumed their powers, thus changing the existing reality (Aldhouse-Green 2004, 168–9).

If the masquerade had a totemic value for the clan, the ritual of transformation may have been connected to the elaboration of a possible 'foundation myth' for the group. The specific masquerade rituals and ceremonies could have formed part of the cult practices which, without doubt, took place in the temples and sanctuaries. These were the places in which the bronzes were kept and where they were left. It is significant that echoes of the ritual practices in which men dress as animals can still be found in various masquerades in the folklore of Sardinia such as in the Merdules of Ottana, the Mamuthones of Mamoiada or the Corriolos of Neoneli.

The emphasis on mythological episodes linked to a common past may have been part of the ideology of the dominant group, who, by recounting the efforts and history of their ancestors, promoted their own prestige and strengthened the whole community. Our interpretations are limited by the lack of data, but images like that of the figure from Cann'e Fadosu (Ugas 1985, 222, n.15), where a man is shown climbing a *Nuraghe*, may represent an episode from a battle. Other protagonists in the mythical narrative may be the monkey on the Golgo boat or the snakes on both the bronzes (in the bestiary of the Vetulonia boat) (Depalmas 2005b, 141) and in the decorations of clay objects. The well-known 'mother' seated on a circular five-legged stool who holds on her lap either an adult or a baby (Fig. 13.5c) may also be the commemoration of a myth or a celebratory story which formed part of the narrative heritage of the Sardinian people. The fact that the same type of stool can also be found in stone in the meeting huts (e.g. at Palmavera

(Moravetti 1992, 92, 108, fig. 102) and was reproduced alone in the form of a *tintinnabulum* in the Ponte Rotto – Cavalupo tomb (Arancio *et al.* 2010, 181, figs. 5,33; 7,44) (Fig. 13.5, d) indicates its great symbolic value. In all probability it was one of the symbols of prestige and power.

Conclusion

The presence of sculptures of *Nuraghi* in prominent positions, such as for example in the ‘meeting hut’ in Palmavera (Moravetti 1992, 91–103) or in space 80 in the village around Su Nuraxi di Barumini (Lilliu & Zucca 1988, 122, fig. 63), as well as the numerous examples found in spaces connected to power and religion throughout the entire island, clearly confirms how, in the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages, the *Nuraghe* had assumed great symbolic value in the society that was named after them.

The nuragic sculptures at first did not represent concrete forms which may suggest that originally this was taboo, but gradually they moved towards realistic representations, although this did not mean eliminating their associated symbolic connections. This corresponded with profound changes in the wealth of the community. One can show that there was a degree of manipulation of the collective reality at the level of the imagination. This was done through the proposing or imposing of symbols characteristic of

the strong ideology and the predominant mentality of the hegemonic group.

The significance of these images, which were cult objects in the communal meeting places, can clearly be connected to the celebratory and ritual practices. They are also evidence that, when the properly nuragic period finished, the towers, while no longer being built, had become de-functionalized and raised to the level of a totem of identity, and treated as witness of the great work achieved on the island by the ancestors of the community.

In this sense the *Nuraghi*, and the characteristic built landscape, assumed the role of being the medium through which cultural memory operated, embodying a kind of physical memorial, a space for commemoration. This was celebrated through reproducing the *Nuraghi* precisely or schematically in a way which can be compared to *logos* or *icons* (as *semata*).

The sanctuary festivals and the meetings of the tribes of the area must have been the moments when the legends and the stories of their ancestors were recounted. In this context, the cult, the offering of evocative votive figures, the ceremonies, the mythical masquerades and the ritual celebrations of a complex society such as that of Sardinia in the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages, can all be seen as part of the reorganization and the refoundation of the identity of the community based of the symbolic power on the nuragic towers.

Chapter 14

Burial locations, memory and power in Bronze Age Sardinia

Luca Lai

This chapter has three main goals: to help bridge a communication gap between the traditionally archaeological domain and the bioarchaeological one in Sardinian prehistory, providing data that have not fully entered archaeological literature on Bronze Age burials; secondly, to draw a tentative outline of what this knowledge means for our understanding of the complexity of the funerary phenomenon in Bronze Age Sardinia; and lastly, to illustrate how several problems and questions arise from adding the cave burial component to the increasing data on ritual landscapes and social transitions so far related only to stone architecture, and how these can be used to inform future research with more theoretically orientated approaches.

Giants' tombs have traditionally been identified, in descriptive reconstructions of nuragic Sardinia's cultural landscapes, as the canonical burial place where the constructors of the *Nuraghi* lay their deceased members. In fact, in Lilliu's first synthesis *La civiltà nuragica* (1982), connecting human remains to nuragic diagnostic items did not lead to the possibility that caves could also be used for burial; this was conversely evaluated as a deviant special trait of Gallura, the northeastern region of Sardinia, which he often describes as economically poorer and culturally backwards in comparison with mainstream nuragic developments. In his sequence of periods, giants' tombs appear in the Early Bronze Age as competing solutions next to cave burials and less refined megalithic monuments (*allées couvertes*).

In Lilliu (1982; 2003), the progression through phases I, II and III (roughly parallel to Early-Middle, Middle-Recent, Recent-Final Bronze Ages in today's standard chronology, where Recent is used as a synonym of Late) corresponds to the golden age of architectural development, which is characterized by an earlier tomb type with upright stones and central stela (Bagella 2001a), and by a later type with more or

less regular and refined rows of masonry parallel to the *Nuraghi*, and sacred wells and springs. It seems, from such a narrative, that nuragic human groups were fundamentally buried in these monuments. Strangely, the paradox of hardly a few hundred such tombs then known in opposition to over 6,000 *Nuraghi* was not highlighted sufficiently. Conversely, the use of caves is mentioned concerning only one burial cave, Tani (or Su Cungiareddu 'e Serafini, Carbonia), where human remains were found in very unusual conditions associated with diagnostic material culture (discussed below: Ferrarese Ceruti & Fonzo 1995), and a few extraordinary ritual sites, inducing the reader to picture a lived landscape where caves were not a normal feature in the mature nuragic age from the end of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA).

As will be seen, despite the awareness of occasional finds of nuragic items in caves, this picture, which still permeates the reconstruction of the average nuragic community both among scholars and the general public, is inaccurate; evidence today is instead overwhelming in showing a continuous, or possibly intensified, use of caves during the later Bronze Age (RBA). Lilliu between the 1950s and 1970s was indeed constructing the 'nuragic civilization', which as such is to some degree the product of a remarkable cultural operation that had a crucial role in shaping present-day Sardinian identity, as critiqued and unveiled by recent work (Sirigu 2012; Sirigu 2006); possibly this effort, along with his classicist early education, is at the root of Lilliu's tendency to overlook features perceived as 'primitive' – as a familiarity with caves so well documented for Neolithic times – and to stress instead grand architecture, which would endow Sardinia with a dignity comparable with the classic 'civilizations' of historic antiquity. Even after Lilliu, most scholars, when attempting to synthesize data into general scenarios of nuragic social evolution, have given burial caves

Table 14.1. AMS dates from Sardinian MBA-EIA cave burial contexts. (*Date from Grotta del Marinaio: courtesy of the Museo Sardo di Antropologia ed Etnografia, Cagliari).

Site	Reference	Lab number	Raw date & error	68.2% probability cal BC	95.4% probability cal BC
Dana del Maccioni (Dana di lu Maccioni), Alghero	(Cosseddu <i>et al.</i> 1994; Sanna 2006)	Beta-37704	2720 BP ± 60	916–812	1000–799
		Beta-47023	2800 BP ± 60	1021–893 (61.0%) 874–850 (7.2%)	1116–824
Su Cungiareddu 'e Serafini/Tanì, Carbonia	(Cosseddu <i>et al.</i> 1994; Sanna 2006)	Beta-47025	3380 BP ± 70	1764–1607 (62.7%) 1582–1560 (5.5%)	1878–1838 (6.4%) 1830–1510 (89.0%)
Tueri, Perdasdefogu	(Cosseddu <i>et al.</i> 1994; Sanna 2006)	Beta-47024	2880 BP ± 60	1187–1183 (1.1%) 1156–1146 (2.9%) 1128–976 (62.2%) 952–945 (2.0%)	1228–906
		(Marcus <i>et al.</i> 2020)	MAMS-38280	2987 BP ± 23	1262–1194 (61.4%) 1142–1133 (6.8%)
	MAMS-38282	2996 BP ± 24	1270–1196 (65.0%) 1140–1134 (3.2%)	1370–1360 (1.8%) 1294–1154 (85.9%) 1148–1127 (7.7%)	
	MAMS-38283	3020 BP ± 23	1290–1221	1386–1340 (15.5%) 1309–1195 (79.6%) 1138–1135 (0.3%)	
	MAMS-38284	2974 BP ± 17	1226–1191 (39.6%) 1177–1161 (13.4%) 1144–1130 (15.2%)	1260–1240 (8.1%) 1236–1126 (87.3%)	
	MAMS-38285	2961 BP ± 23	1216–1128	1261–1110 (94.8%) 1096–1091 (0.6%)	
	MAMS-38286	2992 BP ± 23	1264–1195 (64.0%) 1140–1134 (4.2%)	1286–1126	
	MAMS-38287	2990 BP ± 24	1264–1194 (62.5%) 1142–1133 (5.7%)	1286–1125	
MAMS-38288	2917 BP ± 24	1188–1181 (4.0%) 1158–1146 (7.3%) 1128–1052 (56.9%)	1208–1140 (28.9%) 1134–1026 (66.5%)		
Stampu Erdi, Seulo	(Cosseddu <i>et al.</i> 1994; Sanna 2006)	Beta-37705	3190 BP ± 80	1606–1583 (5.7%) 1558–1554 (1.1%) 1546–1391 (58.4%) 1336–1323 (3.0%)	1643–1263
Cannisoni & Gastea, Seulo	(Sanna <i>et al.</i> 1999; Sanna 2006)	Beta-50953	3470 BP ± 60	1880–1740 (62.4%) 1712–1698 (5.8%)	1936–1640
Capo Pecora, Arbus	(Sanna <i>et al.</i> 1999; Sanna 2006)	Beta-82327	2940 BP ± 70	1258–1246 (3.2%) 1233–1042 (65.0%)	1384–1340 (3.9%) 1308–971 (89.6%) 960–936 (1.9%)
Grotta del Marinaio, Orosei	(Unpublished)	Beta-101397*	2700 BP ± 40	894–866 (25.3%) 856–812 (42.9%)	920–801
Is Aruttas, Cabras	(Lai 2008)	AA-64824	3054 BP ± 55	1396–1258 (64.4%)	1433–1188 (91.2%) 1182–1158 (2.3%) 1146–1128 (2.0%)
	(Olivieri <i>et al.</i> 2017)	MAMS-26894	2952 BP ± 25	1244–1234 (3)	1256–1250 (1.0%) 1232–1056 (94.4%)
	MAMS-26896	2941 BP ± 27	1210–1114	1229–1047	

little attention, because of the scarce evidence in this respect. Webster for instance, notes that ‘many of the natural caves previously used as seasonal shepherd camps and burial sites have scant evidence of Middle Bronze Age visits. Cave use also declined with the spread of *Nuraghi* and megalithic tombs during the MBA into the extreme southwest of the island, in the Iglesiente-Sulcitano regions’ (Webster 1996, 91). As an exception, he does not overlook the presence of burial caves, but precisely in the southwestern region, thus fitting the pattern of a southwards replacement of caves by megalithic graves; such caves, furthermore, mostly pertain to the pre-nuragic Bonnanaro B/ Sa Turracula phase today commonly labelled as MBA1 (Ferrarese Ceruti 1981b). The following MBA2 and MBA3 phases were not represented by any finds of materials, with the exclusion of the cave at Tanì mentioned above. He does, however, suggest, based on the average number of individuals retrieved at giants’ tombs, perceived as too low for population estimates, that caves could be a burial for lower-status groups (Webster 1996, 143–5).

Perra (1997a; 2009), in his reconstruction of social dynamics in the nuragic age, while featuring prominently the role of megalithic tombs as arenas for collective ritual and opposition to aspiring elites, does not mention caves, as does not Blake (2001; 2002), who restates what Lilliu perceived decades earlier: that ‘apart from a small number of burials in natural granite crevices called *tafoni* and the sporadic reuse of earlier burial sites (in particular, rock-cut tombs), the giants’ tombs are the only known nuragic form of burial’ (Blake 2002, 121). However, several questions that she sets forth can receive light from considering caves as burials, as is argued here; the most evident is the mentioned problem of the overall low ratio of chambered tombs vs *Nuraghi* (Blake 2002, 121; Webster 1996, 104), which cannot be explained assuming that groups from several *Nuraghi* buried in the same tomb.

¹⁴C-based evidence for the use of natural caves for burial

Table 14.1 shows radiocarbon dates available from caves at sites with a calibrated time span at least partially corresponding to the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) to Early Iron Age (EIA). All dates were calibrated with OxCal v4.3.2, IntCal13 curve (Reimer *et al.* 2013), and the chronological schemes used here as a reference are in Perra (1997a) and Tykot (1994), which differ in several respects (in the former, there is a more refined articulation of material culture-based phases and the anticipation of the beginning of the Recent Bronze Age (RBA), Final Bronze Age (FBA) and Early Iron Age (EIA) by between ~50 to over ~150 cal. years) (Table 14.2).

Table 14.2. Chronological table comparing Perra (1997) and Tykot (1994) schemes (all dates cal. bc).

Perra 1997		Tykot 1994	
S. Iroxi	EBA2	MBA	Bonnanaro B
Sa Turracula	MBA1		Nuragic I
Zone-impressed ware; S. Cosimo; comb-impressed ware	MBA2		
	MBA3		
Comb-impressed ware; emipsheric bowls; storage and collared jars; gray ware	LBA	LBA	Nuragic II
Nuragic FBA 1-2; pre-geometric pottery; gray ware	FBA1	FBA	Nuragic III
	FBA2		
Nuragic FBA 3; geometric pottery	FBA3		
Nuragic EIA	EIA	EIA	Nuragic IV geometric
			Nuragic IV orientaling
			Nuragic IV archaic

A brief description of the contexts will help explain why caves have been so far overlooked by archaeologists when drawing general pictures of landscape and spatial organization. The cave Dana di lu Maccioni/Dana del Maccioni (Maxia & Fenu 1962) was located near the coast just south of the city of Alghero, northwestern Sardinia; it was destroyed during road construction in 1954, when human bones and material remains were recovered. These remains, however, did not include anything diagnostic, except scarce and coarse pottery, assigned to the Ozieri tradition (Contu in Germanà 1995, 54). Based on this scanty evidence, the context was attributed to the Late Neolithic, and so were the data generated from studying the abundant human remains, until

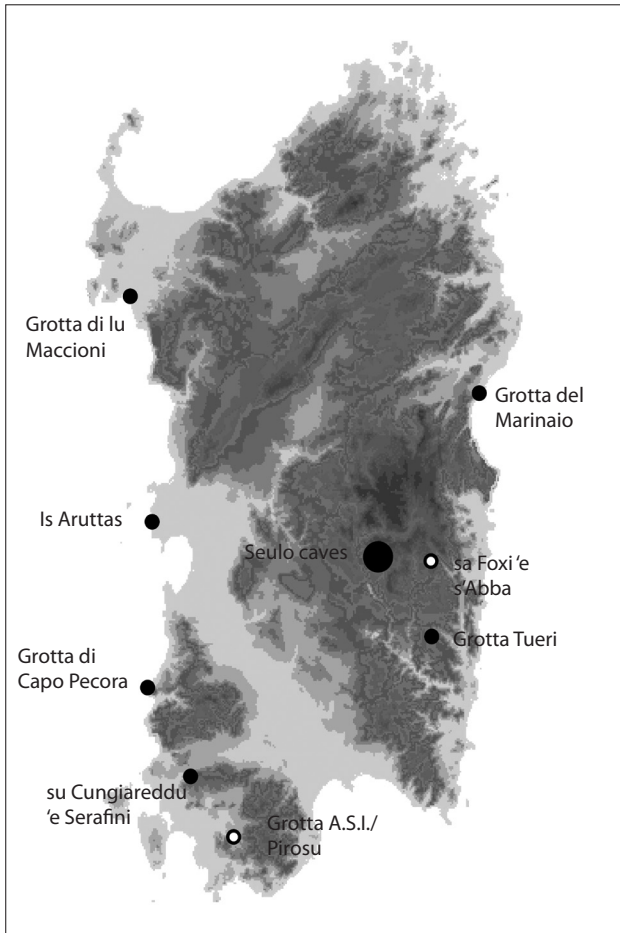


Figure 14.1. Map of Sardinia with natural caves mentioned in text that yielded AMS dates MBA-EIA. Filled circles: cave burials; empty circles: ritual sites.

radiocarbon dating (Cosseddu *et al.* 1994) showed that the chronology ranges from the twelfth to the eighth centuries cal. BC (95.4 per cent probability), centred around the FBA3-EIA. In the absence of any stratigraphy, such AMS radiocarbon determinations do not necessarily apply to the whole skeletal assemblage, but they do mark a date for at least one instance of its use for burial.

The cave near the hamlet of Tani, southwestern Sardinia, named Su Cungiareddu 'e Serafini (or Baiedus de sa Sedderenciu), was excavated between 1958 and 1960 (Ferrarese Ceruti & Fonzo 1995), and yielded evidence for use in several phases, including the Late Copper Age (Monte Claro culture), the EBA and the MBA (animal bone beads), with nuragic diagnostic pottery found mainly near the entrance, not inside the cave with the skeletal remains. The only radiocarbon determination fits this phase, between the nineteenth and sixteenth centuries cal. BC (95.4 per

cent probability), centred around the MBA1. Again, it is uncertain whether this date may be extended to the whole bone collection. Among the cultural materials are bone tubular beads that find comparisons with MBA3 and RBA contexts (Usai A. in Atzeni *et al.* 2012) and support the evidence from potsherds and, to a degree, AMS dating.

The cave of Tueri (Perdasdefogu), in central-eastern Sardinia, is also located near a *Nuraghe*, which is also the reason why its burial use was already attributed to the nuragic period, despite the lack of any cultural marker (Maxia 1964). It consists of a long natural corridor, found in the 1960s covered with human bones, quantified visually in over 50 individuals, which were collected without any contextual record, since the main purpose was acquiring specimens for anthropometric research. The easy access enabled frequent looting, despite recent attempts by the local municipality to close the entrance with a metal gate, until in 2014 at least the visible specimens were salvaged by volunteers supervised by the Soprintendenza. One AMS determination, carried out in the 1990s on human bones, recorded usage between the thirteenth and tenth centuries cal. BC (2σ), centred around the FBA1-EIA time span. After several years, in the context of an ancient DNA project involving several collections across the island, eight more dates were obtained (Marcus *et al.* 2020), all from different individuals, and with a much smaller error. These extend the probability that some of the individuals were slightly earlier (late fourteenth century cal. BC), whereas virtually none of them extends beyond the twelfth century cal. BC (except for one, with 0.6 per cent probability), suggesting that the older determination had a wider range simply due to greater error and a less pronounced slope in the calibration curve. Most recorded burials at Tueri can thus be placed in the RBA-FBA phase, dating to the thirteenth to twelfth centuries cal. BC. Interestingly, although peripheral to the topic at hand, one additional date witnesses burial use in the fourth to third centuries cal. BC at the end of what is the Punic phase on the coast.

No contextual information is known for the human bone assemblage from the cave Stampu Erdi (Maxia 1963), near Seulo, central Sardinia. It yielded an AMS date (Sanna *et al.* 1999) between the seventeenth and the thirteenth centuries cal. BC (95.4 per cent probability), or more narrowly between the sixteenth and fourteenth centuries cal. BC (68.2 per cent probability), corresponding mainly to the MBA2-MBA3 range. Another date comes from bones collected in the 1930s from several caves in the same area (su Cannisoni, which includes what is now identified as Is Bituleris cave, and Gastea), unfortunately

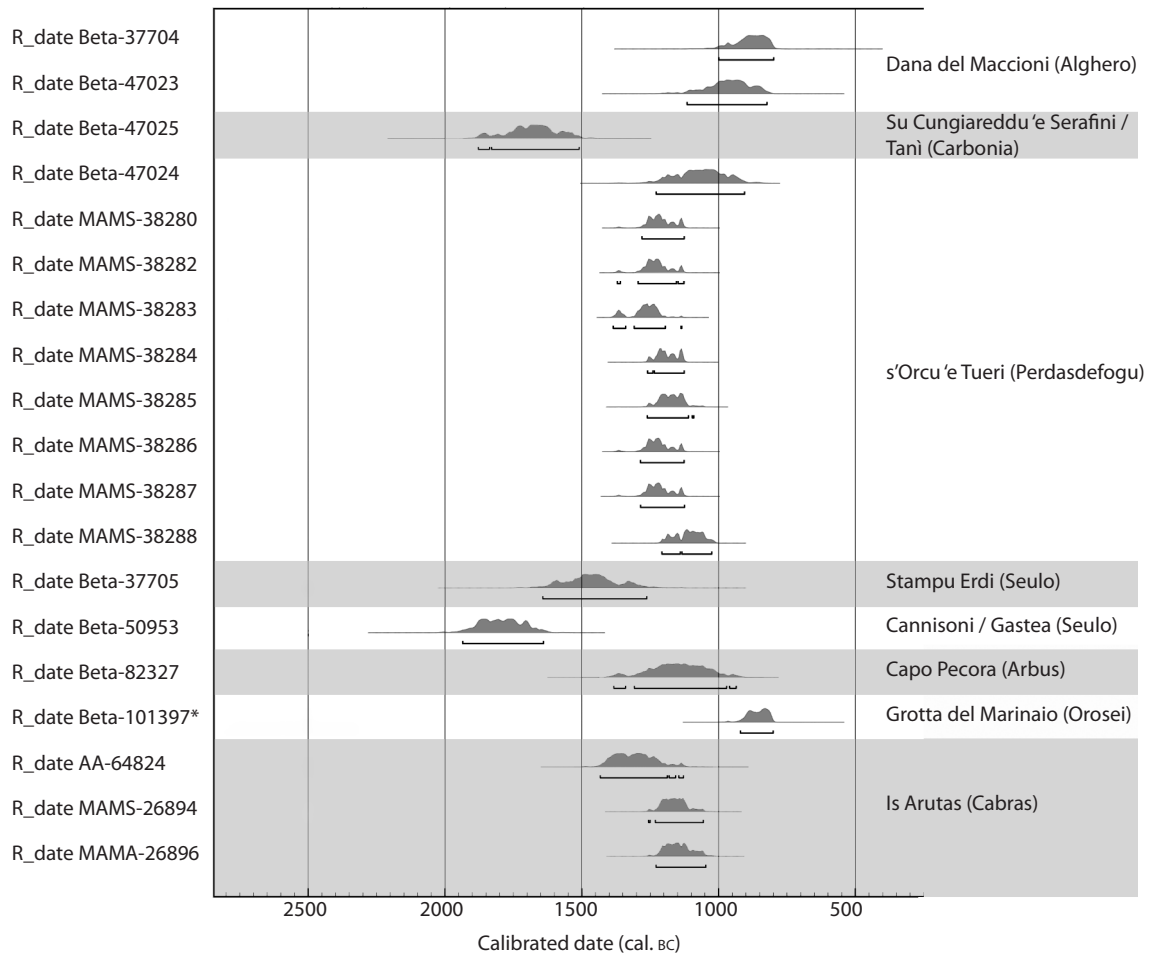


Figure 14.2. Chart of calibrated range of dates for Sardinian MBA-EIA cave burial contexts. OxCal v4.3.2 Bronk Ramsey (2017); r:5 IntCal13 atmospheric curve (Reimer et al. 2013).

without any distinction between caves: from this date, the range is from the twentieth to the seventeenth centuries cal. BC (95.4 per cent probability).

Fifteen radiocarbon dates from the Seulo Cave Project area (Skeates *et al.* 2013) have recently extended and strengthened the record of cave burial utilization, which stretches from the EBA1 through the MBA2-3, with a notable gap between the fourteenth and twelfth centuries cal. BC and only one later FBA date.

Capo Pecora cave (Arbus), near the southwestern coast, close to the municipal border with Fluminimaggiore, yielded skeletal remains that were associated with some pottery interpreted as nuragic (Maxia *et al.* 1973), although some materials apparently date back to earlier phases. The attribution was confirmed by AMS dating, which provided a range between the fourteenth and tenth centuries cal. BC (95.4 per cent probability), centred in the RBA-FBA3 phases, to be extended back to the EBA2.

Is Aruttas cave, although never properly published, was described as a small natural cave accessible by means of two modified entrances, located a few hundred metres from the seashore and a few miles from the brackish water Cabras Lagoon, in western Sardinia. The context was looted and attributed to the Late Neolithic based on the scarce cultural materials recovered with the skeletal remains of at least 25 individuals (Germanà 1980; Germanà 1982). This collection features in all Germanà's publications through the mid-2000s as the second-largest collection of Neolithic human remains from Sardinia (Germanà 1995, 61), but the deposit was clearly disturbed: cranium 10 from Is Aruttas later yielded a date (Table 14.1) which makes this collection unsuitable for studying Neolithic populations, but provides evidence for the burial use of the cave in the Bronze Age, marking a time span between fifteenth and twelfth centuries cal. BC (95.4 per cent probability), centred around

the MBA3-RBA (Lai 2009). Two additional dates carried out contextually with ancient DNA analyses (see above for S'Orcu 'e Tueri; Olivieri *et al.* 2017), on different individuals and with a much smaller error, partially confirmed but narrowed this attribution to the thirteenth to eleventh centuries cal. bc, recording depositions in the cave in the RBA-FBA3.

Finally, an unpublished nuragic date from human bones comes from Grotta del Marinaio (Orosei), on the eastern coast, explored by Carlo Maxia in the mid-1950s. No osteological examination of these remains, located at the Museo Sardo di Antropologia ed Etnografia, at the University of Cagliari, Monserrato, has been reported. The chronological range would translate into between tenth and ninth centuries cal. bc (95.4 per cent probability), virtually corresponding to the EIA.

It is out of the scope of this chapter to review the large amount of evidence for the chronology of the megalithic monuments known as giants' tombs; based on stratigraphy, associations, and scholarship dating back at least one century, they are generally attributed to the nuragic peak of architectural complexity, which was also a time of demographic growth. It is worth highlighting that the first giants' tombs possibly pre-date the *Nuraghi* themselves. Melis (2007b) examines in detail the associations of ceramic types and architectural types: whereas no giants' tomb is found to yield cultural materials unambiguously older than MBA1/MBA2 (see also Perra 2009), there are a few cases of possible association with some EBA2/MBA1 ceramic materials. Conversely, there would be no *Nuraghi* demonstrably datable before the MBA2 (Perra 1997a; Perra 2009). In one case, there is clear evidence that the mimetic rock-carving of a giants' tomb associated with MBA1 pottery damaged a Neolithic reused rock-carved tomb that contained EBA2 potsherds (Melis 2007b). With these premises underlining the chronology of megalithic tombs, it is clear that use of caves, including earlier rock-cut tombs, fully overlaps with them.

Short outline of Bronze Age burial site types by phase

The evidence above confirms therefore a trend of continuous use of caves as burial grounds starting at least from the third millennium bc. During the Copper Age Monte Claro phase, the use of caves for burial is widespread, and evident more than the Bronze Age presence also because of a more distinctive pottery (Ferrarese Ceruti 1989). Such use is maintained in the Bell Beaker/EBA1, with several finds that are in large portion associated with human remains;

apparently, the use of caves was one of the many options possibly constrained by availability; in fact, artificial caves (rock-cut tombs dating to Neolithic times) were also used extensively, as shown by Ferrarese Ceruti's work on Su Crucifissu Mannu, tomb 16, which is the best documented example (Ferrarese Ceruti 1974), but countless instances are known (Ferrarese Ceruti 1981a; Ferrarese Ceruti 1981b; Moravetti 2009), and especially evident in the Sardinian northwest, where an enormous volume of underground space was created by means of carving between the late fifth and the mid-third millennia bc, providing excellent, easily accessible, and often readily visible receptacles for burial. In other cases, perhaps where no underground space was available, then pits were dug, and possibly covered with architectural elements of perishable materials, as can be hypothesized for the site of Iscalitas (Manunza 2000; Manunza 2005), following a tradition that goes back to Bell Beaker customs (Padru Jossu: Ugas 1982; Bingia 'e Monti, Atzeni 2001; Fugazzola Delpino & Pellegrini 1999).

The same options based on availability remained viable in the EBA2, as shown by material culture items and AMS dating of human remains: natural caves as su Cannisoni, Seulo (Skeates *et al.* 2013), possibly Capo Pecora, Arbus, and many more; reused artificial caves (e.g. among many: Sa Figu, tomb 4: Melis 2010); open pits, in some cases resulting from the collapse or degradation of previous structures (as S. Iroxi, Ugas 1990a; Bingia 'e Monti, Perra & Lai 2020, Perra in Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 266–7). Possibly, in the northeast, some experiments in manufacturing above-ground built structures, so-called *allées couvertes*, were setting the foundations for the later standardized megalithic tombs, although as already mentioned there is no clear evidence for this (Castaldi 1969; Antona 2008).

In the MBA1 (defined by Sa Turracula style pottery), some new options were added to the old. Natural caves were still utilized; for instance, the known example of single burial at Sa Oche/ Sisaia, Oliena (Ferrarese Ceruti & Germana' 1978), the remains that yielded a MBA1 date from Su Cungiareddu 'e Serafini, Carbonia (Cosseddu *et al.* 1994; Sanna 2006), and several more (Ferrarese Ceruti 1981b). Rock-carved tombs were also still reused, as evident at several sites as, for instance, at Sa Figu (Melis 2011), where different tombs yielded items pertinent to different Bronze Age phases, in some cases with human remains. At this burial site the visual template of giants' tombs is behind the transformation of earlier Neolithic tombs into nuragic ones (Melis 2007a; Castaldi 1969). If the *allées couvertes* recorded in northeastern Sardinia actually date to this phase, then their development into canonical giants'

tombs must have occurred fairly rapidly, since some megalithic tombs already show their standardized elements (chamber, semicircular forecourt, facade with upright slabs and monumental stela) associated with MBA1 pottery.

The MBA2 phase (characterized by San Cosimo/*metopale* pottery) marks the success of the giants' tomb model in central-northern Sardinia. It is unclear to which degree at this point the giants' tomb was associated with the *Nuraghe* (Blake 2001), since according to Perra (1997a) there are no reliable stratigraphic contexts linking MBA2 material culture and architectural features. It definitely appears that during this phase radiocarbon evidence for burial use of natural caves perhaps starts dwindling, since only one date, except for the Seulo caves (Skeates *et al.* 2013, 104–5), falls around 1600–1500 cal. BC (Beta-37705, Stampu Erdi: Sanna 2006). MBA2 pottery seems present, but rare, also at the necropolis of Sa Figu (Melis 2010), and the only two radiocarbon dates from reused Neolithic rock-cut tombs come from southwestern sites (Sa Serra Masi, room 1, Martella *et al.* 2014; Montessu, t.10, AA-64836, Lai 2009), therefore located in what probably was the last region to be reached by the new above-ground templates. This apparently corresponds to the time when normative codes regarding mortuary rituals virtually excluded grave goods, limiting severely both the presence of artefacts with the dead (as accompaniment or offerings), and proportionally also the archaeologist's ability to infer use from material remains. Additional phenomena could be suggested: if the MBA2 preceded a sharp demographic increase (Webster 1996), we will expect to find less evidence of human remains dating to this period compared to the following; also, the normative power of above-ground chambered tombs might have reached its peak at this time, before caves were used again more intensely. Only further AMS dates in the future will help us understand if this is a real gap in natural caves' burial usage, or only a random artefact of insufficient research coverage.

While *Nuraghi* proliferated all over the island (Perra 2009), the MBA3 phase, the first that can no doubt be defined 'nuragic' from a monumental standpoint, showed continuity in the trends concerning burial practices and locations. The diffusion of giants' tombs reached the south of the island. Overall evidence for burial use of caves is scarce; one of three radiocarbon dates from Is Aruttas (Table 14.1) is the most likely record of use during the MBA3. Giants' tombs could become in this phase the normative grave for newly established settlements, coupled with the *Nuraghe* (Blake 2001), an impression that the Seulo cave cluster record seems to corroborate, with a gap in

dates between the fourteenth and twelfth centuries BC after a solid body of 14 dates for the preceding eight hundred years (Skeates *et al.* 2013). An increasingly well documented phenomenon is that of clusters of giants' tombs (Perra 1997b; Zaru 2011; Castoldi 2010, among many), some of which apparently dating to the MBA, some likely to the RBA.

Next to the previously built giants' tombs, some seem to be newly constructed in the RBA; these tend to show distinct features: lack of semicircular forecourt, use of smaller stones, in one case even a lateral instead of frontal entrance (Ugas 1993; Ugas 1990b; Lai 1992; Contu 1957). Besides giants' tombs, found in different densities but virtually on the whole island, in the RBA Neolithic rock-cut tombs and natural caves are still being reused: human remains from a number of sites yielded AMS dates likely corresponding to this phase (s'Iscia 'e sas Piras, Usini, date unpublished; Table 14.1 for caves).

Finally, there is clearly continuous use of giants' tombs in the FBA or even EIA, at least at some locations, as shown by material culture (Sa Sedda 'e sa Caudela, Atzeni *et al.* 2012), and a few AMS dates (Motrox'e Bois, Usellus: Sanna 2006; Ingurtosu Mannu, Donori: Martella *et al.* 2014, Olivieri *et al.* 2017), although this was probably less intense or even sporadic. Whereas burial reuse of rock-cut tombs is documented by material culture (Melis 2011; Melis 2010), use of natural caves, besides other ritual activities, is documented by AMS dates at several sites (see Table 14.1).

Power, memory and burial locations

As presented in the introduction of this chapter, the starting point for discussion is the observation that despite some piecemeal evidence being available for a long time, a persistent view remains in analyses of social organization, landscape patterning and narrative syntheses, that chambered tombs were the canonical burial place for nuragic communities. However, sporadic finds of cultural materials in caves previously, and the first dataset of radiocarbon evidence presented here make it clear that a large portion of the Sardinian population in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages was not actually laid to rest in such tombs. Such dates from human bones recovered in natural caves are an indication of burials *continuing into and/or possibly beginning after* the MBA, when giants' tombs appear to be widespread all over the island. The problem that this evidence opens up is then manifold: how to reconcile the different types of burials? How to explain the perceived meaning/function of different burial locations and different

types? What was their charge of memory and identity for the burying/buried community, their role as social settings for single, collective agents and/or as secondary agents themselves (as discussed in Robb 2010; Dobres & Robb 2005). Finally, can we associate varying social contexts and dynamics with varying uses of different types, if any?

Considering that natural caves fulfilled the role of burial grounds of choice for about 500 years after the virtual demise of tomb rock-carving by ~2300 cal. bc and before the first experiments with above-ground constructed graves between 1900 and 1600 cal. bc (EBA2-MBA1), it is possible to set out already as a working hypothesis, that giants' tombs were actually analogues to artificial caves. We can presume that, in conditions where local lithology and geomorphology did not offer natural caves, nor previous human groups had prepared carved tombs amenable for reuse, with or without modification, there was then a need for alternatives. It may not be coincidental that earliest evidence for such chamber tombs is recorded in Gallura, a predominantly granitic area poor in large natural caves compared to other areas of the island and especially to the limestone plateaus between the Barbagie and Ogliastra. As we have seen, burial might not be the right term, since there is good evidence that what we call burials were not interments but true rooms, where remains were not covered with soil, but to some degree exposed and at least periodically available for manipulation (Manunza 2000; Ugas 1982). That this role of artificial cave was important is also indicated by how the earlier type of giants' tomb, unlike those built in regular masonry in the centre-south, were covered by a mound, or tumulus, so that the tomb as seen from the back was probably similar to a low hill. Possibly only later (MBA3-RBA?), when a canonical locale *Nuraghe* + tomb (as in Blake 2001) was established, giants' tombs were possibly preferred, but always within the range of choices available at a specific site when establishing new settlements.

We can then reflect on what fundamentally was a giants' tomb in the eyes of a member of a nuragic community, and what features seem to be in common among all types of tombs: physically, a) it is a structure with a hollow space inside; b) it has an entrance that remains open or can be periodically opened; c) it is covered by a certain volume of soil and/or stone which renders the inside space functionally underground; d) it is spacious enough for the bodies, or bodily remains, of several individuals to lay inside at the same time; e) it has an adjacent space large enough for communal gatherings/events. All these elements are to be considered canonical,

and are actually recordable and recorded for many tombs, especially the few that were not devastated and reused in historic time. Virtually all of these points apply as well to natural caves, except perhaps for the variability of the space available for corpses and more or less skeletonized bodies, and possibly for the outside space available for communal events; conversely, it is possible that this space was not as relevant in the latest graves dating to the RBA-FBA, many of which do not show evidence marking the semicircular forecourt. Other features cannot be surely extended to all tombs as part of the required elements: one is the circular shape of the forecourt (in one case added to the pre-existing tomb so as to border the liminal space in front of the tomb: Ugas 1999); another is the presence of the three betyls and their slots sculpted in stone on top of the tomb's facade (Bagella 2007; Castoldi 2010; Bittichesu 1998).

Mentally and emotionally, we can identify the tomb/forecourt as a liminal space, at the interface between the dimension of the living and the dimension of the dead; a resting place for the remains of the ancestors, however they may have been intended and understood: the space for celebrating ancestors, community values, continuity of life, and possibly to have some form of communication with such ancestors, in order to ask intervention in the lives of the survivors or conversely to request them to give up their involvement. It could be seen, additionally, as a political arena (Perra 2009), the place where everyone is confirmed as equal in one's collective connection with the ancestors, whose remains from individually identifiable become progressively commingled. This bodily transformation and unification practically and ideologically worked as an opposing force to rising inequality in wealth and authority. Such inequality, coupled with intensification of production, has been explained as the effect of a deliberate aggrandizing strategy developed through contact with complex societies of the Eastern Mediterranean (Perra 1997a). However, the fact that individuals or groups arrived in positions of authority or prestige could be as likely the unintended gradual outcome of daily practices, and may have not been consistent at the intra-community level, as evidence of tiered hierarchy appears to rest mainly on inter-settlement differentiation (Araque Gonzalez 2014).

The role of memory in these practices was fundamental, as the giants' tomb's forecourt, and possibly the open space in front of burial caves, became the place where cosmology and cosmogony was told and retold, taught as a collective intangible patrimony of a kin or tribal group. Likely, besides stories of mythical past, most tombs/caves were linked with memories

of the founding of the village/settlement and to the 'domestication' of a whole landscape, the community's little universe (most tombs and *Nuraghi* date to between 1500–1200 cal. BC, fairly little time relative to the power of oral history). It was also a place tied more closely to the memory of individual burials of family members, women and men, parents, siblings, children, spouses, relatives, with their charge of life memories, feelings of loss or detachment. Memory is therefore also inextricably intertwined with social relations and power, and so is the burial location and burial-related performances as physical and social fields of action, as the place where the community reproduces itself, shapes and negotiates among its members ideology and social constructs (Chesson 2001); it appears as a physical and behavioural field of action, an interface providing a contact opportunity for different agents and a source of identity for both human individuals and collective bodies (Gillespie 2001), with the addition of material things as secondary agents (Robb 2004). This materiality can first be identified in the burial type's features, and in properties of such natural/artificial burial caves: shape, colour, appearance, sound effects, olfactory experiences related to ritual, feasting, and at least occasionally the handling of decaying human remains.

Including caves in the potential number of sites appropriate for burial in the MBA-FBA, as anticipated above, modifies strongly our view of the problem, touched by many but not yet faced systematically, of the numeric ratio between tombs and *Nuraghi*. Bagella (2007), based on a database of about 800 tombs, calculates a rough [$n_{\text{tomb}} : n_{\text{nuraghe}}$] island-wide ratio of 1:10. However, the ratios by municipality reported in the literature vary remarkably: anywhere between 2:1 in Esterzili, where more tombs are documented than *Nuraghi*, to Sedilo (Bagella 2007), with a 1:1.5 ratio, the closest to reflecting a ritually bifocal tomb + *Nuraghe* locale, and up to an exceptional 1:33 in areas of central-western Sardinia (Usai 2003), with various ratios in between (Webster 1996; Navarra 1997; Bagella 2007; Crispu *et al.* 2011). Whereas the general scarcity of tombs relative to *Nuraghi* can largely be attributed to differential preservation, because of their location at lower elevations on soils more susceptible for agricultural exploitation and therefore ploughing, I argue that a sizable portion of such gap, at least in some areas, can be because of the usage of natural caves or Neolithic rock-cut tombs instead of megalithic tombs.

Overall consideration of the nuragic population and the issue whether the whole community or sections of it were buried in giants' tombs deserves some reflection. Whereas the general collective nature of nuragic burial ritual is not in question, a few aspects

call for some reconsideration. Based on extant evidence, there is no indication suggesting the clearing out of human remains from the tomb. The argument that Minimum Number of Individuals recorded would be incompatible with fully inclusive collective burials (Blake 2002, 121) might have been overemphasized, despite it being largely based on longer time estimates of use than actually demonstrable and on visual head counts upon recovery: in fact, giants' tombs were used perhaps as little as three centuries in some areas – especially in the southwest, if we consider the direction of diffusion. More importantly, the potential for quick reduction of the space required by a decomposed body should not be underestimated. In a similar situation of collective burial in a relatively confined space from previous prehistory, one of the few analyses of teeth has shown that an MNI based on these durable skeletal elements can be over 10 times higher than an MNI based on bone only (Vargiu *et al.* 2009), not even considering the comparison with counts based only on visually identifiable cranial remains. If we take the bone only-based MNI of one of the few collections analysed according to modern standards, the comparatively late and small tomb of Su Fraigu (Ugas 1993; Spina 2005), we could easily project some 3,000 depositions within about 300 years. The inclusive nature of burial in nuragic times, therefore, needs not be ruled out, and comprehensive consideration in the future should include the cave record.

Another avenue of research not frequently touched upon is the investigation of traces of ritual activity in the forecourts of giant's tombs – and similarly in the areas before entering burial caves. For instance, in one case to be verified *in situ*, pottery appeared to be placed not with the dead, but at the entrance of the burial cave, possibly reflecting a ritual preference parallel to what observed in megalithic tombs (Ferrarese Ceruti & Fonzo 1995). Whereas the tendency for preferential accumulation of sherds on the right side of the forecourt, despite some exceptions, has been firmly established, other traces of ritual have been described but are not well understood (Bagella 2001b): the possibility of reburial rituals could be at the root of small cists and pits occasionally found on the pavement of the forecourt (Tanda 2003; Lilliu 2003); in one case, it involved infant remains (Atzeni *et al.* 2012). Besides the moving of remains that would simply have fulfilled the purpose of freeing up space for new corpses, another sign of ritual performance is the treatment of skulls, with their placement in prominent position, as documented already in the Neolithic (Maxia & Atzeni 1964), but also in the Bell Beaker/EBA (Ugas 1982; Ferrarese Ceruti 1974; Atzeni 2001), and still in

the MBA-FBA (Atzeni *et al.* 2012). In addition to these, the presence and location of betyls and various kinds of architectural details (Bagella 2001b) are all features that besides being worth investigating *per se* beyond typology, would also provide a key for testing the hypothesis that similar activities were performed in functionally parallel locations of burial caves.

Conclusion

In the interaction among different elements of a nuragic constructed landscape and their role in politics and power relations, architectural elements have been extensively discussed. *Nuraghi*, especially the complex ones, whether or not they were symbols or symptoms of class differentiation (Perra 2009) show some features that could have factually limited social participation and selectively granted access: a doorway, a narrow staircase to reach upper floors, and a courtyard that provides additional inside space but doubles access limitation. Whereas the general role of giants' tombs' forecourt as collective, open gathering areas has already been suggested, how should we read 'deviant' situations where such forecourt is absent, or unmarked? How should we interpret the variables related to multiple tombs? Since the ritual focus definitely shifted, in the FBA, to water cult-related sites, both natural (springs, wells) and artificial (round temples, megaron temples), it is here suggested that giants' tombs and water-related sites may have filled a similar niche in the meaning system and cosmological patterns. What role did caves play in these changing relationships among agents and locations? Some spatial patterning actually appears to be common to many types of structure: the recurring presence of offerings residues on the right side of giants' tombs' forecourt seems to match the niche consistently placed to the right in the entrance corridor at a large number of *Nuraghi*; this also matches the floor paved area immediately to the right upon entering many stone houses in several nuragic villages (for example: Bruncu Maduli, Gesturi; San Salvatore, Tortoli); and can be compared with the massive amounts of pottery remains on the right side at the monumental spring of Mitza Pidighi: Usai 1988). The whole meaning system behind the many signs of ritual patterns listed above, with a possible *Nuraghe*-tomb dualism related to cosmic opposites (male-female, light-dark, sky-earth, sun-moon, high-low, meteoric water-underground water...), is mostly unknown; in the framework of such potential binary system, natural caves must also have played a role: was it fully parallel and equal to megalithic tombs? Or was it instead analogous and therefore some way competing with

the megalithic tombs? Were these alternative options based on social standing (megalithic tombs for elites, as suggested by some: see Lilliu 2003; Webster 1996; Blake 2002). In this respect, there is evidence that in some instances both types were used in the same phase (Antona 2005; Skeates *et al.* 2013: 109–10) – as far as such phase can be culturally identifiable; this is another point that needs further investigation, to verify if its scarce evidence represents a local trait or is the fruit of differential preservation and/or research coverage. Among the many features in common between natural caves and giants' tombs there is a lower potential for ritual manipulation by limiting access, compared with both *Nuraghi* and later 'temples' of different kinds; this less controllable nature is particularly strong for caves. In an effort to find a collective identification with a location and egalitarian values, both, at different degrees, could have met the needs of a community attempting to contrast groups that were threatening, or attempting, as an intended or unintended outcome, to break such values. Controlling the place where the most important ritual activity is performed was surely a way to affect or control the construction and maintenance of collective memory, the intangible locus where the naturalization of power inequality must be rooted in order to become stable. At some point around the FBA, collective memory for some reason began losing its link with giants' tombs; possibly ancestral cults were replaced by water cults, or they were bound to water cults, which changed practical expressions, or the memory of the ancestors was manipulated as to make them selectively the ancestors of only a select group. Whichever the interpretation of these phenomena, consideration of the role of natural caves in these dynamics cannot be overlooked any longer for a full understanding of social transformations in Sardinian society at the end of the Bronze Age. As a research agenda for the future, therefore, some directions are suggested: the systematic recording of the coexistence of caves and tombs as burial sites, and their use history; the investigation of the relationship between multiple tombs and/or caves and main features (such as size) of nearby settlements and/or *Nuraghi*; the identification of potential presence of ritual markers at burial natural caves to assess their functional analogy relative to megalithic tombs; the integration of potsherds' distribution with other methods of investigation (e.g. chemical analyses of soil) to detect ritual activities; extensive osteological work on the abundant skeletal materials available, with substantial AMS dating of human bones from both caves and giants' tombs. This should help progressively unravel the unfolding of the social birth and death of nuragic Sardinia.

Acknowledgments

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Chapter 15

Memory and movement in the Bronze Age and Iron Age landscape of central and southeastern Slovenia

Philip Mason

The late second and first millennium BC in central and southeastern Slovenia saw the formation of dynamic landscapes, in which place, memory of place and movement were combined. This chapter seeks to explore the ways in which these were expressed in the Late Bronze Age and how this expression changed in the Early Iron Age.

The area under discussion is dominated by three major rivers, the Sava and its tributary the Krka that flow east-west and served as major arteries of communication, linking the Po plain with the Danubian region and the Balkans in prehistory, the Roman period and later, and the Kolpa which flows southwest-northeast into the Sava at Sisak, forming an artery of communication with the Gulf of Kvarner via the Mala and Velika Kapela uplands. The region is deeply divided by karstic interfluvial valleys with incised river and stream valleys of varying extent. Much of the lowland is characterized by covered karst and karst plateaux, although there are some more extensive areas of lowland river valleys, such as the Krško polje and the Šentjernejsko polje with extensive Pleistocene and Holocene sediments and glacial outwash gravel deposits (Mason 1996a, 1–8; 1999, 143–55; Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 44–65).

Memory and movement in the Late Bronze Age

The Late Bronze Age landscape was initially characterized by large extensive open settlements in the river valleys, which were typical of the Br D (Bronze Age D) and Ha A (Hallstatt A) periods, but were still occupied in the Ha B period, that is from 1250 BC to 800 BC (Teržan 1999, 102–4, 107). However the small defended upland settlements that are typical of the Ha B period were also present at least in the Br D (Teržan 1999, 102–4, 107).

The Late Bronze Age lowland settlement complexes were extensive in nature and were located on river terraces beside tributary streams of the major

river valleys. As such they were close to major lines of communication, which were utilized in inter and intra regional exchange. The settlements were large, but extensive, although excavation has been limited on most sites in the area under discussion, e.g. to a total of 70,000 sq. m at Obrežje at the confluence of the Breganščica with the Sava (Mason 2006b, 131–2; 2009b, 12) and to a total of 20,004 sq. m at Velike njive on a tributary of the Sava in the Krško polje (Mason 2006c, 230–1; 2009b, 12, 14–15). The full extent of these settlement complexes has not been fully defined, but they are known to have extended well outside the excavated area. They are similar to contemporary settlements in adjacent areas of Slovenia, such as Rogoza, Pobrežje and Slivnica 2 in the Drava valley and Dragomelj in the Ljubljana basin, which have excavated areas ranging between 5,000 and 30,000 sq. m (Črešnar 2010, 7, 57–71; Djurić 2003b, 273; Strmčnik Gulič 1999, 117, 122; 2005a, 53–4; 2005b, 213–14; 2005c, 240–1; Strmčnik Gulič & Kajzer Cafnik 2007, 133–5; Turk 2000, 110; 2005b, 130–2; Mason 2009b, 12, 14–15). The true extent of such settlements can only be understood by examining field survey data. Thus, surface survey at Dragomelj revealed settlement activity over an area of at least 40,000 sq. m, whilst intensive surface collection at Griblje in the Kolpa valley suggests that the core of the Late Bronze Age activity covers an area of approximately 80,000 sq. m, but evidence of activity extends over an area of approximately 40 ha along the edge of the river terrace and the hinterland behind it (Mason 2001, 24; Mason *et al.* 2006c, 54–5; Mason *et al.* 2006, 55–6; Turk 2005b, 131).

The internal structure of these settlements was characterized by post-framed residential structures loosely grouped in farmsteads and separated from each other by borrow and storage pits (Črešnar 2010, 70–1). However, paths were important elements within settlements, not only forming arteries of movement but also boundaries. Thus at Velike njive, a path formed a

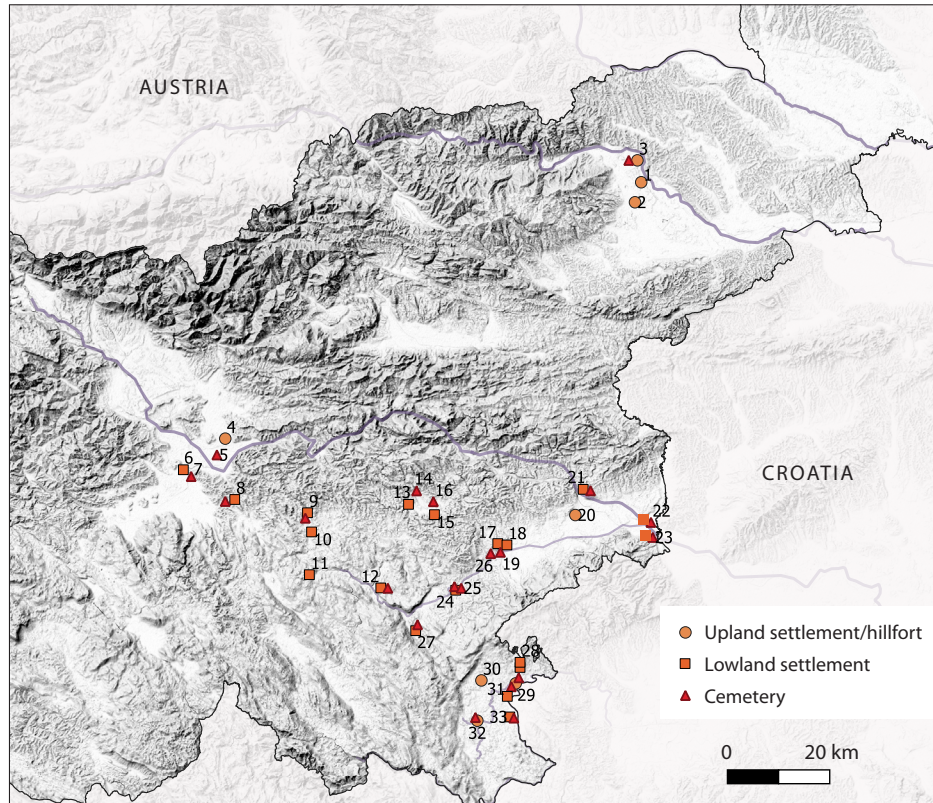


Figure 15.1. *The Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlements and cemeteries in central Slovenia, mentioned in the text (After Dular 1993, 103, figure 1, with additions from Dular et al. 1995, 90, figure 1; Dular et al. 2000, 120, figure 1; Dular et al. 2003, 160, figure 1; Dular and Tecco Hvala 2007; drawing by Dimitrij Mlekuž Vrhovnik). 1. Rogoza. 2. Slivnica. 3. Pobrežje. 4. Dragomelj. 5. Podgorica. 6. Ljubljana – Grad 7. Ljubljana – SAZU. 8. Molnik. 9. Gradišče nad Mekinjami. 10. Stična. 11. Korinjski Hrib. 12. Vinkov vrh. 13. Žempoh. 14. Ostrožnik. 15. Križni vrh. 16. Slepšek. 17. Vinji vrh. 18. Vihra. 19. Dolge njive. 20. Velike njive. 21. Libna. 22. Dobova. 23. Obrežje. 24. Novo mesto. 25. Mačkovec. 26. Otočec. 27. Cvinger pri Dolenjskih Toplicah. 28. Metlika. 29. Križevska vas. 30. Semenič. 31. Kučar. 32. Črnomelj. 33. Griblje.*

boundary between the settlement zone and an area of storage, which in itself was separated from a watercourse by an extensive cobbled area on the river bank (Mason 2006c, 230–1; 2009b, 12–14, 17–18).

The lowland settlements exhibited further links with marshy zones and watercourses, which are best known for the deposition of metalwork. This is particularly true of the Ljubljanica on the western edge of the area under discussion, but some cases of metalwork deposition are also known in the Sava, such as those from Krško and Drnovo, close to Velike njive (Dular 1974, 14, 19) and the axes from the Kolpa at Metlika (Dular 1985, 90–1). However, the deposition of midden material in palaeo-channels is known at Križevska vas and at Obrežje, whilst at Rogoza it is additionally associated with the deposition of metalwork. The paths at Velike njive were also connected with midden deposits, linking paths and to watercourses and marshy

areas and possibly to movement – all of which have a liminal or transitional meaning (Mason 2009a, 221–3)

Formal burial areas were rare in the Ha A, but these were also linked in some cases with marshy zones or watercourses, a practice which continued and expanded in the Ha B (Mason 2009a, 228). The Late Bronze Age cemetery at Griblje was located close to a marshy hollow or pool on the Pleistocene terrace of the Kolpa (Dular 1985, 74). The complex of Late Bronze Age cemeteries at Dobova was located on a series of low terraces cut by the marshy valleys of tributary streams on the northern side of the Sava valley (Stare 1975, 13–14; Teržan 1999, 111). These are associated with a contemporary settlement, close to the primary school in the centre of the modern settlement of Dobova (Plestenjak 2016, 46–7). The Late Middle and Late Bronze Age biritual cremation cemetery at Obrežje was associated with an extensive Late Middle and Late Bronze Age

settlement on the Pleistocene terrace of the river Sava and the Early Holocene terrace of the river Bregana. It comprised 375 cremation graves and 6 inhumation graves, which were located on Pleistocene gravel point bars on the slope and within the marshy valley of the Struga stream, a now defunct tributary of the river Sava (Mason 2006b, 131–2). The slopes running down into the marshy areas between the point bars were characterized by discrete spreads of pottery fragments, which were dominated by jar fragments. These deposits were probably connected with feasting as part of the mortuary ritual (Mason 2006b, 131–2; 2009b, 17–18).

The upland settlements appeared in the Ha B period and were generally on prominent isolated hills and on heights on the edges of the upland interfluvies. Thus they occupied sites similar to those used for the deposition of large hoards and single finds of metalwork in the preceding period, although the presence of earlier single finds on such settlements are only known in a few cases, e.g. Veliki Korinj, Črnomelj and Semenič (Dular 1985, 58; Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 278; Dular *et al.* 2002, 176, 177). These sites were much smaller than the lowland settlements of the preceding period, but there is little information on their internal layout, beyond the presence of post-framed houses on terraces. There is no evidence for substantial defences,

with the exception of a timber framed rampart at Cvinger near Dolenjske Toplice (Dular & Križ 2004, 215–24, 230–2). However it is these sites, which in some cases developed into the later hillforts of the Early Iron Age, whilst the large undefended settlements were abandoned by the end of the Late Bronze Age and in many cases at the beginning of the Ha B period.

Prominent heights and hill slopes below them were also favoured as cemetery locations (Mason 2008, 97). In some cases this mirrored the locations of upland settlements as at Metlika, where the Borštek cemetery was located on a low hill, close, but subordinate to the Late Bronze Age settlement in the medieval town centre (Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 186). Other cemeteries were now located on the approaches to some settlements, as is the case at Črnomelj (Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 189–90; Mason 2007, 364), Mokronog (Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 141, 142, 174–5) or in Novo mesto (Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 177–9; Križ 1995, 8–12; 1997, 21–9) (Fig. 15.2). The location of these Late Bronze Age flat cemeteries may conceivably have marked the beginnings of more formalized prescribed lines of movement towards settlements, heralding the changes of the Early Iron Age.

The large flat cremation cemeteries close to watercourses and in marshy zones continued in use and increased in size, whilst new sites appeared, including

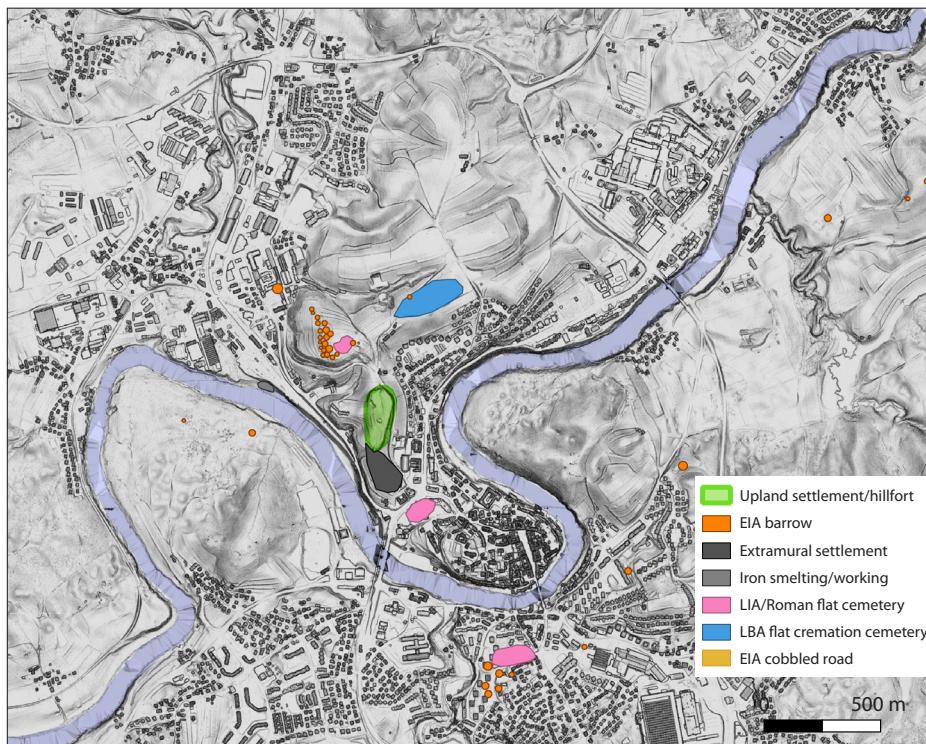


Figure 15.2. The Late Bronze Age and Iron Age centre at Novo mesto (Source: Agencija za okolje RS; adapted from Križ 1997, 21; 2012, 64; drawing by Dimitrij Mlekuž Vrhovnik).

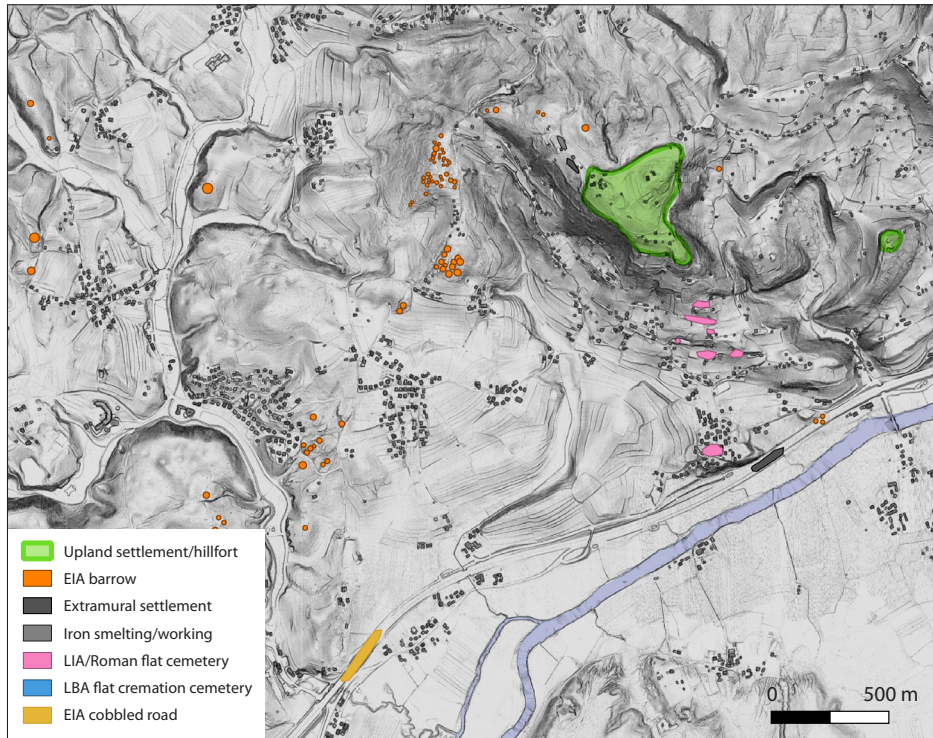


Figure 15.3. *The Iron Age centre at Vinji vrh (Source: Agencija za okolje RS Adapted from Dular, A. 1991, fig. 3; with addition of recent data; drawing by Dimitrij Mlekuž Vrhočnik).*

the large Ha B Ljubljana cemetery, located a low gravel terrace close to the Ljubljana, connected with both settlement on the Castle Hill and on the upper terrace to the south of the river (Mason 1996a, 55; Puš 1971; Puš 1982; Stare 1954).

There is also evidence for the connection between lowland settlements with mortuary areas being marked by formal paths, e.g. at Pobrežje in the Drava valley was connected with a large cremation cemetery by a cobbled path. The use of paths in the landscape in conjunction with mortuary practice and memory in marginal wet areas can be particularly well illustrated by the Late Bronze Age phase at Dolge njive (Mason 2005, 123–5; 2006a, 8–9) (Fig. 15.3). The site was located beside a palaeo-channel on the edge of the first terrace of the river Krka floodplain and was subject to seasonally flooding in the Late Bronze Age. It produced evidence of three stone platforms connected by a cobbled path or hollow way, the margins of which were further defined by boulders. Charcoal and burnt human bone were associated with the path and two of the platforms, which were subject to repeated resurfacing. These structures are interpreted as a mortuary complex, possibly linked to an as yet undiscovered cremation cemetery, or to deposition of mortuary remains in the river. The nearest known Late

Bronze Age settlements in the area are those at upland settlement at Vihra and the putative settlement in the northwestern part of the Vinji vrh hillfort (Dular *et al.* 2000, 122–4, 134–9; Mason & Merc 2010, 257–8), and the paths on the site indicate connections with either or both of these settlements. A similar group of three stone mortuary platforms associated with Early Iron Age cremation graves, was on the edge of a palaeo-channel also found at Podgorica, 360 m south of the lowland settlement at Dragomelj (Novšak 2005, 223–5).

Memory and movement in the Early Iron Age landscape

The development of hillforts and the rise of visible elite burial in the Early Iron Age, that is from the end of the ninth and the beginning of the eighth century BC onwards, led to an increasingly visible formalization of the lines of approach to hillfort centres and of movement through the landscape (Mason 1996b, 274–82; 2008, 102–4; 2012; 2013, 271–6). Many Late Bronze Age upland settlements were abandoned or did not become hillforts, but equally many hillforts and settlements were demonstrably based on Late Bronze Age settlements (Mason 2008, 97). There is evidence of earlier occupation at Cvinger (Dular & Križ 2004, 211),

Novo mesto (Križ 1997, 21–9), Vrhtrebnje (Dular *et al.* 1991, 69–76), Črnomelj (Mason 2007, 363, 364), Metlika (Breščak 1992, 255–6; Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 186, 347), Stična (Gabrovec 1994, 34) and Vinji vrh (Križ pers. comm.; Mason & Merc 2010, 258). However the extent and nature of this occupation is uncertain, given the larger area of Early Iron Age hillforts and the limited extent of excavation. Where evidence from the limited excavation in the interiors/edges is lacking, there is often evidence of Late Bronze Age ritual/mortuary activity in the immediate vicinity as at Kučar (Dular *et al.* 1995, 9; Mason *et al.* 2006a, 118; Mason *et al.* 2006b, 148–9) (Fig. 15.4). However it is unclear if this site should be considered as a ‘new’ Early Iron Age foundation, appropriating a Late Bronze Age ‘upland’ ritual site, continuous occupation from an earlier period or the reoccupation of a Late Bronze Age settlement.

The enclosure of hillfort settlements with drystone ramparts created highly visible places that were centres of reference or nodal points in the landscape. The elites and putative descent groups that were connected with the hillfort centres were interred in earthen barrows that clustered around the hillfort (Mason 1996a, 78–83; Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 237–8, 247–50). The barrows in themselves might reflect the bounded nature of the

hillfort or the putative descent group that they represented through the placement of a stone kerb around the edge of the barrow. The placement of the barrows increasingly defined and formalized the approaches to these hillforts (Mason 2008, 99–104).

The appropriation and reinterpretation of a Late Bronze Age mortuary area is even more apparent in Novo mesto, where the Late Bronze Age flat cemetery on Kapiteljska njiva was chosen as the site for a large Early Iron Age barrow cemetery (Fig. 15.2). This would not seem to be a case of the reuse of an abandoned site, but the development of a Ha B cemetery into an Early Iron Age barrow cemetery. Here we find examples of early barrow forms that were also current in the wider southeastern Alpine region. The barrows extended over the entire Early Iron Age and marked a route towards the northern side of the Marof hillfort. However the earlier barrows at the northern end of the route mirrored to some extent the Late Bronze Age hollow way that ascended from the Krka valley via the northwestern slopes of the hill. A further access point probably ran through the deeply incised valley between the Late Bronze Age flat cremation cemetery, the Early Iron Age barrow cemetery on Kapiteljska njiva and the Late Bronze Age flat cremation cemetery

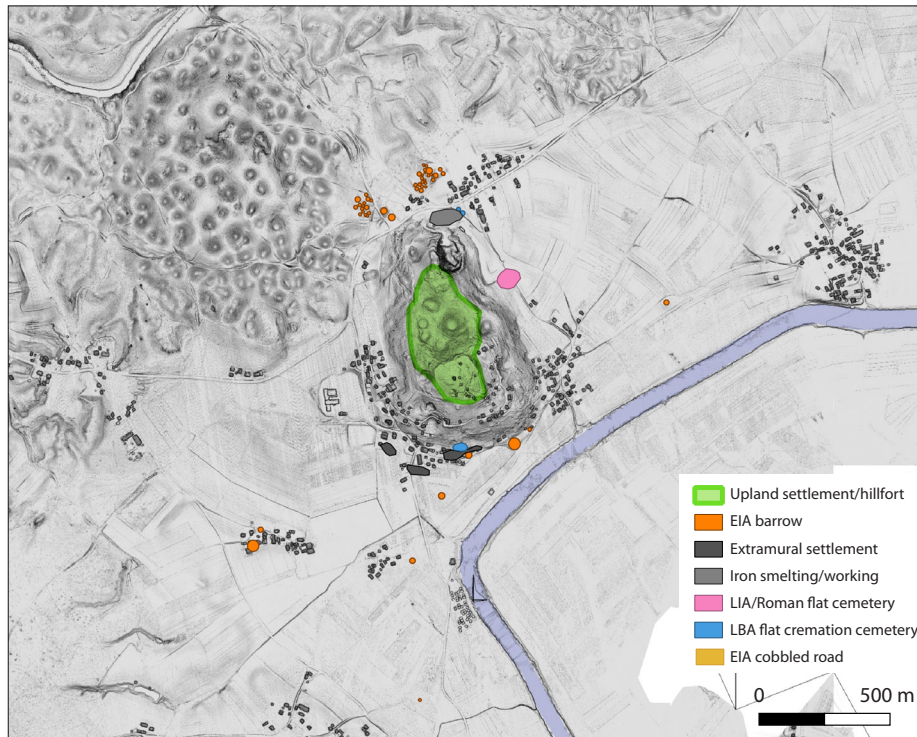


Figure 15.4. The Late Bronze Age and Iron Age centre at Kučar near Podzemelj (Source: Agencija za okolje RS Adapted from Dular, J., Ciglencečki, and Dular, A. 1995, 8, fig. 2; with the addition of recent data; drawing by Dimitrij Mlekuž Vrhovnik).

on Mestne njive (Križ pers. comm.). The importance of this route was emphasized by elaboration of what later became the northern end of the above mentioned barrow cemetery with a stone row or enclosure during the Late Bronze Age–Early Iron Age interface. The memory of such activity would also help to explain the presence of archaic Late Bronze Age symbols on a bronze vessel from an Early Iron Age inhumation burial in the Malenšek barrow in Novo mesto (Križ 2012, 101). It would suggest that Late Bronze Age symbols still had sufficient meaning for them to be employed in a visible context within the new Early Iron Age elite prestige systems in some parts of the region.

The use of barrows to elaborate and define approaches was present on all Early Iron Age hillfort centres in the region to a greater or lesser extent, whether lining the entire route, defining points along it or defining access points. This is illustrated by the elaboration of routes and approaches to the hillfort centre at Vinji vrh (Fig. 15.3) (Mason & Mlekuž 2016). The barrow cemeteries that lined and defined the main approach to the hillfort were largely eighth and seventh century BC in date; the Vinji vrh hillfort was occupied throughout the Early Iron Age, but the barrow cemeteries around Vinji vrh largely dated to the period between the eighth and sixth centuries BC. The continued maintenance of the rampart on the north-western approach throughout this period and in the late Iron Age suggest that this monumental approach continued to be of importance, without the need for further elaboration on the route itself, although the stone road at Požarnica may represent a later elaboration of this approach (Tica 2005, 233–5). The former Late Bronze Age approach that was marked by paths and stone platforms, was perhaps subordinate to this route, but was emphasized by the placement of three early Iron Age barrows directly on the platforms at Dolge njive and the construction of an Early Iron Age cobbled surface on the bank of the river Krka, a possible river landing (Križ 2005, 97–8; Mason 2005, 123–5). Further elaboration of entrance ways with embanked roadways leading directly into hillforts is only known from Cvinger near Dolenjske Toplice and Vinkov vrh (Dular & Križ 2004, 212–14; Dular *et al.* 1995, 111; Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 183–4, 184–6).

A similar situation may be observed at other hillfort centres such as Molnik and Kučar, where barrows lined routes or defined access points in conjunction with earlier Late Bronze Age mortuary activity (Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 161, 186–9; Puš 1984, 134–62). The memory of earlier settlements was also enshrined in the landscape and the paths through the landscape beyond the hillfort centre. The large barrows on the southern side of the Kučar hillfort marked points of

access to the hillfort and also lined a river route (Fig. 15.4). However, they are visible from the site of the Late Bronze Age settlement at Griblje, which was itself marked by a single Early Iron Age barrow (Dular 1985, 73; Mason 2001, 24). In some cases isolated barrows on routes through the landscape were also connected with Late Bronze Age settlement and mortuary sites as at Grofove njive, where a barrow was located beside a path, apparently running north towards the Libna hillfort, close to the point where it runs directly past the edge of the Late Bronze Age settlement at Velike njive (Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 294; Pavlovič 2014, 491–504). Outside the study area, a similar situation may be observed at Rogoza, where four Early Iron Age barrows respected the edge of the former site of the Late Bronze Age settlement (Strmčnik Gulič 2001, 125; Črešnar 2010, 69). The isolated barrows and barrow groups in the landscape were not always directly associated with earlier activity as was the case at Otočec (Križ 1989, 213–14; Dular & Tecco Hvala 2007, 323). However, where excavation of a wider area has taken place, it has become clear that such barrows may well be associated with earlier settlement. This was the case at Mačkovec, where the two excavated barrows that overlooked a route into the Krka valley were closely associated earlier Middle/Late Bronze Age settlement, but would have been visible on the skyline from the route way below (Mason 2012, 153–4; Udovč 2009, 5, 6). These isolated barrows marked lines of movement and travel through this landscape, which were demonstrably in use in earlier periods. The placement of barrows beside or on earlier settlement and existing routes served to incorporate them into the ancestral space of a community. Thus these barrows represent the monumentalization of memory either as a symbol of dominance of elites over or the legitimization of elites by association with ancestral places and so with ancestors. The presence of Early Iron Age activity, the material residue of acts of commemoration, and continued burial at these isolated barrows indicated a strategy for their incorporation and with them of routes through the landscape into the communal space/area of control of communities, either locally or at specific hillfort centres.

Conclusion

The memory of these places in the Late Bronze Age landscape was transformed in the Early Iron Age landscape. This marked a change in the role of memory in the landscape from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age in the region. Formalized paths continued to mark boundaries and represent lines of movement, but in the Late Bronze Age they marked boundaries within

settlements and between settlements and 'outside', connecting the places of the living with the places of the dead, often in areas that were less visible, liminal, but repeatedly visited. In the Early Iron Age some places, such as settlements, cemeteries and prominent features in the landscape, were incorporated into or embellished with new structures, such as hillforts and barrow cemeteries, which enshrined and reinterpreted their memory and function in the landscape, whilst others were apparently abandoned, later to re-emerge in the Late Iron Age. Movement through this landscape

was enshrined in memory through the marking of paths and the elaboration of approaches to hillforts with funerary monuments, which monumentalized and supplanted the memory of earlier places, thus the line of movement was liminal in itself, where mortuary zones were no longer a destination, but became a zone of transition.

The attention of readers is drawn to coverage of complementary and broadly similar material published in the years since the original conference (Mason 2004, 2013).

Part III
Multiple time

Chapter 16

The reuse of monuments in Atlantic Scotland: variation between practices in the Hebrides and Orkney

Niall Sharples

During the Gardening Time conference, there was considerable discussion about whether there was any comparison that could legitimately be made between the brochs of Scotland and the *Nuraghi* of Sardinia. Clearly the chronology of these monuments makes direct comparison problematic. The *Nuraghi* are largely a Bronze Age phenomenon and are definitely not constructed in the Iron Age. Whereas, brochs are an Iron Age phenomenon which reaches its apogee at the end of the first millennium BC, though they continue to be built into the first centuries of the first millennium AD. Structurally there are also considerable differences between the stone vaulted towers that are *Nuraghi* and the stone and timber construction of Scottish brochs. Functional differences may also be significant, but unfortunately the limited number of well excavated primary deposits, in both areas, leaves this a mute point of difference.

Some of the seminar's participants were adamant that they were very different structures and that there could be little meaningful comparisons between the two different societies. I would disagree and argue that there is an essential similarity in their role as monumental houses that make a comparison between the two societies potentially illuminating. One of the principal similarities between the two phenomena is directly related to the conference theme of memory and concerns the materiality of these constructions. The common use of large quantities of large stones in the construction of both monuments means that both *Nuraghi* and brochs normally survive to be encountered by successive generations that will progressively have little direct knowledge of the individuals who built them and of the role(s) that they were built to serve.

Many monuments in temperate Europe make extensive use of timber and the natural decay of organic material can result in the complete destruction

of substantial structures of considerable social significance. In these cases only vestigial and ephemeral memories might linger, as place names perhaps, to record the significance of these ancient monuments. Such structures might lead to societies where forgetting is more important than remembering. In contrast, stone monuments, such as *Nuraghi* and brochs, have a corporeal presence, a powerful sense of materiality that makes it impossible to ignore their existence. These structures form prominent features of the landscapes of Atlantic Scotland and Sardinia and would be regularly encountered in the landscape during the seasonal routine of cultivation and stock movement. They are a constant visible reminder of the activities of past generations. The response to these monuments is not prescribed and could vary from region to region but what unites these regions is the necessity to respond because of the immanent presence of the physical monuments. As a result, we have in the periods following the construction of the monuments, complex patterns of rebuilding and reoccupation, of remodelling and total destruction, which tell us a great deal about social memory in these societies.

This chapter is not about these issues, instead it wishes to look at how the response to existing monuments influenced the creation of the brochs of Atlantic Scotland. Brochs are not the first monuments constructed in this region, and nor are they the only stone structures that have survived to impose themselves on the succeeding generations. Brochs occupy a landscape that has been occupied for generations and which is inhabited by tangible memorials as well as intangible memories. The main point I want to make in this chapter is that the physicality of some monuments demanded a response, but it did not dictate a single uniform response, there was scope for different engagements with ancestral monuments.

Twentieth-century encounters with monuments

My original interest in the relationship between Iron Age brochs and Neolithic chambered tombs dates back to 1981 when I directed the excavations at Pierowall Quarry, Westray, Orkney (Sharples 1984). The excavation revealed a substantial Iron Age roundhouse built directly on top of a chambered tomb (Fig. 16.1), which produced one of the most spectacular pieces of megalithic art found in Britain (Sharples 1984). Subsequent interest was stimulated by work, in the 1990s, on the location of chambered tombs on South Uist, an island in the Outer Hebrides (Cummings *et al.* 2005). In the course of this survey, and some associated small-scale excavations (Cummings & Sharples 2005), it was realized that several tombs had structures built into them in later prehistory and that these provided an alternative narrative for the relationship between tombs and brochs.

When I published the Pierowall Quarry excavations (Sharples 1984), the relationship between the chambered tomb and the Iron Age roundhouse was not discussed and, if my memory serves me correctly, I generally thought this was simply a result of propitious use of a convenient mound by the Iron Age occupants; a prosaic functional relationship that had little symbolic content. My thoughts on this

relationship changed as I became involved in the discussions about the relationship between the causewayed enclosure and the hillfort at Maiden Castle (Sharples 1991, 2010) but more importantly through working with Richard Hingley in Historic Scotland in the early 1990s (Fig. 16.2).

At this time, Hingley was working on two papers (Hingley 1996, 1999) which were groundbreaking in highlighting the complex historical relationships that exist between archaeological monuments, and how societies can have important historical relationships with their landscape and locale. Since these papers were published, it has become commonly acknowledged that many of the roundhouses of the Atlantic Iron Age were deliberately located on existing chambered tombs. However, in these papers Hingley was vague about the nature of the relationship with the past. In his 1996 paper, Hingley suggests ‘people in Later Prehistory drew inspiration from chambered cairns for the design of their own houses...’, ‘...round cairns may have provided an inspiration for a new architectural tradition of roundhouse building in later prehistoric Orkney’ (Hingley 1996, 240). However, he also notes that ‘Chambered cairns may have been seen at the same time as the homes of ancestors and as places where the powerful remains of these ancestors were housed’ (Hingley 1996, 241).



Figure 16.1. A view of the section through the chambered tomb and monumental roundhouse at Pierowall Quarry, Westray, Orkney. The two revetments on the old ground face are the remains of the large circular cairn of Neolithic date. Over this and visible at the top of the vertical ranging rod on the right hand side is the wall of the roundhouse. The passage to the chamber of the tomb survives at the base of the vertical ranging rod on the left.



Figure 16.2. *Richard Hingley encounters the ancestors in a chambered tomb at Skelpick, Strathnaver, Sutherland.*

The 1996 paper in some respects painted a simplistic view of a homogenous Iron Age where the past was seen as a resource that was generally pillaged for inspiration. In the 1999 paper, some important differences were clearly present. The principal point was that 'during later prehistory communities partly identified their place in the world through references to ancient monuments' (Hingley 1999, 246). It is admitted that 'we should not...be looking for one simple standardised concept of what the "past" meant to these communities' (Hingley 1999, 246).

These papers focus on several monuments and in the second paper these are identified throughout Britain and include the complex of monuments at Stanton Harcourt in the Thames valley. However, in terms of the Atlantic Iron Age two groups of sites stood out. Three sites on Orkney, Pierowall Quarry, The Howe and Quanterness, which had all been recently excavated, and a couple of sites in the Western Isles, Unival and Cletraval, which were excavated in the middle of the twentieth century by Sir Lindsay Scott.

In Orkney there is a complex relationship between the roundhouse and the tomb, in some cases the tomb is systematically destroyed, but in others it survives with little alteration. This is best demonstrated by a description of the sequence at Pierowall, The Howe and Quanterness. At Pierowall Quarry (Sharples 1984) the excavations were minimal, but it was clear an already substantially modified Maes Howe type chambered tomb (Sharples 1985) was levelled and used as a platform for the construction of an Early Iron Age roundhouse. The wall of the roundhouse was about 3.1 m thick and the structure had an external diameter of roughly 16 m. Radiocarbon dating suggests the house was constructed before the sixth century cal. BC. The interior of the house was not excavated but it was clear that the passage and chamber of the tomb had been substantially destroyed and some form of structure constructed within these (Fig. 16.1). The interior of the roundhouse was subsequently deliberately infilled with rubble and there was no evidence that this structure had a long history of occupation.

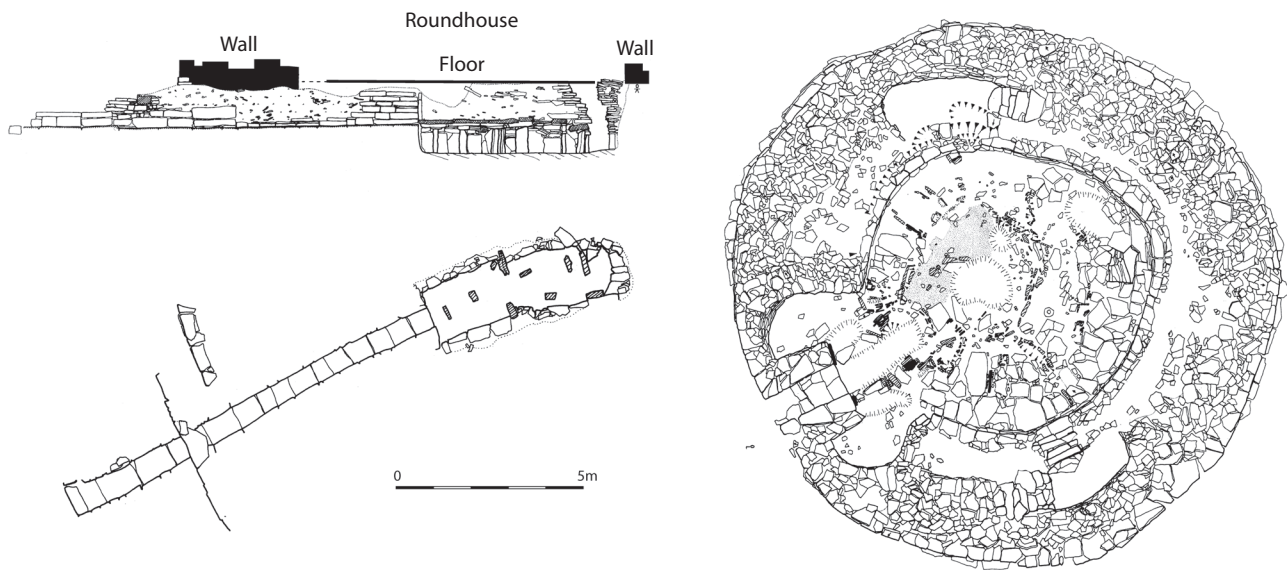


Figure 16.3. A plan of the The Howe showing the interior of the round house in phase 6, and a plan and section through the subterranean chamber. Based on illustrations in Ballin Smith 1994.

At the Howe (Ballin Smith 1994), the Early Iron Age roundhouse was also built directly on top of a Maes Howe type chambered tomb. The construction process involved the substantial demolition of the mound or cairn, the almost complete dismantling of the chamber and the systematic removal of any human remains contained within the chamber. A circular house, roughly 16 m in diameter and with a wall about 4 m thick, was then constructed on top of the mound. In the interior the partially paved and intricately subdivided central living space covered a subterranean chamber that was created by rebuilding the underlying burial chamber (Fig. 16.3). Access was by a staircase entered from directly opposite the main door. The original entrance passage of the chambered tomb was partially preserved and lay directly below the entrance passage to the roundhouse. A largely complete human skeleton was deposited within this passage which is believed to date to the Iron Age. This house was repeatedly rebuilt and the site continued to be occupied until the later part of the first millennium AD.

At Quanterness (Renfrew 1979) there was no attempt to remodel the substantial Maes Howe type tomb, which survived into the twentieth century as one of the best-preserved tombs on the islands. Furthermore, it retained the substantial assemblage of human bones that were deposited in it during the Neolithic, though these were probably rearranged in the Iron Age. In the Early Iron Age, a roundhouse was constructed

in front of the tomb and the original entrance passage was accessible through the interior of the house. The house at Quanterness was not a monumental roundhouse; it had an internal diameter of only 7–8 m and a wall thickness of about 2.2 m.

The two important excavations in the Western Isles that were discussed by Hingley (1996, 1999) were undertaken before and after the Second World War by Lindsay Scott on the island of North Uist. He excavated two chambered tombs on the island and both turned out to have significant Iron Age structures built into the cairns. At Clettraval (Scott 1935, 1948), a wheelhouse was built into the body of a substantial trapezoidal long cairn (Fig. 16.4). A wheelhouse is a non-monumental form of roundhouse found in large numbers in the Western Isles and Shetland (Sharples 2012). In Shetland, these appear as secondary villages surrounding brochs, such as Jarlshof and Old Scatness (Hamilton 1956; Dockrill *et al.* 2010), but in the Western Isles they appear to have been contemporary, geographically separate structures (Sharples 2012). The wheelhouse at Clettraval had an internal diameter of roughly 7.4 m and a wall thickness up to 2.1 m wide. The house was probably constructed in the early first centuries AD, though there are no radiocarbon dates to confirm this. There was no direct access from the house to the Neolithic chamber and the entrance to each structure was orientated in quite different directions; southwest for the house and east for the Neolithic tomb. There was evidence for the deposition of Iron Age ceramics in the

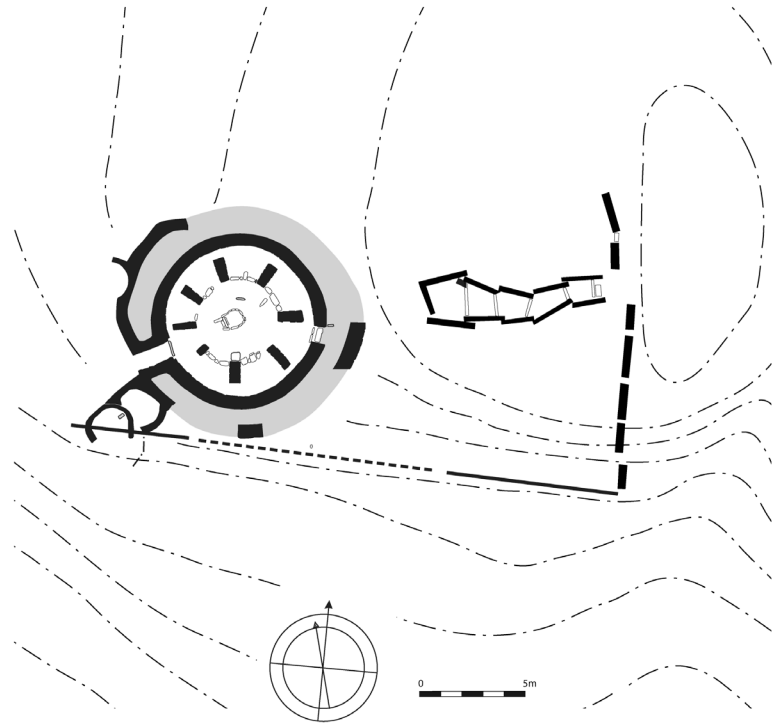


Figure 16.4. *The chambered tomb and wheelhouse at Cleittraval in North Uist. The wheelhouse is built into the body of the long cairn and has no access to the burial chamber at the east end.*

Neolithic chamber which appears to have been open during the occupation of the wheelhouse.

The situation at Unival (Scott 1947a) appears somewhat similar though the structures of both the Neolithic tomb and Iron Age house are very different to the structures visible at Cleittraval. The tomb was a fairly characteristic small passage tomb in an unusual square cairn (Fig. 16.5). The tomb was entered by a short passage facing southeast. The Iron Age house comprised two rectangular rooms joined by a short passage and was located in the northern corner of the cairn. It lies immediately to the north of the Neolithic chamber but there was no interconnecting passage and the house was accessed from the north. The pottery from the Iron Age structure is difficult to date, but this, together with the bicameral structure, might indicate a date of construction later in the first millennium AD than the structure at Cleittraval.

These tombs are not necessarily representative of all tombs in the Western Isles. Two tombs explored in the recent South Uist survey appear to show evidence for a direct connection between tomb and Iron Age roundhouse. At Leaval in South Uist, limited excavation revealed a simple megalithic chamber in a circular cairn, apparently without a passage, which had been substantially dismantled prior to the construction of an oval enclosure (Cummings & Sharples 2005). No excavation of the interior has taken place, but the enclosure almost certainly surrounds a later prehistoric settlement. At Loch a' Bharp a substantial Hebridean passage

tomb has had a circular house constructed on top of the entrance to a passage tomb (Fig. 16.6; Cummings *et al.* 2005). The front of a large corbelled chamber and the passage had been systematically dismantled as part of this Iron Age modification. Unfortunately, this tomb has not been excavated and the nature of the construction which caused this damage is unclear and undated. Nevertheless, it seems likely that both Leaval and Loch a' Bharp indicate a deliberate attempt to control access to the ancestral remains that is quite different to that visible at Cleittraval and Unival. The most significant difference between these sites is altitude. Cleittraval and Unival are located at roughly 250 and 350 feet above sea level, whereas Leaval and Loch a' Bharp are around 50 ft above sea level. Both the latter tombs would be much more accessible to the communities living on the low-lying coastal areas, and it is possible that access to these ancestors was much more contested and therefore controlled than those in the hills.

Landscape in the Western Isles

I have previously explored the significance of the Orcadian patterns and argued (Sharples 2006) that there was a deliberate attempt to control access to the ancestors by an elite that occupied the monumental roundhouses or brochs. Controlling access to the ancestors would increase the power of the occupants of these houses and the decision to build dwellings at these locations would mark a significant break with

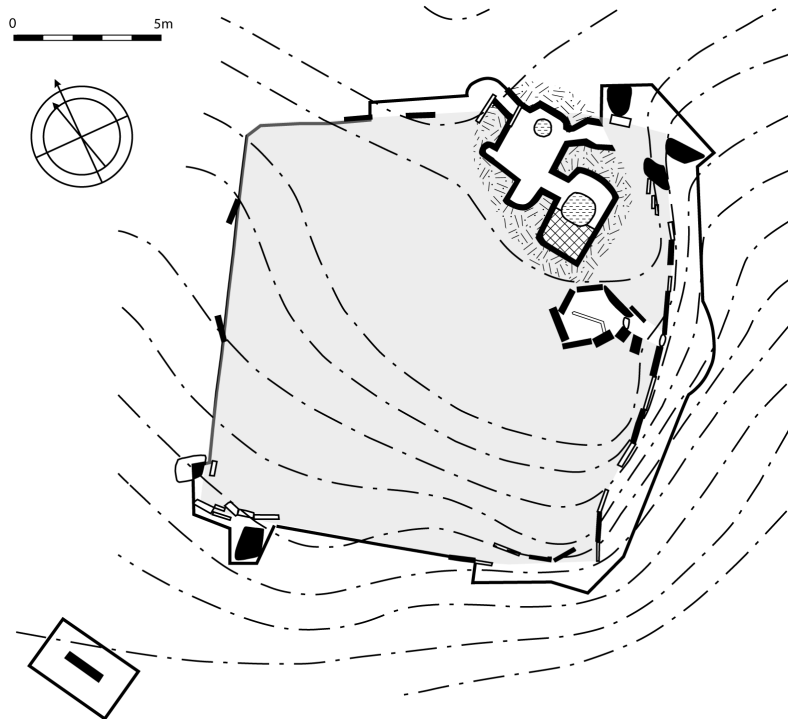


Figure 16.5. The chambered tomb at Unival, North Uist, which has a small bicameral structure built into the northeast corner of the cairn in the Iron Age.

Bronze Age practice when the Neolithic monuments were avoided in a profane landscape of domesticity. The tombs also provided an architectural template for the creation of permanent houses.

In this chapter, I want to concentrate more on the monuments of the Western Isles, as these have been less studied than the Orcadian monuments, and also to concentrate on the landscape setting which has only really been skimmed by writers such as Hingley. In the Western Isles, no monumental roundhouse or broch, that I am aware of, was constructed on a chambered tomb. Some might argue that this is because the brochs have not been extensively excavated, and this is true up to a point. However, pre-broch deposits have been explored at Dun Vulcan (Parker Pearson & Sharples 1999), Dun Mor Vaul (MacKie 1974), Dun Bharabhat (Harding & Dixon 2000), Dunan Ruadh (Foster & Pouncett 2000) and Dun Carloway (Tabraham 1977). At the first three sites, activity was detected that appears to precede the construction of the broch, but radiocarbon dates clearly indicate the activity dates to the first millennium BC and represents an increasing interest in the locale as a place for settlement activity. At Dun Carloway and Dunan Ruadh, the brochs were built on exposed rock outcrops with no earlier activity visible or likely.

It is important to note that the brochs of the Western Isles were not situated in locations that were likely to be occupied by chambered tombs. Most brochs in this region were located on islands in lochs; Rennell (2010, 53) reports that more than 60 per cent of the

Iron Age sites on North Uist and 53 per cent on Lewis are on islands within freshwater lochs and the preference appears to be even more emphatic on South Uist (Raven 2012). An island site would be an extremely unusual topographic position for the building of a chambered tomb. A detailed study of the location of tombs on South Uist (Cummings *et al.* 2005) indicated a preference for raised locations on the edge of the hills overlooking valleys used as communication routes. Coastal and island locations, such as Sig More, South Uist, are much more likely to be a result of recent rising sea levels encroaching on dry land rather than a true reflection of locational preferences.

It is possible that the island locations of brochs are related instead to Neolithic settlements, and there is certainly a considerable similarity between the locations of the settlements at Eilean an Tighe (Scott 1950) and Eilean Dhumnail (Armit 1992a) and the island brochs. The Neolithic settlement at An Doirlinn in South Uist was originally recorded by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments Scotland as a Monumental Roundhouse of Iron Age date (Canmore NF71 NW5). However, it is important to note that not only have none of the excavated brochs been shown to have Neolithic origins, but also none of the Neolithic settlements have any evidence for Iron Age activity on top of them. Indeed, in Loch Olibhat the Iron Age settlement, Eilean Olibhat (Armit *et al.* 2009) was located on a natural promontory a little to the east of the artificial island, Eilean Dhumnail, created in the Neolithic (Fig. 16.7).

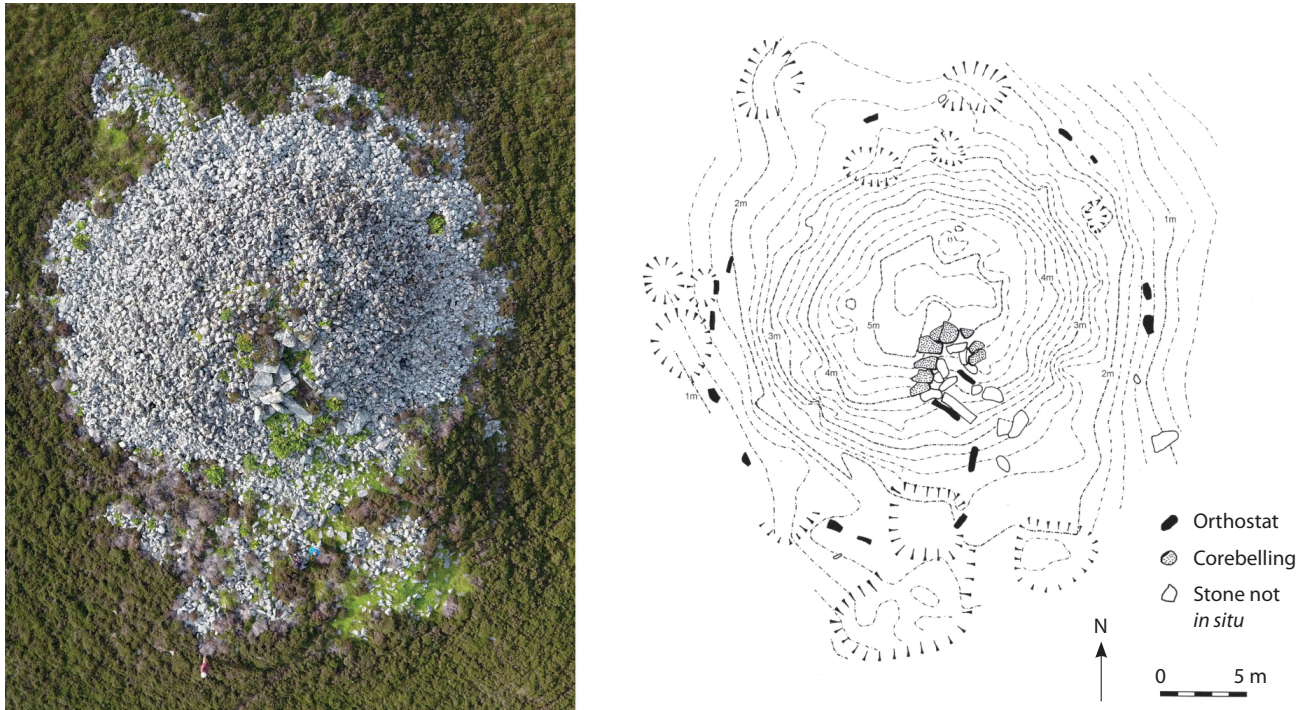


Figure 16.6. The chambered tomb at Loch a' Bharp, South Uist. A roundhouse is defined by an irregular circle of rubble and green grass in front of the entrance to the tomb. Aerial photo provided by Cameron Wesson).



Figure 16.7. A view of Loch Olibhat, North Uist. The island to the left is the Neolithic settlement, the promontory on the right is the location for a long lived Iron Age settlement

It is still unclear whether there was a deliberate connection between these two phenomena. Island locations may have indicated a deliberate reverence for important Neolithic settlements that were avoided and copied rather than reoccupied. However, architecturally Neolithic settlements in the Western Isles were not spectacular (Armit 1992; Scott 1950). Excavation has seldom revealed well preserved stone buildings and it would appear that a considerable amount of timber and turf was used in conjunction with only occasional stone. If they were being acknowledged in the Iron Age this would have to have been through social memory, and possibly the presence of artefacts, such as pottery and stone tools, rather than recognizable architectural remains.

On the island of South Uist, in the Western Isles, brochs appear to have been quite specifically constructed in a liminal position (Sharples & Parker Pearson 1997). They are located between the principal settlement zone on the machair, a shell sand deposit that lies along the west coast of the island, and the extensive areas of moorland, loch and mountain that cover the centre and east coast of the island. Most of the evidence for Iron Age settlement comes from the contemporary wheelhouse settlements that were located on the machair plain and these were clearly surrounded by fields of barley, which dominates the carbonized plant assemblages from all Iron Age settlements (Sharples 2012). In contrast, the interior of the island, during the Iron Age, was a sparsely populated peat covered bog only suitable for the summer grazing of cattle and sheep. In the recent past, the occupation of this area was seasonal and based on sheilings, temporary summer settlements, and this is likely to have been the case in the Iron Age.

This Iron Age division of the landscape into a permanently settled domesticated coastal plain and a hostile and only intermittently occupied interior was a relatively recent pattern that reflected the deterioration in the climate during the early first millennium BC. It is clear that in the Neolithic, settlements were much more evenly distributed across the island and it is possible that the machair plain was not present, or at least not sufficiently stable to be occupied (Sharples 2009). The chambered tombs were located immediately overlooking and close to contemporary settlements and this is most clearly demonstrated at Caranais on North Uist, where a Neolithic settlement was located in close proximity to the long cairn at Bharpa Caranais (Crone 1993).

In the Bronze Age, settlement began to appear on the machair (Sharples 2009), but the evidence suggests that this initially started as a seasonal occupation in the Beaker period as the landscape was still very unstable,

and it was only in the Late Bronze Age that large settlements were created. It seems likely therefore that the upland continued to be the principal location for settlement in this period, and this was certainly the principal period of forest clearance in the peat columns from the island (Brayshay & Edwards 1996).

By the Iron Age, however, things had changed dramatically; peat growth was becoming a serious problem and the centre of the island became increasingly damp and inhospitable (Sharples *et al.* 2004). Settlement was essentially forced onto the machair and there it remains for approximately 2000 years. The machair is not the most fertile environment for agriculture, nutrient levels are poor, and the shell sand can suffer catastrophic erosion if the conditions are dry and windy. Settlements were marked by the deliberate accumulation of substantial midden deposits, which helped to reduce the possibility of erosion and provided a source of manure for the cultivated areas. A dichotomy was created in the Iron Age which contrasts the inhospitable moorlands, where the homes and tombs of the ancestors were located, with the green and fertile plains of the machair, where the contemporary settlement was concentrated.

On South Uist the brochs' location on the boundaries of these two landscapes seems in many senses to be a 'defensive' arrangement to impede the continued expansion of the moorland (Fig. 16.8). However, it was also an attempt to position the local elites that occupied these structures in a location that detached them from the prosaic domestic landscapes of settlement and daily activity (Sharples & Parker Pearson 1997). This was a landscape that contained many lochs and I have argued previously that the water was an additional boundary used, together with the architecture and the location, to separate further the occupants of the brochs from other members of their community (Sharples & Parker Pearson 1997). The role of water as a substance with symbolic significance also must be considered and this can be documented in many other Iron Age societies.

The chambered cairns in this Iron Age landscape were central to the wilderness. They were too distant from the main Iron Age settlement zone to empower the elites located in the brochs. The buildings that occupied these monuments were isolated outposts in an otherwise inhospitable landscape. The wheelhouse at Clettraval might indicate the last remnants of the communities that once occupied these locales in the Bronze Age or alternatively, an ambitious attempt to recolonize the wasteland when the climate slightly improved in the Iron Age. Structures such as those found at Unival are more likely to be protection for seasonal occupations associated with the use of this area for grazing. In both cases, I would argue that the

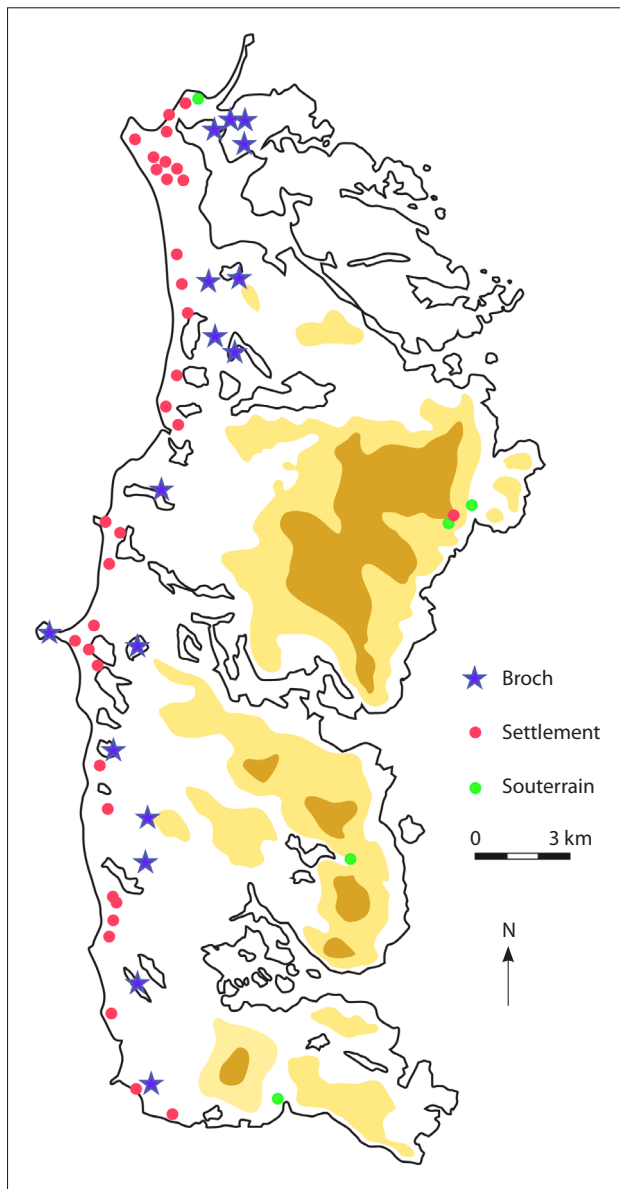


Figure 16.8. *The location of brochs and settlements on South Uist, Western Isles.*

Iron Age occupants were calling upon the ancestors for protection from the inhospitable environment that surrounded them.

Northern landscapes

This interpretation can also be used to reconsider the situation on Orkney. The Orcadian landscape is much more fertile than the Western Isles because the geology is a lime rich permeable sandstone which is eroded into rolling countryside that is generally low lying. Hills are restricted to the geological distinctive island

of Hoy and a limited area of the Orcadian mainland. The islands are generally not characterized by the clear-cut distinction between an inhospitable mountainous interior and a marginal restricted agricultural zone on the coast, which is such a prominent feature of the Western Isles. Large areas of the interior on Mainland Orkney were occupied throughout prehistory and many islands can be farmed from coast to coast.

The dense prehistoric settlement of the Orcadian landscape gives us a very different chronological narrative. In the Neolithic, the settlement densities were large enough to enable the construction of the earliest permanent village settlements in Britain (Richards *et al.* 2016). They also encouraged the development of large complex chambered tombs, the Maes Howe type, that were located within the settlement zone (Sharples 1985). The central position of these Maes Howe type tombs meant that they became the focus for ceremonial activity. They contrast with the early small tombs which were located on the edge of the uplands, a location similar to that of nearly all the tombs on the Western Isles.

These large tombs were the focus for activities throughout the Late Neolithic and the type site, Maes Howe, was incorporated into the principal ceremonial centre of the island. Many tombs were substantially remodelled during the Late Neolithic (Sharples 1984), but in the Bronze Age they appear to have been left alone and this is a period which is generally less visible in Orcadian prehistory. Their central location and substantive presence suggest they were not forgotten and ignored, but represented an ancestral presence that was avoided and perhaps regarded with some reverence.

As we enter the Iron Age, we have in contrast to the Western Isles, a domestic landscape which is extensive and not naturally split into obvious territories. It had a long and continuous history of use and preserved within it were massive monuments that were known to contain chambers with significant deposits of human remains. The construction of a roundhouse on top of the tombs was a powerful statement of change at the beginning of the Iron Age. The act immediately separated the inhabitants of the houses from other households in the profane landscape that surrounded these ritually charged monuments. The construction of the roundhouses was also carefully designed to allow but control access to the chambers of the tombs and the human remains they contained. Access was possible, but in most houses it involved traversing the main living space and at the Howe it was through an entrance that was covered by paving and perhaps invisible to visitors. It seems likely that access to the ancestors was much more restricted and controlled in

the Iron Age than it had been previously and that this privilege gave the occupants of the broch a religious as well as a secular status within the local community. They became a restricted elite who could communicate and receive instructions from the ancestors.

In Orkney, the tombs had a much more central role in the development of the Iron Age because landscape and human action in the Neolithic gave them a prominence, which was much greater than the tombs in the Western Isles. They provide the model for the development of a unique series of subterranean structures which were central to the brochs' importance in the Middle Iron Age (Sharples 2006).

Conclusion

The development of power relations in the Iron Age was focussed on the construction and occupation of architecturally sophisticated houses. These required the control of skilled builders who were able to construct these impressive towers, some up to 13 m tall. They required the mobilization of a substantial labour force in their construction and they utilized important scarce resources, most notably timber, but also good quality building stone, which though available

still required quarrying and transporting to the construction site. These buildings acted as a symbol of the independence of the local community and of the power of the family that occupied the building. The position of these families was emphasized by their liminal location. They were separated from the community by the architectural boundaries of the massive wall, the low entrance passages, the doors and guard chambers. In the Western Isles, this separation was enhanced by their location on islands surrounded by water and accessed across long narrow causeways. In Orkney, this environmental separation was not so easily available and instead ancestral locations surrounded by ancient taboos were chosen to provide this separation.

In both regions the tombs of ancestors provided a resource for the Iron Age population. In Orkney, the ancestors were a powerful symbol that could be used as a model for the development of sophisticated architecture and provided additional resources for elite control. In the Western Isles, the ancestors were more distant and divorced from contemporary society and could be called upon by individuals and communities to protect them from the hostile environment that had destroyed their ancient homelands.

Chapter 17

The nuragic adventure: monuments, settlements and landscapes

Alessandro Usai

Perhaps more than anywhere else, in Sardinia, the memory of the past is selective and consoling. It chooses the features which exalt the greatness of the Sardinian people and leaves in the shadows the moments of decline and even the normality of human activities. The nuragic civilization is still considered as the Earthly Paradise of Sardinia and, rightly or wrongly, it is perceived as the foundation of our feeling of historical and cultural identity (Frongia 2012).

The word *Nuraghe* itself (*nurac* in the Roman inscription carved on the lintel of *Nuraghe Aidu Entos* at Bortigali: Gasperini 1992, 303–6) is a living piece of memory, a venerable linguistic residue of the Bronze Age, still surviving after many changes of language in Sardinia. Trying to interpret the remains of cyclopean and megalithic monuments, the popular memory imagined a people of giants. Therefore television, newspapers and politicians still simplify and trivialize the historical meaning of the nuragic world, perpetuating complaints and claims which produce the opposite effect, even though they are justified by deep-rooted economic and social injustices.

So, what really were the *Nuraghi*? Today Sardinian archaeologists work to give new answers to this question, well beyond the answers given by the twentieth century tradition of studies. Still 60 years ago, when an absolute chronology did not exist yet in Sardinia, it was believed that the *Nuraghi* had been built in the space of one thousand years, from 1500 to 500 BC, that is from the time of the Mycenaean *tholos* tombs to that of the Carthaginian invasion (Lilliu 2000b, 14–60).

For this reason, the nuragic archaeology is still a young discipline, in which many fields remain to be explored. Today we know that the phenomenon of the *Nuraghi* was much more explosive and manifold and had a huge impact on the Sardinian landscape. About 7,000 or perhaps 10,000 *Nuraghi* were built, not

in the space of 1,000 years, but over 500 years, roughly from 1700 to 1200 BC: Middle and Late Bronze Age in Italian terms, which are the phases of formation and maturity of the nuragic cultural cycle.

The archaic *Nuraghi* are squat and low, at first provided with corridors and niches but without rooms; only afterwards did elliptical or rectangular rooms develop. The settlements, both next to the archaic *Nuraghi* and isolated, are constituted by small groups of round single buildings or by hollows dug in the ground with organic superstructures. In the same phase, the earliest ‘tombs of the giants’ appeared, megalithic burials made up of a ceremonial forecourt and a funerary gallery (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 265–9; Webster 1996, 62–84; Moravetti 2015, 39–41; Depalmas 2018, 55–6).

The *tholos* or false dome made up of rings of dry stone smaller and smaller from the base to the top, was the great invention of the nuragic architects of the mature phase, which gave to the classical *Nuraghi* their characteristic shape of towers on a round base (Fig. 17.1). This clever simplification allowed both the widespread construction of single towers and the development of complex multi-towered monuments with several rooms at ground level and one or two superposed floors (Fig. 17.2) (Lilliu 1962, 11–52; Lilliu 1988, 485–517; Moravetti 2015, 41–2; Depalmas 2018, 56–8).

In this way, the nuragic communities began to carry out a prodigious colonization of plains, hills, tablelands and mountains, organizing their territories as polycentric hierarchical districts characterized by the multiplication of monuments, settlements and tombs. This population process went along with the deforestation and the development of an efficient integrated economic system (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 269–72; Webster 1996, 85–107; Vanzetti *et al.* 2013; Usai 2015, 62).



Figure 17.1. A simple Nuraghe: Zuras (Abbasanta).

Nuraghi and nuragic societies

Scholars and the general population have perennially wondered about the *Nuraghi*'s function; yet the question is often wrongly posed. Supposing they were royal houses or fortresses or lookout towers or temples or tombs, leaving to one side even odder ideas, does not seem suitable to the organization of the societies that built them. The archaeological evidence suggests that the *Nuraghi* were built by societies that were, especially at the beginning, of a tribal type, that is compact, with minimal rank differences and weak functional specialization (Usai 1995; Webster 1996, 81–2, 98–100; Perra 1997a, 54–62; Perra 2009; Perra 2018b).

For this reason, the *Nuraghi* probably carried out all the material and symbolic functions which were necessary to the nuragic communities' life, within a mostly agricultural economic system and a social structure which was beginning to differentiate. So, though not simple dwellings, they were used for household activities; though not actual fortresses, they were also fortified buildings, etymologically 'made strong' and equipped for protecting people and things; above all

they were instruments of widespread land control and resource management, and evident signs of power and wealth of the communities that owned them. Only in the Iron Age did some *Nuraghi* become temples and only in Roman and Medieval times were they sometimes used as tombs.

It is important to stress that the several thousands of *Nuraghi* do not follow a unique ideal model; they rather constitute a polymorphic category which is highly variable in building techniques, architectural shapes, dimensions, structural and functional complexity. Actually the word *Nuraghe* defines several types of buildings which are considerably different from each other, though all are characterized and perceived as real monuments in comparison with the normal dwellings (Usai 2006, 560).

The biggest *Nuraghi* or complex *Nuraghi*, made up of several towers and courtyards, attract attention not only for their monumentality, but also because they express a structural, functional and territorial hierarchy, related to the control and management of resources and route networks. The biggest *Nuraghi* also suggest emulation and competition between neighbouring



Figure 17.2. A complex Nuraghe: Orolu (Bortigali).

communities (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 269–71). Nevertheless, it is not clear whether and how much the territorial hierarchy indicates steady rank and power differentiation within the societies; actually prestige and luxury items are extremely rare inside the *Nuraghi*, settlements and ‘tombs of the giants’, where the ancestors’ cult continued in collective and egalitarian forms.

***Nuraghi* and landscapes: colonization, exploitation and the first nuragic crisis**

An interesting feature is that some *Nuraghi* were built in the alluvial plains, where big building stones were absent. This choice required the transport of large amounts of blocks from rock layers some kilometres away. It seems likely that the construction of these big and small *Nuraghi* took place within huge territorial projects of agricultural transformation and economic and demographic reorganization (Stiglitz *et al.* 2012, 922). Here we begin to see that the cultural landscape not only adapted to the natural landscape and exploited its opportunities, but sometimes was superimposed on it and even clashed with it.

The same trend is shown by other phenomena, which reveal the mechanisms of reproduction of the settlement cells. Firstly there are clusters or chains of simple *Nuraghi* of medium-small size highly standardized, which indicate an intense effort aimed at occupation and productive transformation of areas which were important for the agricultural economy (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 271). Secondly, we know several scores of structures made up of one, two or three layers of blocks, without debris mounds and even without the usual small filling stones in the middle of the walls. They have certainly been reduced by stone robbery over the centuries, but I believe they must be interpreted as unfinished *Nuraghi*. Apart from a few uncertain cases of archaic and complex *Nuraghi*, the largest majority of them had been undoubtedly conceived to create simple *Nuraghi* (Fig. 17.3) (Usai 2006, 559; Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 271–2). Both these phenomena appear not sporadically but with several examples grouped in clusters or regular arrangements like chains along the river valleys, couples or sets of three in the plains and tablelands. In particular, the unfinished *Nuraghi* are often found next to the main



Figure 17.3. An unfinished Nuraghe: Codina 'e s'Ispreddosu (Norbello).

settlements or at the boundaries of the settlement clusters, such as to indicate failed attempts of intensification or expansion (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 272; Usai 2015, 63–4).

Certainly there are many Middle and Late Bronze Age settlements without *Nuraghi*, but in general it seems that it was important to mark the conquest of new land with the construction of a monument, beyond its mere material functions. Was this too a form of memory, a repetition of acts almost ritual in nature, though seemingly not connected to any cult, aiming at perpetuating a tradition that had to be kept alive and unchanged, like a sort of never-ending social refoundation? Of course this could be a symbolic expedient which allowed the dominant social groups to expel young people, who were forced to create new opportunities.

Actually, during the Bronze and Iron Ages the territorial development of the nuragic people took place with the multiplication of the settlements within hierarchical polycentric systems, without a tendency to urban concentration. A new settlement implies a germination project, which requires the transfer of

a human group from an occupied place to another still unoccupied which in the same time has to be reclaimed and colonized. Thus a certain amount of settlement projects could obviously fail at any time for whatever reason. Nevertheless, since in some areas the unfinished *Nuraghi* reach 40 per cent of the total, we are probably facing a systematic failure, which can be explained only by considering structural reasons connected to the transformation of the nuragic society (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 272). That is why I suppose, though, subject to proof by excavation, that the majority of these unfinished *Nuraghi* were the latest ones to be started.

Most probably, the whole of the supposed colonization, exploitation and construction projects, carried out so far as to reveal an actual frenzy, soon became unsustainable. Beyond the traditional and superficial picture of Sardinia crowded with *Nuraghi* tall like skyscrapers and powerful like castles, another hypothesis emerges: a heavy crisis, a deep disorientation, a radical and painful reorganization (Usai 2015, 64). What happened at the beginning of the Final Bronze Age? Together with the small *Nuraghi*, how many big *Nuraghi* were abandoned? How many settlements? How

many lands? At this point I can't avoid recalling the images of the last Moai statues on Easter Island, left unfinished in their quarries or abandoned along the transport ways, as the best images of a revolutionary buffer to an explosive expansion.

The extent of these phenomena is currently under discussion (Usai 2012b; Perra 2012). I believe that this first great crisis of the nuragic cycle marked the end of the construction of the *Nuraghi*, yet not the end of the *Nuraghi* themselves. Some of them were certainly abandoned; others were certainly not, and not all those which survived became temples. In general, I suppose a functional decline from communal to private or family use; in some cases at least the upper room became a simple habitation occupied in the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages.

In spite of this fascinating history, neither the popular memory nor the current political propaganda have ever been interested in the end of the *Nuraghi's* construction. The myth of the people of the giants in the Sardinian Earthly Paradise still resists.

Nuragic settlements and landscapes: reorganization and consumption of resources

Likewise, the memory and perception of the importance of settlement vanished, simply because they are not as imposing as the *Nuraghi*; nevertheless, many of them are really monumental too. As well as the temples and sanctuaries, settlement development is the most evident mark of the recovery and reorganization of the nuragic people after the crisis of the *Nuraghi* (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 272–7; Webster 1996, 108–52). It is interesting to observe that the extent of the settlements is often not proportional to the monumental size of the adjacent *Nuraghi*. Some complex *Nuraghi* have no settlement or a very small one, while some simple *Nuraghi* have large settlements. Sometimes their extent can be precisely evaluated, mainly if there is an enclosure wall, but generally one must consider the dispersal of structural remains and finds or look for weak signs of nuragic presence within settlements of Roman times. The extent of the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages settlements is generally between 0.5 and 1.5 hectares; an extent larger than three hectares must be considered exceptional. It seems that the Late Bronze Age settlements were much smaller, and even smaller were those of the Middle Bronze Age.

During the Final Bronze and the Early Iron Ages the settlement development was ambivalent: on the one hand they grew in size and population, yet without the least urban character; on the other hand they continued multiplying, producing new cells even if small or very small in size. The former were likely

permanent and long-lasting, the latter temporary and short-lived. In spite of the thorough change and the tendency to stabilization, there remained alive also the tendency to expansion, occupation of new lands, exploitation of new resources by means of transformation and colonization projects. From this point of view, the hierarchical polycentric arrangement remained unchanged, though managed by emerging elites that transformed the traditional forms of territorial and social organization into some sort of 'states without towns' (Usai 2015, 65).

The evaluation of the territorial demographic density is quite difficult, because it is impossible to establish how many settlements within a district were occupied at the same time. It is also impossible to estimate the weight of each significant factor in a picture lacking in information regarding the degree of stability, expansion, contraction, intensification or rarefaction of the settlement network. Most of the settlements provided with massive stone structures seem to have been permanently occupied for several centuries, with an evident spatial and demographic increase from the Middle to the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages. The settlement density suggests that the custom of fission was usual in any condition, as it had previously been for the *Nuraghi*, though reasonably tended to intensify in times of social tensions, generation conflicts or demographic pressure (Usai 2006, 557–60).

Thus, as for the *Nuraghi*, even more for the study of the settlements, it is necessary to lay the basis for a reconstruction at a district scale, or even better at a tribal scale. Undoubtedly, the nuragic settlements of the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages were interdependent elements of integrated networks, aiming at the exploitation and exchange of all different economic resources.

It is interesting to make a comparison between two cases in west-central Sardinia, one of which could be considered a 'normal' case and another which appears strongly anomalous.

In the Oristano area, the settlement of *Nuraghe Pìdighi* at Solarussa has been studied. It belongs to a territorial system made up of 36 *Nuraghi* (archaic, simple, complex, indeterminate and unfinished) and 22 settlements, which, without exception, remained closely connected over the centuries with the places at first occupied by the *Nuraghi*. This settlement, nearly one hectare and a half wide, developed in several phases at least from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age (Fig. 17.4). The structural development is the material indicator of the resident families' genealogy, with a growing gathering of houses and rooms because of the demographic increase within a clearly bounded space. The factor which marks the shift from settlement

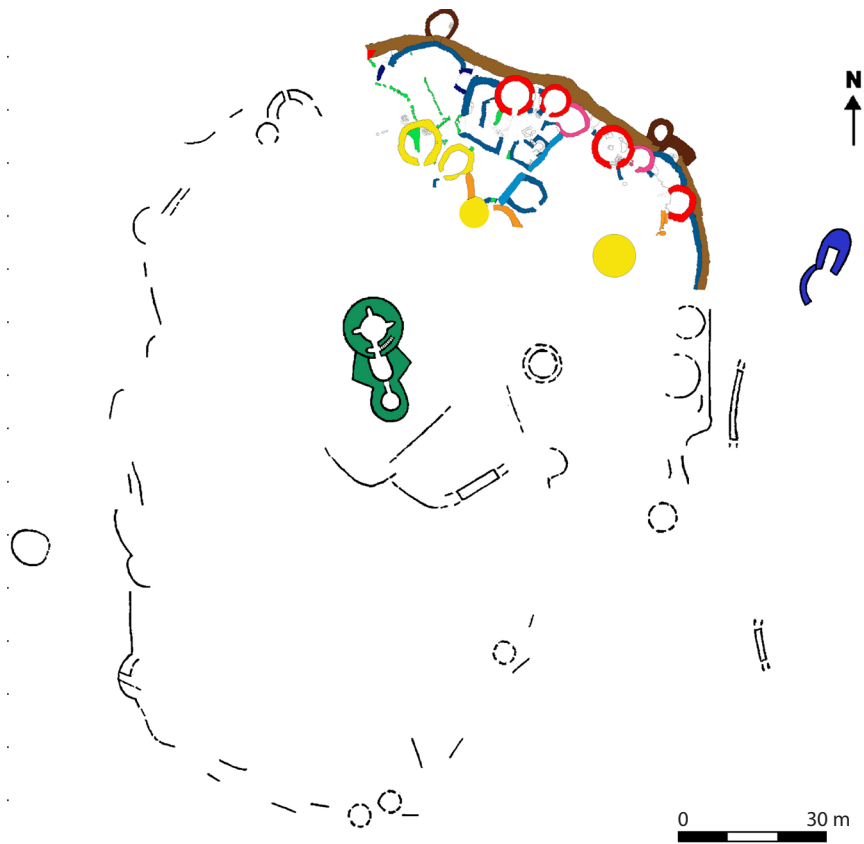


Figure 17.4. A compact nuragic settlement with the Nuraghe in the middle: Pidighi (Solarussa).

expansion to intensification is the construction of the enclosure wall, which indicates a pressing safety need. The continued settlement development around the *Nuraghe* bears witness to the permanent land occupation; its construction required a work investment even greater in comparison with the *Nuraghe* and reveals an evident confidence in the community's future, without any time limits, beyond the short life of individuals (Usai 2012c, 740–2).

The large plateau called Sa Jara or 'Giara di Gèsturi' offers a completely different picture. Scores of *Nuraghi* are distributed at different altitudes on the slopes, while the edges of the plateau are dotted with 21 *Nuraghi* and 15 settlements. There is only one archaic *Nuraghe* and a series of simple *Nuraghi* and particularly complex *Nuraghi* of small size. The settlements are partly next to the *Nuraghi*, but nearly half cases are without any *Nuraghe*. In spite of the morphological isolation, in the nuragic period the plateau had to be subdivided into several districts which were appendices of different territorial systems whose main monumental, demographic and economic centres were located on the lower fertile hills. The site of Bruncu Màduli presents a seemingly exceptional situation, which must be interpreted in a dynamic way as adaptation to the environmental

and socio-economic conditions (Fig. 17.5). The large archaic *Nuraghe* (in red), occupied at least at the end of the Middle Bronze Age, was never the centre of a compact settlement. Apart from small ruins of dwellings (in orange) lying next to the *Nuraghe* and perhaps connected to it, the settlement is made up of about ten distinct blocks and some isolated buildings (in yellow), seemingly occupied only during the Final Bronze Age. The total surface is about three hectares, while the area actually occupied by the buildings, including the *Nuraghe* and the adjacent ruins, is of about one hectare. This unusual conformation does not suggest the development of a compact community, deep-rooted for several generations in a well-defined place around a recognized aggregation centre; on the contrary it suggests the parallel course of several groups arrived at different times. I think that these groups did not arrive spontaneously but in consequence of precise directives aiming at alleviating the overpopulation of the hilly areas, so promoting the exploitation of the marginal resources of the plateau and the activation of a product redistribution system. This impression is strengthened by the conformation of each block, which seems to have its own centripetal organization, tending to intensification instead of expansion, perhaps to keep unaltered the distances

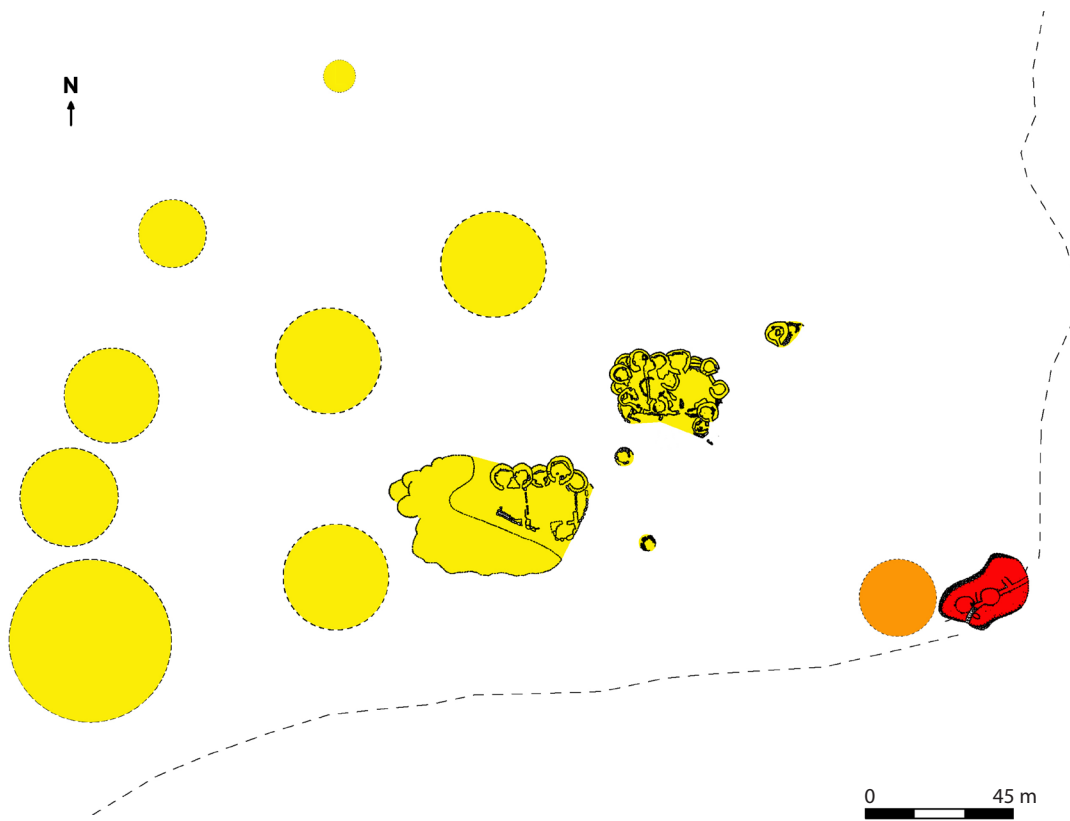


Figure 17.5.
A nuragic settlement made up of isolated blocks with the Nuraghe on its edge: Bruncu Māduli (Gèsturi).

and prevent fusion with the adjacent blocks (Usai 2012c, 742–4).

The nuragic complex houses have been compared to similar African compounds known as kraals; the similarity has been interpreted as an indication of the existence of polygamous households comprising few men, more women, their children, some dependents and animals (Webster 1996, 126–8). This interpretation remains unproved.

These nuragic landscapes were defined not only by monuments, but by the relationships among all the natural and artificial, material and immaterial elements of both land and resident community, and by the relationships with the neighbouring landscapes: internal and external relations of power, exchange, marriage, collaboration or exploitation. These were landscapes of hard work, conquered with force applied to nature, planned and domesticated with patience, transformed into Mediterranean gardens: most often these were rocky, spiny and arid gardens, but in some favourable areas there are elements which also indicate an early development of intensive specialized gardens with fig trees, grapevines and watermelons, as proven since the Late Bronze Age in the settlement of Sa Osa at Cabras, in the alluvial plain of Tirso river (Usai 2011; Usai 2015, 66). Many of these landscapes

are still exploited; many have been exhausted over the centuries, then abandoned or left to extensive pasture.

No memory of that is preserved, apart from the archaeological research. Yet perhaps the nuragic people tried to construct a memory of their work. For instance, the bronze statuettes and ships with scenes of agricultural work, were they only realistic images or rather celebrations of work or even commemorations of mythical colonization enterprises?

Degeneration and dissolution of the nuragic civilization

The period between the later Final Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age (tenth to first half of the eighth century BC in traditional chronology) appears to have been the time of maximum settlement occupation, wealth accumulation in the sanctuaries and development of the workshops which produced ritual offerings in bronze and stone. During this period the social elites, that had become leaders of the reorganization process, legitimized and celebrated their own power by exploiting the religious practices (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 272–7; Webster 1996, 153–94). Against the opinion of some authoritative scholars, I believe that this was the time of the last nuragic apogee. Of course,

that world had deeply changed in comparison with the times of the cyclopean monuments.

In spite of the lack of systematic data, the example of the settlement of *Nuraghe Pidighi* leads me to believe that at least a part of the enclosure walls of the west-central settlements may belong to the later Final Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age. In fact, in some regions, those walls might mark the main settlements which had not been abandoned earlier, as a response to a widespread safety need expressed during that period, or as a means to strengthen the emerging social elites. This does not exclude the persistence of several undefended settlements up to the Early Iron Age.

Throughout Sardinia, the nuragic sanctuaries, which were the pulsating centres of the social and economic organization, reached the peak of their development during the ninth and the eighth centuries BC, then began to decay and disappeared very fast. In some regions of southern Sardinia, many settlements survived during the Late Iron Age (late eighth to seventh centuries BC in traditional chronology), with a material culture which bears witness to the dissolution of the nuragic tradition and the growing cultural hybridization between the island people and the Phoenician newcomers. In other regions, like west-central Sardinia where I am working, it seems that most settlements were abandoned during the Early Iron Age or at its end. In the Oristano region just a handful of settlements were still occupied during the Late Iron Age. Here we are facing a real process of recession and depopulation, which does not seem to be compensated at all by the urbanization of local groups into the new coastal towns founded by the Phoenicians (Usai 2012b; Usai 2015, 68–9). Yet it is worthy of note that other thorough studies are trying to trace elements of continuity and indications for an active role of the communities of nuragic tradition (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2009, 280–3; Bernardini 2012a; Stiglitz 2018; Usai 2018).

Therefore, the Iron Age of Sardinia looks like a period of accelerated evolution, if not revolution. It is not anymore marked by outdated ideas of opposition between two ethnic and cultural blocks; nevertheless, the exhaustion of the nuragic cultural cycle retains a huge historical importance, for it expresses a complex and painful process of transformation, disintegration and readaptation, in which played both factors of continuity and change.

Conclusion

Although it may appear paradoxical, I believe that the last nuragic apogee period did not precede, but on the contrary included in itself a great part of the degeneration process. I intend degeneration as conversion of traditional strong points into limitations and weakening factors: for instance, from the expansion of land to the exhaustion of resources, from competition to conflict, from settlement multiplication to inability to achieve urban evolution. The nuragic societies of the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages had overflowing resources and energies, but were also fragile and had no alternatives. The exhaustion or internal depletion should have involved the disintegration of the system, but this could not emerge in the outward appearances (and in the archaeological record) until the complete maturation of the process and the consequent collapse, which should have been only seemingly sudden. I believe that this process, which had begun in the brightest times of the nuragic cultural cycle, underwent a strong acceleration during the second half of the eighth century BC, and finished around the end of the century with assimilation and loss of cultural identity. Nevertheless, the popular memory still prefers to believe that the nuragic people were overwhelmed by the Phoenicians, firstly by fraud and then by arms. By this account the end of the nuragic Earthly Paradise was the first historical injustice suffered by Sardinia.

Chapter 18

Changing media in shaping memories: monuments, landscapes and ritual performance in Iron Age Europe

Peter Wells

Mounds containing burials are an important aspect of prehistoric European cultural landscapes in central Europe. In some periods and regions, mound burial was common, in other contexts less so. During the Early Iron Age (800–450 BC) in the central regions of temperate Europe, mound burial became a standard part of funerary ritual. In the earlier part of the period, when cremation was common practice, mounds typically contained remains of one or two individuals. Later, when inhumation came to predominate, frequently more than 10 individuals were interred in a mound, and sometimes well over 100, as at the Magdalenenberg tumulus in the Black Forest region (Spindler 1976) and at Stična in Slovenia (Gabrovec 1966).

At the beginning of the Late Iron Age (Early La Tène Period), mound burial continued, but ordinarily without the very large mounds of the Late Hallstatt Period. From the early fourth century BC onwards, mound burial became rare in most parts of temperate Europe, and common practice was flat inhumation.

In regions east and south of the Main-Rhine confluence, the practice of burying the dead waned during the second century BC, and although a few small cemeteries are known, the large cemeteries that we would expect at the great *oppidum* settlements are missing. Evidence from a number of sites indicates that some kind of funerary rituals involving bones of the dead were performed in settlement contexts (see below), but the nature of these rituals is unclear.

Following the Roman conquests of Gaul and the lands east of the Rhine, the practice of sub-surface burial was resumed. Although some mounds are known from this period, more common practice for well outfitted burials was stone monuments placed above the ground that commemorated the buried individuals.

Constructing above-ground monuments, visible to living communities for generations, would seem to be very different from leaving graves unmarked on

the surface, or at least unmarked as far as any kind of permanent markers were concerned. In this chapter, I argue that the changes summarized above are connected to different ways of creating memories (Jones 2007), which in turn were linked to major cultural changes taking place during the final half millennium of prehistory.

Memory

For purposes here, memory is the recollection of objects, experiences, and social relationships, based on both what a person or group has seen and done and on the transformations that take place in people's minds as they recollect past events and experiences (Connerton 1989). Through our memories we fashion our identities, both as individuals and as members of communities. We need memories upon which to base our present and future thoughts and actions.

Memory, monuments and the performance of ritual

Funerary rituals are critical events in societies. They are highly charged emotionally, and when the deceased is a person of social or political importance, they are of political significance (Huntington & Metcalf 1979). These ceremonies remain strong in the memories of participants. (For examples from contexts for which textual accounts are available, see Kurtz & Boardman 1971 on ancient Greece and Owen-Crocker 2000 on *Beowulf*.) As Williams notes (2004, 94), the ways that rituals are performed, including the ways in which objects are manipulated, determine how the events are remembered.

Graves are the material manifestations of funerary ceremonies, and from them we can learn a great deal about the ceremonies. The discussion that follows



Figure 18.1. Map of principal sites mentioned in the text. Basemap source: Esri.

focuses on well outfitted burials. The same principles apply to less richly equipped graves.

The objects that were placed in Iron Age graves were selected to convey specific meanings (Hallam & Hockey 2001, 1). This aspect is apparent when we compare assemblages of objects in different graves of the same period and region. It is clear that specific rules were followed with regard to the inclusion of certain kinds of objects, though every grave was unique.

Although in most cases we cannot reconstruct in detail the process through which objects were placed into graves (but for some instances in which we can, see Wells 2012, 162–5), it is most likely that objects were displayed to those participating in the ceremony as they were being set into the grave, perhaps held aloft to the accompaniment of words spoken about how the object was important to the deceased individual and to the community. The objects are likely to have served as mnemonic devices to guide those performing the ceremony, in the sense of extended mind theory (Clark 2008; see Williams 2007, 145).

Cultural rules also guided the arrangement of grave goods – the ways in which they were arranged with respect to the remains of the deceased, to the walls of the grave, and to other objects. Arranged graves can be understood as ‘diagrams’ of their communities and their societies, in the sense that Bender and Marrinan (2010) argue that arrangements of objects and people

in representations are diagrams of how societies work and of how their memories are created. (For full details of this argument for graves as diagrams, see Wells 2012, Chapter 8.)

Patterns of change – Early Iron Age burial: ritual performances for individuals and their monuments in the landscape (800–450 BC)

The Early Iron Age grave at Hochdorf, near Ludwigsburg in southwest Germany, dating to about 525 BC, was richly outfitted with culturally important objects, was undisturbed, and was very well excavated (Biel 1985). In the context of the present discussion, I highlight four aspects of this grave with respect to the theme of memory.

Those who arranged the body of the man attached to it a whole series of visually evocative objects that would remain in the memories of all who attended the funerary ceremony. He was decorated from head to foot with gold – neck ring, two fibulae on his chest, wide ornate bracelet, gold belt plaque, dagger in a gold-covered sheath at his waist, and sheet gold ornaments on his shoes. Whatever members of his community recalled of him in life, they would surely remember how he looked in death, laid out with this elaborate display of gold on his body (for more detail on the visual aspects of this individual, see Wells 2008, 66–9).

The most striking theme conveyed by the burial assemblage at Hochdorf is the representation of the man's social role by the feasting equipment that literally framed the space inside the oak-built chamber (Fig. 18.2). The body was laid out on an ornate bronze couch, a type of furniture that played a central role in feasts (*symposia*) in the Greek and Etruscan worlds (Boardman 1990). At his feet was an enormous bronze cauldron manufactured in a Greek colonial workshop, along with a gold bowl. On the south wall of the chamber were hung nine drinking horns, all decorated with gold bands; along the east wall was a four-wheeled wagon with nine bronze dishes on it – apparently drink and food containers for the deceased man and eight of his followers. This arrangement of objects in the grave seems to have been designed specifically to emphasize his role as host and leader (Krausse 1996). The material representation of this role, through these visually striking objects – especially the cauldron, 80 cm high, 104 cm in diameter, and with a capacity of some 500 l – surely created a vivid memory in the minds of the participants and observers.

The third visually striking aspect of the burial chamber is the open space in the centre, measuring about 2.5 by 4 m – the affordance, to apply James J. Gibson's (1977, 1979) concept for visually empty spaces. Whether this space was left open during the ceremony, or occupied by people moving in and out

and performing with objects as they conducted the ritual, this open space was, as Gibson argues, visually critical to the message conveyed by the grave. It was a space of potential, bounded by highly evocative objects. And it would have been remembered as such by those present at the performance.

Finally, and perhaps most powerfully affective as regards memory, was the laying out of bedding on the couch and the subsequent wrapping of the body and later of the entire contents of the grave in brightly coloured textiles. Movement of objects makes them much more visible and attention-getting than stationary states of objects (Gregory 1998). When we watch someone manipulate objects – swinging an axe against a tree, lifting a chalice, or wrapping something in cloth – our brain responds to seeing those actions by taking part in them vicariously (Johnson 2007, 19–32). These responses would result in more vivid and lasting memories than simply seeing objects in a stationary tableau. Because of the unusually favourable conditions of preservation and the detailed analysis of organic remains by Udelgard Körber-Grohne (1985) and of textiles in particular by Joanna Banck (1996, Banck-Burgess 1999), we can say much about movement and sequential actions in the manipulation of these materials.

Körber-Grohne's analysis shows that in preparation of laying out the man's body, a layer of badger fur was set down on the couch. On top of that was placed a textile woven from hemp, on that stalks of grass set perpendicular to the weave of the hemp. Next were placed finely woven textile of badger hair, and on top, wool. The corpse was wrapped in a blue cloth decorated at the edges with red bands, then in a red textile, and finally another blue textile was placed over the lower part of the body. Other textiles decorated objects in the grave, and others were hung on the walls of the chamber. Many of the textiles were decorated with geometrical motifs woven into the fabrics.

Before the burial chamber was closed, every object was wrapped in textile (reconstruction drawing in Banck 1996, 40–1). If the wrapping was carried out in front of the participants in the ceremony, this action may have been the most powerful of all with regard to the creation of memories of the event – removing the objects from the visual world of the observers through a dramatic performance (Banck-Burgess 1999, 129).

These practices at Hochdorf are apparent in richly outfitted burials throughout the central regions of temperate Europe, though preservation of textiles is rarely as good. Other examples include chamber graves in northern Württemberg, notably Grafenbühl (Zürn 1970); and at Vix in eastern France (Rolley 2003), Grosseibstadt in northern Bavaria (Kossack 1970), and Hradenín in Bohemia (Filip 1966). In all of these

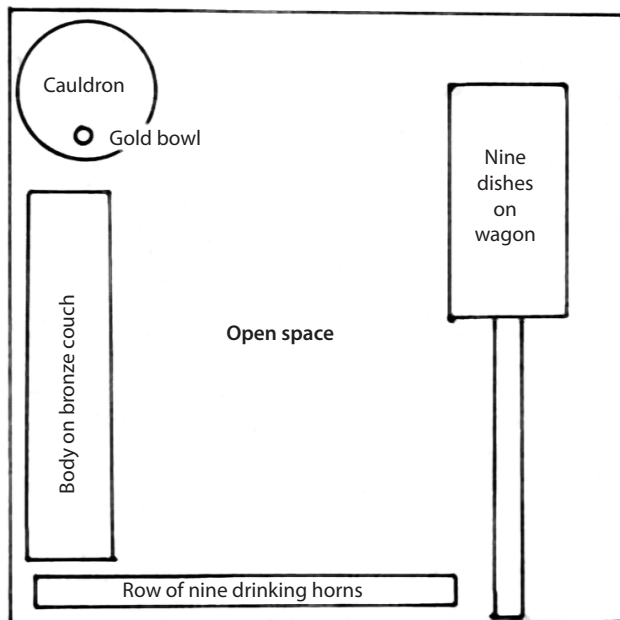


Figure 18.2. Schematic plan of the Hochdorf burial chamber, showing the framing of the central space by the objects referring to feasting, and the open space in the centre.

chamber tombs, the individual buried was decorated with special personal ornaments, often of gold, and in the chamber, feasting vessels played a major role in the funerary display. Open space was regularly a part of the overall display arrangement in this period.

Two elements of this set of practices are especially important, because they changed in the fifth century BC. One is the outfitting of the grave with feasting equipment for multiple participants, not just for the one deceased individual. The multiple sets of vessels, and extraordinarily large capacity of some, such as the Vix krater and the Hochdorf cauldron, represent the deceased's social role as host in the community. This individual-community link is all important, as will be seen below. The second is the open space in the burial chambers, unoccupied by grave goods – the affordances in Gibson's sense.

The richly outfitted burials of the sixth and early fifth centuries BC were the sites of the most elaborate rituals of which we have evidence during this period, in terms of expenditure of goods and labour, and presumably in numbers of participants. Both the focus on the individual person as community leader and the leaving of a substantial monument were closely connected to the hierarchical social structure of the time (for recent discussions of social structure, see the papers in Kienlin & Zimmermann 2012).

Patterns of change – community rituals and new kinds of memory: Early and Middle La Tène (450–150 BC)

The most familiar change in the archaeological material of the fifth century BC is the development of the Early La Tène style of ornament. But this was only one of a series of changes. At the end of the fifth century BC and the beginning of the fourth, burial mounds were still constructed over some graves, notably over the relatively richly outfitted burials of the Paris Basin, the Middle Rhineland, and Bohemia (summary articles in Moscati *et al.* 1991, 127–91). But the graves in those mounds were arranged differently from Hochdorf and the other chamber tombs of the preceding centuries.

Glauberg grave 1 will serve as an example, since it was well excavated recently and is typical in important ways (Frey & Herrmann 1997). Like Hochdorf, it contained the body of a man outfitted with gold and bronze ornaments and with weapons. Instead of feasting vessels for nine individuals, this grave contained a single ornate bronze jug. The gold, the ornate fibulae, the weapons, and the jug mark this man as elite for his time, but in contrast to Hochdorf, it is only the status of the man himself that is represented in the grave goods, not his role in his community.

Consistent with this perspective is the lack of open space in the grave chamber. As the plan (Frey & Herrmann 1997, 467, Fig. 7) shows, the body and the accouterments fill the grave space. There is no open space into which participants might move during the performance of the funerary ceremony. Other graves of this period – around 400 BC – show this same pattern, for example the relatively richly outfitted woman's grave at Reinheim (Keller 1965, 16, Fig. 4).

A large number of cemeteries dating to the fourth, third, and early second centuries BC are known all over temperate Europe (map in Müller 2009, 83, Fig. 79). The graves are generally small, just big enough to accommodate the bodies, typically laid out flat on their backs with legs extended (e.g. Hodson 1968; Waldhauser 1987). Women's graves typically include items of personal ornament (neck rings, bracelets, fibulae). Some but not all men's graves contain weapons (swords, spears, occasionally shields or helmets). Exceptionally richly outfitted graves are rare, though some differentiation in burial wealth is recognizable (Bujna 1982).

Instead of the most elaborate community rituals being carried out at the graveside, as at Hochdorf, Vix, and other Early Iron Age chamber and tumulus burials, community ceremonies were performed now at spacious, open enclosures, or 'sanctuaries', as they are often called in the literature (Poux 2006). In contrast to burial chambers like Hochdorf, these sites provided spacious enclosures where potentially hundreds of people could assemble to witness and participate in the performance of ceremonies that included the breaking and depositing of quantities of weapons. At Gournay-sur-Aronde the excavators estimate that the over 2000 weapons recovered represent the full accoutrements of some 500 warriors (Brunaux 2006). Open places where hundreds could assemble to participate in ceremonies are apparent at other kinds of sites as well, such as the water deposit sites at La Tène in Switzerland (Alt 2007) and at Hjortspring in Denmark (Kaul 1988) and at the 'fire offering sites' (*Brandopferplätze*) in Alpine and Alpine foothill regions, as at Forggensee in Bavaria (Zanier 1999) and Wartau in Switzerland (Pernet & Schmid-Sikimić 2007).

The performances at these sites – breaking swords and spearheads at Gournay, throwing weapons into the lake at La Tène, tossing tools and weapons on fires in the Alps – all took place in open spaces, with broad views of the countryside, with the possibility of being attended by large numbers of people (Fig. 18.3). Where small communities could attend the funerary ceremonies at Hochdorf and at the other Early Iron Age burials, all focused on a single individual and his or her role in the community, now much larger numbers of people could participate, and the focus was no longer

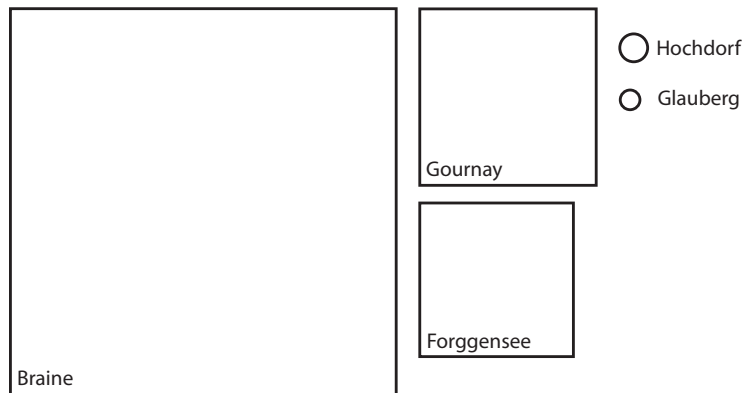


Figure 18.3. Schematic sketches of sites of memory-generating performances, all drawn at the same scale. Hochdorf and Glauberg are represented here by the entire burial mounds, though the performances were focused on the graves in them, which occupied much smaller spaces. The performance spaces of Gournay, Forggensee, and Braine are represented by squares showing the areas of the enclosure interiors where performances took place.

on the relation of an individual to a community but rather on the entire community itself. At these sites, there is no evidence for special attention devoted to any single individual. The result was the creation of memories of communities, not of specific persons.

Patterns of change – increasing engagement with the wider world: Late La Tène (150–25 BC)

Throughout much of the central regions of temperate Europe, the practice of burying the dead in the ground declined during the second century BC. We have no sizable cemeteries at the major *oppida* during this period, and only west of the Rhine and from the Moselle valley north do we find substantial cemeteries. Instead of subsurface burial, throughout much of temperate Europe, rituals surrounding the dead changed to a variety of practices involving manipulation of the bones of the deceased, frequently on settlement sites. At Manching, human bones from hundreds of individuals recovered on the settlement have been extensively studied (Lange 1983, Hahn 1992, 1999), and they have been recovered at other *oppida*, including Breisach-Hochstetten in southwest Germany, Basel-Gasfabrik in Switzerland, and at Knovice in Bohemia. Little is known about the rituals practised. Practices involving the manipulation of human skeletal parts, but not burial of the type represented earlier in the Iron Age, are evident at other sites as well, as for example Acy-Romance in France (Lambot 2006) and Leonding in Austria (Pertlwieser 2001).

The occurrence of human skeletal remains on big settlements suggests that whatever the rituals may have been, they were public affairs, not restricted to the celebration of specific individuals. The evidence at Manching suggests that no special treatment was accorded to deceased individuals, and the bones did not end up in any kind of special grave or ossuary.

Many open-air sites of the preceding period continued in use during these times and often on into

the Roman Period. At the Forggensee, depositional practice continued from the late prehistoric Iron Age into Roman times (Zanier 1999), and many of the sanctuary sites in France and other parts of Gaul, as at Empel in the Netherlands, continued in use throughout the period of the conquest and into provincial Roman times (Arcelin & Brunaux 2003, Roymans & Derks 1994). Of special importance for my argument below is the appearance of some rectangular enclosures considerably larger than earlier ones, defined by ditches with deposits of quantities of imported Roman amphorae in them in place of the damaged weapons that characterize the earlier sites such as Gournay. Braine in Aisne, France (Fig. 18.3, left), is among the best documented examples of these larger sanctuaries (Auxiette *et al.* 2000).

Two new media became major factors in forming and preserving memory during the second and final centuries BC – coins and writing. Both of these media are complex in their significance; here I highlight just one aspect. Although the idea of coinage was introduced into temperate Europe in the latter part of the fourth century BC, and local coinages developed throughout the third, not until the second did legends come into common use – names written in Greek and Latin letters (Allen & Nash 1980, 107). Allen and Nash observe that some 500 or 600 different names have been identified on coins of this period, indicating that writing in this form and medium had become widespread. Evidence for writing in other media, such as stamped on swords (Wyss 1956) and incised on pottery (Krämer 1982), is less common but nonetheless significant. Caesar's remark (Gallic Wars I, 29) that his troops found in the Helvetian camp 'records written out in Greek letters' supports the idea that writing was considerably more widespread in Late La Tène temperate Europe than the inscriptions on coins and other metal objects, and on pottery, would suggest. As Greg Woolf has noted (2009, 47), the practice of writing expanded greatly in the Roman world during the second century BC. With

all of the interaction evident in imported amphorae, pottery, bronze vessels, and coins from the Roman Mediterranean into temperate Europe, it is not difficult to imagine how writing was adopted, at least by those involved in the commerce.

As many researchers have argued (Goody 1986; Olson 2009), there are close and important connections between writing and memory. The presence of writing in a society changes the way people use material culture to preserve memory, whether each individual in the society is able to read or not. When subsurface burial of the dead was resumed as common practice in temperate Europe after the Roman conquests, many of the dead, at least among the elites, were commemorated with written burial monuments – gravestones with Latin inscriptions that spelled out the information which earlier had been conveyed by performances with objects placed in burials and by mounds erected in the landscape.

Interpretation

During the first centuries of the Iron Age, the greatest expenditure of resources and energy for ceremonial purposes was in the construction and arrangement of chamber burials under large earth mounds, as at Hochdorf. All indications are that the performance of the funerary ritual was a community event, and the arrangement of the selected objects in the chamber was intended to create powerful memories in the participants. The dominant theme of the funerary process was the individual in his or her role as an elite member of the community.

Early in the fifth century BC, this practice changed. The practice of erecting mounds declined, and small and spatially restricted graves replaced the spacious chambers of the previous century, and even the wealthiest burials (e.g. Waldalgesheim–Joachim 1995) contained only feasting equipment for one person, not for the groups represented by the sets in the earlier chamber burials. The focus of burial ritual was on the individual person, not on the person's role in the community. Much greater amounts of effort and material were expended in the construction of large open-air enclosures and in the display and deposition of quantities of material objects. These sites bear no signs of status display with respect to individuals, but rather emphasize community performances in large-scale deposition of swords, spears, shields, and other objects. The memories created in these events concerned communities, not individuals.

This profound shift from expenditure of effort and resources focused on individuals to expenditure focused on communities requires comment. Looking

beyond the confines of temperate Europe, we can see abundant evidence that long-distance contacts and interactions, not only with societies of the Mediterranean basin but beyond, were playing important roles in changing the worldview of people in temperate Europe. The stylistic elements of the new Early La Tène style were part of a Eurasia-wide sharing of design elements and motifs during the fifth and fourth centuries BC (discussion in Wells 2012, 201–9; 2019). Importation of exotic goods from beyond Europe also attests to the opening up of the continent to influences and products from other societies of the wider world, including ivory from Africa or Asia, silk from Asia, and ornate glass and metal vessels from north Africa and western Asia (Mac Sweeney & Wells 2018).

Another important indication of a widespread change in attitude toward the outside world is apparent in the treatment of imports from the societies of the Mediterranean region. The bronze vessels and Attic pottery that were imported from the Etruscan and Greek worlds during the seventh, sixth, and early fifth centuries BC were rarely altered by craftworkers in temperate Europe – they seem to have been valued as they were received and treated with special attention in their use in feasting rituals and funerary ceremonies. At the same time that the La Tène style of ornament developed, during the fifth century BC, we see indications of a change in attitude toward imports and presumably toward the societies from which they came. To cite just two examples – the Attic cups in the Kleinaspergle grave were transformed by a local goldsmith through the addition of La Tène-style ornaments of sheet gold to the ceramic bodies (Schaaff 1988); and the Etruscan bronze jug from Weiskirchen I was decorated locally with incised linear patterns, as were other imported vessels of this time (Megaw 1970, 63; drawing in Haffner 1966, 214). Whatever the specific reasons behind such alterations might have been, they show a change in attitude toward imports that had previously been unaltered after they arrived north of the Alps.

Textually attested service of 'Celtic' mercenaries in armies of potentates in the central and eastern Mediterranean regions during the fourth and third centuries BC (Szabó 1991) was another important aspect of this increasingly outward-looking activity on the part of Europeans. And the commercial activity between communities in temperate Europe and societies elsewhere, represented by the imports noted above, provided other contexts for interaction and development of new kinds of cultural self-awareness.

In this context of increasing interaction with the outside world, monuments and memorable experiences took on different aspects from those of earlier

times. The place of the individual in relation to the community became less critical, and the community as a whole, affirming its status and solidarity through performance of public ceremonies in open spaces, became more important. Memories created through large public ceremonies replaced memories generated by ceremonies performed with respect to individuals.

The introduction of coins and writing was part of the increasing involvement of communities of temperate Europe in the affairs – commercial, political and military – of the wider world of the greater Mediterranean basin (Dietler 2010). Quantities of Roman amphorae, pottery, bronze vessels, and coins attest to the growing scale of commerce between north and south. Exchange goods from the north remain elusive, but what have been interpreted as slave chains at Manching and elsewhere (Sievers 2003, 124) may point to a major aspect of the southward commerce, along with goods cited by Strabo (IV, 5, 2) and others.

The importance of a much more commercially orientated worldview during the final century BC is apparent in the character of the few unusually rich burials of this period (though they do not compare in wealth of gold and other luxury materials with Hochdorf, Vix, and Grafenbühl of the earlier period). For example, the grave at Clemency in Luxembourg included 10 Roman ceramic amphorae in the chamber (Metzler *et al.* 1991), that at Welwyn Garden City in southern Britain included 6 such amphorae (Stead 1967). This replacement of traditional local signs of special status, such as gold neck rings and fibulae, with signs of affiliation with the extensive commercial networks of the day is an indication of a substantial shift in the character of memories formed at ceremonial performances during the final half millennium BC. These individuals were not decked out with gold ornaments such as the Hochdorf man or the Vix woman were, suggesting that it was not so much the individual nor his or her role in the social system of the community that was being memorialized, but rather their position in commercial networks that were coming to dominate much of Late La Tène life. The display of amphorae in the sanctuaries at Braine and elsewhere, rather than the decorated weapons of Gournay and the other earlier sanctuaries, further emphasizes this aspect of ritual activity celebrated around the material signs of wider commerce rather than integration into local

communities. Memories of rituals at sanctuaries such as Braine and others at which imported commodities played such a major role (Poux 2006) were built around these new values that derived from the growing connections between communities in temperate Europe and societies in other parts of the world.

In temperate Europe, these widespread changes are further apparent in mass production of goods for the first time. Pottery made on the fast wheel came to dominate assemblages at both major settlements such as Manching and smaller settlements in the countryside. Iron tools and ornaments were manufactured in large series. And fibulae were mass produced. In all of these manufactures, detailed ornament and other individualizing features of objects that were so characteristic of earlier times largely disappear.

Conclusion

The character of monuments and of performances carried out at them can help us to understand how the kinds of memories created through ritual practices changed along with much else during the final half millennium of the prehistoric Iron Age. During the Early Iron Age, the construction of burial mounds and the performance of funerary rituals at them created memories about individuals and their roles in their communities. A couple of centuries later, as communities in temperate Europe became increasingly aware of, and interacted with, societies of the Mediterranean basin and beyond, the emphasis shifted to open public spaces, where much larger numbers of people could congregate to participate in performances with objects that emphasized the community, not any one individual's role. In the final two centuries of prehistory, as European communities became increasingly entangled in economic and political affairs of the larger world, writing began to replace objects as a medium for remembering, a point nicely illustrated by coins bearing legends. At the same time, both burials of some individuals (Clemency, Welwyn Garden City) and ever-larger public monuments constructed for ritual performance (Braine) emphasized the increasing role of the connections with other societies that created memories in this period, as communities of temperate Europe became ever more thoroughly involved in the affairs of the larger world.

Chapter 19

Cultivated and constructed memory at the nineteenth-century cemetery of Cagliari

Hannah Malone

A cemetery is a monument, or rather a collection of monuments, which serves to generate, reinforce, and perpetuate memories. However, that function cannot be easily defined in that it is complex, dynamic, and multifaceted. A cemetery is a vessel for many memories, not only of the recent dead, but also of cities, communities, and cultures. Moreover, the perpetuation of memories is an on-going and evolving process.

The Bonaria cemetery of Cagliari

This chapter represents an attempt to unfold the layers of memory associated with the nineteenth-century cemetery of Bonaria in Cagliari, Sardinia. It explores the construction of memories, and their evolution over time, with an eye to different analytical frameworks pertaining to monuments and memory (mainly: Riegl 1903; Halbwachs 1980; Rossi 1987; Lowenthal 1985; Connerton 1989; Gillis 1994; & Choay 2001).

The Bonaria cemetery in Cagliari is a rewarding case study partly because it accommodates a range of private and public monuments and their associated meanings. Whereas, on the one hand, a funerary monument is intended to commemorate an individual or a family, it also embodies memories regarding the social and political structures that bound the dead into a particular culture, and into alliances based on power and class. In that a tomb is a measure of the economic and socio-political status of the deceased, it carries meanings that relate both to individual remembrance and to the social, or collective, memory (Halbwachs 1980, Chapter 1). In short, a cemetery preserves memories that are both individual and collective, or that relate to the dead, the community, and society. However, the meanings, or memories, carried by cemeteries and funerary monuments are both reinterpreted, and overlaid, by subsequent generations.



Figure 19.1. Cagliari, Bonaria cemetery, monument to Antonietta Todde Pera (Ambrogio Celi 1879).

These memories are evident, for example, in the case of a monument at the Bonaria cemetery in Cagliari that was created by Ambrogio Celi in 1879 (Fig. 19.1, Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 88–90). That monument was originally erected to the memory of a

young mother, Antonietta Todde Pera, who died aged twenty-five, leaving three children. Thus, its main purpose was to commemorate an individual. It may also be seen as a monument to an aspiring wealthy bourgeoisie, as reflected in the detailed and realistic depiction of Antonietta's modern and fashionable dress. The sculpture is also a testament to Christian beliefs that are expressed by the presence of an angel. However, as the mother's face carries an expression of mute sorrow rather than the certainty of salvation, this might be taken to suggest the impact of Romanticism, and the attention awarded to private and individual sentiments within nineteenth-century culture (Ariès 1974, 55–84; Ariès 1981, 409–558; Laqueur 2015, 271–312; Malone 2017b, 834–5). Seen in this light, the tomb is a celebration of the virtues of motherhood and the importance of the family in middle-class life. It also records a moment in art history and, more precisely, the period in the latter half of the 1800s when a new style emerged in Italian funerary sculpture. Termed 'bourgeois realism' for its reliance on middle-class patronage, that style was characterized by a shift from the representation of allegorical figures in classical dress, which were typically toga-clad personifications of faith or charity, to the portrayal of real-life characters in contemporary clothes – most often representing the dead and their relatives (Sborgi 1988, 355–62; Berresford 2004, 60–5; Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 79; Malone 2017a, 66–80). In this instance, there is also potential evidence of associations with the development of photography in the frozen poses adopted by the figures, which create the appearance of a *tableau vivant* (Sborgi 1988, 388).

Given that the immediate descendants of Antonietta Todde Pera are now also deceased, the monument's original meanings, which were both personal and related to the commemoration of a known individual, have been lost. In effect, it might be assumed that the monument no longer performs its initial function in terms of commemoration and mourning. However, each succeeding generation may reinterpret that monument, adding new memories, and investing it with new meanings that overlay, and eventually replace, those that were tied to its original commemorative purpose. Individual memories might be forgotten, but broader social, historical, and human meanings persist. Thus, a tomb that was once invested with personal memories associated with an individual develops into a monument that may adopt a succession of meanings within the collective memory – meanings that represent an evolving culture and society. In this respect, a tomb also becomes, over the course of time, a historical monument. That expression is used in the definition coined by the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl (1858–1905) in his seminal essay of 1903 entitled, 'Der moderne Denkmalkultus: sein Wesen und seine

Entstehung', which translates as 'The modern cult of monuments: its character and origins' (Riegl 1903, 72; also, Choay 2001). The distinction is that the message of a monument is dictated by its original creators, but the meaning and value of a historical monument are established by later viewers. This implies that, whereas the monument has a deliberate intent, the historical monument is unintentional, or rather it describes the state in which the tomb's original purpose has been superseded by the superimposition of additional, or posthumous, meanings.

The collective memory

The definition of private and collective memory, which can be applied to a single monument, may be extended to cemeteries as a whole. As a commemorative site, which aids the process of remembrance, the cemetery 'objectifies' memories, or facilitates the association of memories with objects and places. The French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945) noted that the collective memory of a group can be sited within a material space that is common to that group, and which yields spatial images that aid recollection (Halbwachs 1980, Chapter 4). Similarly, in 1966, while drawing on Walter Benjamin's observations on the capacity of architecture to retain memories, the Italian architectural theorist Aldo Rossi (1931–1997) identified that 'the city is the collective memory of its people' (Rossi 1987, 191).¹ In that respect, it might be argued that the cemetery, as a space whose primary function is the preservation of memories, may serve the collective memory in a manner that is more direct, or more efficient, than the city – largely because of the singularity of its purpose, and the condensed nature of its monuments and the architectural framework within which they are embedded.

The cemetery of Bonaria in Cagliari was particularly suited to act as a monument to the collective memory because of its physical context and historical background. It was established on the southeastern outskirts of Cagliari in 1827. The site was convenient in that it was relatively flat and undeveloped (Spano 1869, 4). However, it was also historically significant in that the area had, albeit intermittently, been used to accommodate the dead over a period of approximately 22 centuries. The Punic, ancient Romans, and early Christians buried their dead within the same ground. Thus, the site was layered with the memories and bones of numerous generations. The nineteenth-century cemetery was built in the area known as Bonaria Hill, which had been the location of a Punic necropolis from around the fourth century BC (Pesce 2000, 89, 159–60; Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 21). Excavation

has revealed chamber tombs dating from that period that were essentially deep niches, dug into the rock, with well-like openings. Subsequently, between the first and third century AD, the ancient Romans buried their dead within the same area (Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 22–3). The Roman tombs that survive range from simple, carved-out graves to subterranean chambers, which house graves, *columbaria* for the placement of urns, and *arcosolia* (or arched niches) for sarcophagi. Other Roman remains include cinerary urns and related stone supports. In some cases, the tombs were surmounted by *cupae*, or semi-cylindrical coverings that functioned to accommodate the ancient ritual of the *refrigerium*, a commemorative banquet held by the relatives of the dead (Dadea 2001, 282–3). Moreover, there is evidence that a number of the tombs were lavishly decorated with frescoes, mosaics, and stucco work. Early Christian tombs dating up to the sixth century were also found on the same site, some with extensive decoration (Vivanet 1892; Pinza 1901; Pani Ermini 1968). Those tombs show that early Christians also placed their dead in graves or *arcosolia*, set within cave-like niches dug into the hill.

A stratigraphy of memory

A map of Cagliari, which shows the location of Punic, Roman, and early Christian tombs, demonstrates how the nineteenth-century cemetery of Bonaria was set on an ancient place of burial (Fig. 19.2). The foundation of the new cemetery, which re-established a tradition that had been dormant since the sixth century, followed

from fundamental changes in funerary customs across Europe (Laqueur 2015, 215–38; Malone 2017a, 9–31). In Cagliari, as in most European cities, the ancients and the early Christians buried their dead outside the city walls. This was both a tradition and a legal requirement connected with hygiene. However, that tendency to separate the dead from the living was abandoned in the early middle ages when the Christian Church took control of burial practices. Religious customs encouraged interment within a church, or an adjoining churchyard, as the proximity of the corpse to relics was thought to increase the individual's chance of salvation. Hence, the dead were frequently retained within urban boundaries – a shift which may be dated to the period after the sixth century, when the last, surviving, early Christian tombs were created at Bonaria Hill. However, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a revolution in funerary practices across Europe was engendered, in part, by hygienic concerns and expanding urban populations, but also by cultural changes tied to the Enlightenment, and in particular to changing attitudes to death, a renewed interest in the dignity of man, anticlericalism, and an emergent egalitarianism. The result was the prohibition of interment within the city in favour of new suburban cemeteries, and the transfer of responsibility for the dead from the Church to the municipality. This, in the case of Cagliari, meant that burials were removed to the outskirts, and to land that was once the site of an ancient necropolis and which, in the early nineteenth century, was split between the archbishopric, the convent of Bonaria, and the Boy family.

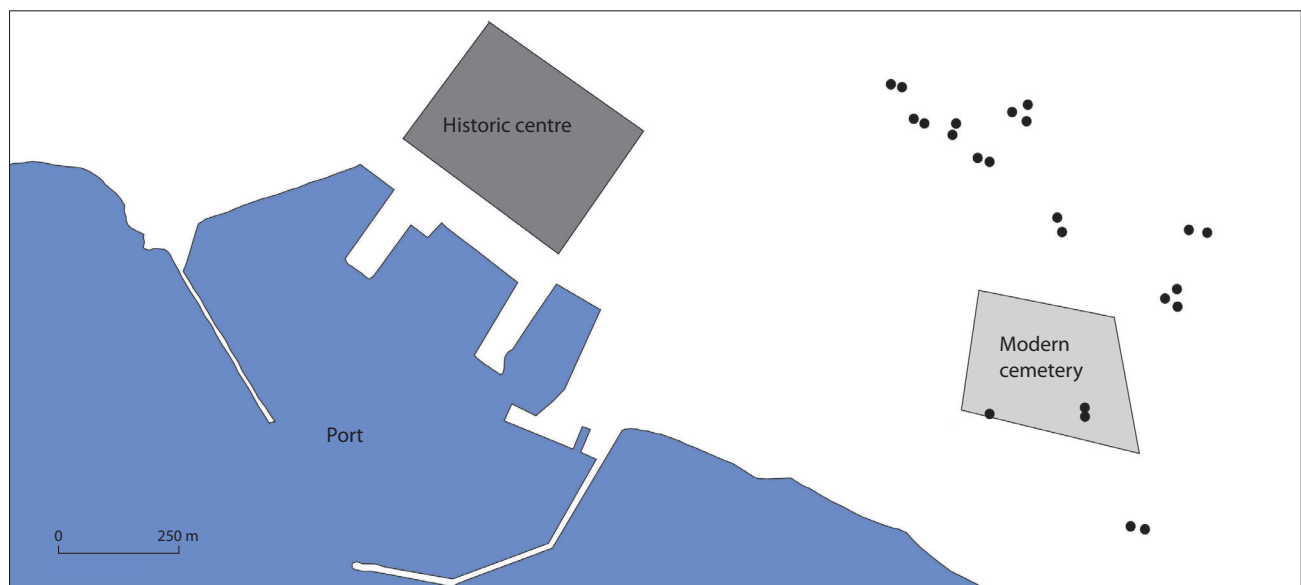


Figure 19.2. Map of Cagliari marking the location of ancient tombs (dots) with respect to the cemetery of Bonaria.



Figure 19.3. Cagliari, Bonaria cemetery, main chapel (Luigi Damiano, 1828).

From its foundation in 1827, the cemetery grew steadily throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its construction proceeded in parallel with archaeological excavations of which perhaps the most notable were undertaken by the archaeologist Giovanni Spano (1803–1878) who, in the second half of the nineteenth century, revealed Punic and Roman tombs that were under the cemetery and nearby churchyard of the Basilica of Bonaria (Spano 1864; Spano 1869, 18–23; Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 21). Spano, a priest, theologian, and linguist, might be called ‘the father of Sardinian archaeology’ (Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 21; Dyson & Rowland 2007, 10). However, the Roman necropolis at Bonaria was excavated as early as 1585, as part of what may have been the first modern excavations in Sardinia (Dadea 2001, 282; Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 22). The expansion of Bonaria cemetery during the 1800s prompted further digs, which uncovered Roman and early Christian tombs (Crespi 1863). Of particular importance was the discovery, in 1888, of two early Christian burial chambers of the fourth century AD, which were remarkably well preserved

and richly adorned with frescoes. These archaeological investigations were part of concerted efforts to harness the historical value of the location, and enhance the significance of the new cemetery. By drawing on the past, the promoters of the nineteenth-century cemetery sought to establish a sense of continuity, and thereby re-enforce the identity of the local community (Connerton 1989, 12; Malone 2017a, 118). In 1869, the archaeologist Giovanni Spano published the first monograph on the history of the cemetery (Spano 1869). Moreover, that work was part of a vast literature relating to the burial ground that was written during the nineteenth century, and which ranged from artistic manuals, to guides for tourists, and articles in local newspapers and specialized journals. Together with the excavations, that literature contributed to a process of ‘monumentalization’, whereby the cemetery was invested with history, and with collective memories that were associated with the dead, the community, and the city. In short, the archaeological efforts, together with other generative elements of local culture, shaped the cemetery’s role as a historical monument, and as a place of collective



Figure 19.4. Cagliari, Bonaria cemetery, monument to Enrico Serpieri (Sisto Galavotti, 1876).

memories. In turn, the importance accorded to the cemetery contributed to its gradual development through a combination of private and public investment, as the local authority built an ever-expanding architectural framework within which private sponsorship gave rise to an increasing number of monuments.

Associations with antiquity were given emphasis in the architecture of the nineteenth-century cemetery through the adoption of a neoclassical style for both the main buildings and a number of the monuments, and also in the revival of the *columbarium*, as a system of stacking the dead that had been employed by the ancient Romans (Malone 2017a, 40, 152–3). In the initial design for the cemetery, the military engineer Luigi Damiano followed the Italian tradition of the Campo Santo, or cloistered burial ground, in that he created a rectangular, arcaded, court that was clad in the Tuscan order. The cemetery was entered via a recessed Tuscan portal that led into an avenue and on to an Ionic chapel, built in 1828 (Fig. 19.3). The choice of the neoclassical style reflected its dominance in Italian architecture in the first half of the nineteenth

century. However, the architectural character of the cemetery was also partly determined by the superimposed niches of the nineteenth-century *columbaria*, of which the first were built in 1866. The *columbarium* represented an efficient, space-saving, solution to the demand for burials that resulted from an increasing population (Spano 1869, 16), but it also suggested a reference to the ancient Roman *arcosolium* – examples of which were excavated nearby.

The historical legacy of the new cemetery at Bonaria bolstered its role as monument, which served both political and social purposes. During the nineteenth century, the cemetery operated as an instrument of politics in a period of turmoil and radical change within Italy. The Risorgimento, or the Italian struggle for independence, brought a jigsaw of minor states, each with its own administration and distinctive cultural identity, under a unified nation-state established in 1861. As in other major Italian cities, the cemetery at Cagliari contributed to political ends as its monumental architecture expressed the power of the city within the fledgling nation. As a destination for tourists, it was

the object of national and international interest, and a focus of civic pride (Spano 1869, 24). It was part of an assumed heritage that was aimed at the enhancement of national and local life, and the promotion of civic values (Lowenthal in Gillis 1994, 45). Moreover, like the many monumental cemeteries that sprung up all over Italy during the nineteenth century, the burial ground at Bonaria functioned as a monument that fostered nationalism and an emergent civic consciousness (Malone 2017a, 107–26). It was, as were other Italian monumental cemeteries, a major element of an emergent collective memory that had specific political overtones. For instance, at Cagliari and in other Italian cities, special areas were designated within the cemetery for the commemoration of national heroes, as exemplified by a monument of 1885 that celebrated those who died while fighting for the establishment of the nation (Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. II, 75). Built by the local *Società dei Reduci delle Patrie Battaglie*, an association of veterans of the Italian struggle for independence that was established after unification, the monument of 1885 was intended to fuel patriotism, encourage civic virtue, and contribute to the creation of an appropriate history for the new nation. In that the monument was inscribed with the names of soldiers from the military expeditions of Giuseppe Garibaldi, the Italian Wars of Independence, the Crimean War, and Italy's earliest colonial campaigns, the epitaphs read like a history of the *Risorgimento*, and of the first military efforts of the new nation. Essentially, such monuments contributed to the construction of a national identity by creating a shared memory of the dead (Gillis 1994, 8). Later, the process of generating history also led to the creation of the cemetery's *Viale degli Eroi* (Avenue of the Heroes), a stretch of wall flanked by monuments to those who fought in the First World War, which was defined in contemporary Italian propaganda as the Fourth (and last) war of the *Risorgimento*. Further evidence of the impact of the forces of nation-building may be found in Bonaria's private monuments. For instance, a detail of the tomb of Enrico Serpieri (1809–72), created by Sisto Galavotti in 1876, also reflects the historical events of the *Risorgimento* (Fig. 19.4, Dadea 2011, vol. I, 82). Enrico Serpieri's tomb depicts an episode in the history of the Roman Republic, a short-lived democratic government that was established in Rome in 1849 after an insurrection reduced the power of the Papacy. Serpieri, as a member of the Republican assembly, is shown resisting the French army that was sent by Napoleon III to restore papal power. A bas-relief creates a theatrical stage that casts the deceased Serpieri as a major player in a significant event in national history, when the French gained access into the Republican Parliament to arrest



Figure 19.5. Cagliari, Bonaria cemetery, monument to Giuseppe Todde (Giuseppe Sartorio, 1897).

its members. Originally from the region of Romagna, following the fall of the revolutionary government, Serpieri opted for political exile in Sardinia where he profited handsomely from the mining industry. It is interesting, however, that Serpieri's monument depicts a moment in his life that represents the historical events of 1849, thereby adding to the narrative of national history.

The cemetery as expression of social change

In addition to its role as a tool for propaganda that served the creation of a new nation, the Italian monumental cemetery was also an expression of social change during the nineteenth century (Laqueur 2015, 288–305; Malone 2017a, 57–65). Legislation was introduced into Cagliari in 1830 that abolished interment in churches and private chapels, and determined that all social groups (with the initial exception of the clergy)

were to be buried within the public cemetery, which thus became socially inclusive. Differences in economic or social status were reflected in the capacity to acquire burial plots and to erect monuments. Hence, the new cemetery mirrored the nature of urban social structures and shifts in the redistribution of power, albeit in a condensed, or purified, form. The cemetery also offered an emergent bourgeoisie a platform on which, through the creation of lavish monuments, individuals and families could assert their status and newfound socio-economic position.

Throughout Europe, prior to the reforms in burial practices that emerged during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a decorated tomb was a privilege generally reserved for the aristocracy. As family chapels were passed down from generation to generation, burial within a church tended to be restricted to the nobility. However, the creation of public cemeteries on the outskirts of cities from the early 1800s offered the middle classes the chance of an adorned grave. Moreover, particularly during the second half of the nineteenth century, a period of economic prosperity, industrialization, and urban growth, spurred the rise of a wealthy urban bourgeoisie, for which the cemetery represented an arena for both intimate and social forms of expression. This resulted in the production of numerous tombs and monuments, and statuary that combined emotive expressions of grief with the display of luxurious clothing, elaborate *coiffeurs*, and sentiments that exalted the bourgeois ideals of family and work. Given the richness and variety of their monuments, cemeteries were destined to become museums for nineteenth-century sculpture. For instance, the cemetery of Bonaria offers many examples of bourgeois realist statuary, such as the monument to the economist Giuseppe Todde (Giuseppe Sartorio, 1897) which offers a realistic 'snapshot' of contemporary life. Todde's wife, who may have commissioned the sculpture, is portrayed as a visitor to the cemetery, and is shown dressed in her finest mourning clothes as she prays at the foot of the tomb of the deceased (Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 90). Similarly, the chapel of the Birocchi Silvetti Berola family of 1891, decorated by the sculptor Giuseppe Sartorio (1854–?1922) embodies an interpretation of a domestic bourgeois interior (Dadea & Lastretti 2011, vol. I, 112–13). The power of the bourgeois realist style was such that it was also taken up by members of the aristocracy. For example, generations of the noble Cugia family were depicted, in the 1870s and 1880s, by the sculptors Tito Sarrocchi (1824–1900) and Giovanni Pandiani (1809–1879) in a manner that,

in 1875, led the latter's work to be scornfully described by one observer as 'mercantile art' (Vivanet 1875, 4). However, the values inherent in nineteenth-century Italian funerary sculpture, which was created through the patronage of the middle classes, were evidently bourgeois in that common themes were rooted in the exhibition of wealth, the myth of the 'self-made man', the celebration of professional achievements, and the nuclear family. In fact, through these funerary monuments, the identity of the new social group was committed to collective memory.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to note that Bonaria cemetery exemplifies the construction of memory through the creation of monuments. Architecture, archaeology, and their supporting literature underscored the site's heritage as an ancient burial place. Associations with the past consecrated, and bolstered, the role of the cemetery as a monument that preserved, and transmitted, both individual and collective memories. Whereas, through its monuments, Bonaria cemetery imposed individual remembrance upon posterity, it also functioned to promote the passage of collective memories between generations. Moreover, in commemorating the dead, it helped to allay the individual's fear of annihilation while promoting a sense of permanence, which strengthened the common memory and the identity of a community. Arguably, those functions were particularly important in nineteenth-century Italy, when momentous changes were taking place within its political and social frameworks. In that context, the cemetery acted as a monument to an emergent social group, to a fledgling nation-state, and to the city of Cagliari as it moved through a shifting political landscape. Its monuments sanctioned socio-economic and political developments by establishing relationships between the present and the past. Thus, the cemetery at Bonaria illustrates the manner in which memory is generated, and is eventually overlaid by new memories. As the archaeologist Giovanni Spano suggested in 1869 'the most remarkable aspect of the cemetery at Cagliari is [...] that many of the graves of our ancestors, after twenty or maybe thirty centuries or more, now enclose the bodies of their descendants' (Spano 1869, 16–17).

Note

1. Translations from Italian are by the author.

Chapter 20

morentur in Domino libere et in pace: cultural identity and the remembered past in the medieval Outer Hebrides

John Raven & Mary MacLeod Rivett

The Outer Hebrides are an archipelago of over 100 islands, lying at most 40 km off the western coast of Scotland (Fig. 20.1). Their location on the western coastal sea route, between the Irish Sea, and northern Scotland and Scandinavia, ensured that they were occupied from the Mesolithic onwards (Simpson *et al.* 2006; Gregory *et al.* 2005) and despite a paucity of surviving documentary sources, it is clear that they played an important strategic role in the cultural and political changes of the Late Iron Age through to the Middle Ages which led to the development of the modern country of Scotland.

Two crucial changes, for which we have both archaeological and some documentary evidence, happened in this area at the end of the eighth century and in the third quarter of the thirteenth century AD. The first was the arrival of a new political elite from Scandinavia, at the beginning of the Viking Age in the ninth century AD (Sharples 2005b; Sharples & Parker Pearson 1999), bringing with them new artefacts, architecture, languages and genetic material (Wilson *et al.* 2001, 5078–83). Then, about 450 years later, the islands were transferred from the Crown of Norway to that of Scotland, at the Treaty of Perth in 1266.

Around this time, the Hebrideans were increasingly looking to the Gaelic world for social and cultural references, although they were slow to abandon their links to the wider Scandinavian Diaspora. This chapter considers how the abandonment of brochs in the ninth century and their reuse from the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries may reflect wider social and cultural changes that were taking place in the Outer Hebrides. In turn, this demonstrates significant changes in attitudes to architecture in the landscape.

The background

Documentary sources for the early history of the Outer Hebrides are limited, and of variable historicity

(Jesch 1996); the islands were on the periphery of the Earldom of Orkney, and later of the Kingdom of Man, and are therefore rarely referred to in the Norse literature, for example, *Orkneyingasaga* (Palsson & Edwards 1981). However, the advent of the Vikings was marked in external sources such as the *Annals of Ulster*, which when referring to ‘the devastation of all the islands of Britain by the heathen’ in AD 794, (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983) can be presumed on the basis of close ecclesiastical links between Ulster and the church of the west of Scotland (Raven 2005, 122–34, 160–87), to have included the Hebrides.

The written records, then, provide us with little detailed knowledge of the years between AD 794 and 1266. However, a number of clear themes can be drawn out of the sources which, when combined with toponymic, linguistic and recent genetic evidence, contribute significantly to our understanding of the social and cultural changes which occurred during these 472 years. The first of these themes is religious change: the incomers were not Christians (Hultgård 2012, 212–18), although the pre-existing Iron Age population were clearly at least partly so (Abrams 2007), based on the monastic annals surviving from Ulster (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983), on the wide spread of early Norse place names indicating monastic presence (Crawford 2005), and not least on the presence of large numbers of pre-ninth century carved stone crosses (Fisher 2001). However, by the mid-eleventh century, the area was firmly Christian (Crawford 1987, 178–84), and, by AD 1266, it had a parochial system, and was part of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Nidaros (Trondheim), in Norway (Raven 2005, 122–34; 160–87).

The second significant theme is that of the integration of population. A heated debate amongst archaeologists on the relationship between the incomers and the native population (for example: Ritchie

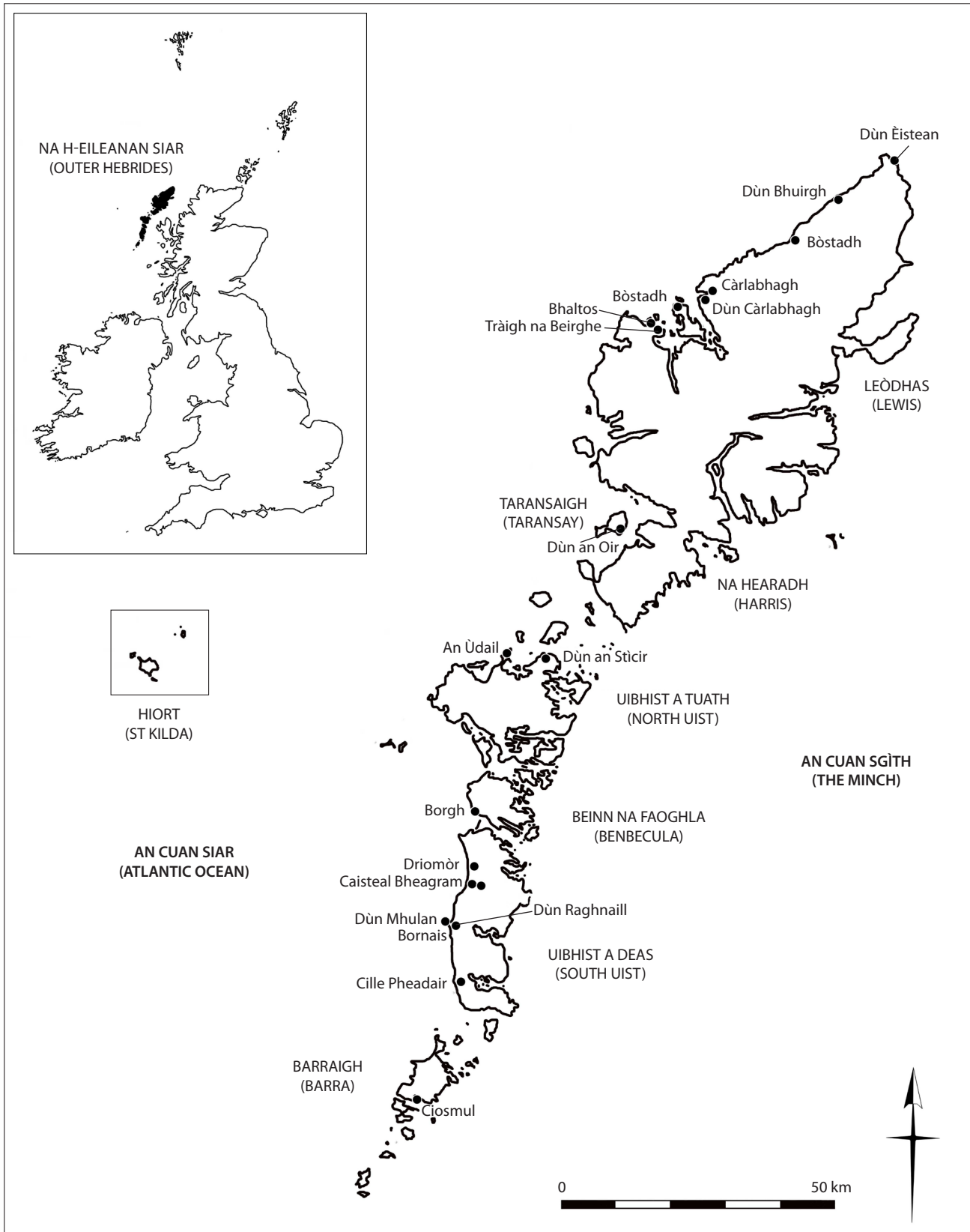


Figure 20.1. Location map.

1974, 1977; I. Crawford 1981; Jennings & Kruse 2005; Smith 2001, 2003) does not change the fact that by the end of this period, in the thirteenth century, the population of the archipelago was of a genetically mixed Gaelic and Norse background (Wilson *et al.* 2001, 5078–83). This was reflected in personal names, for example, Somerled, the founding father of the lineage of the Gaelic MacDonald Lords of the Isles had a Norse name, and sons called Olaf & Ragnair, (MacDonald 1997, 140), as it was in loan words, for example the Gaelic word *airidh*, meaning shieling, which was loaned into Old Norse as *aergi*, and used as an element in place names as far away as the Faroes (Fellows-Jensen 2005, 152).

Importantly, the third theme to emerge from the documents and other written sources is changes in language itself. It is unclear what language was spoken in the Outer Hebrides prior to the arrival of the incoming Scandinavians. There is little surviving evidence for the use of the Pictish language in the islands; Cox notes a couple of place name occurrences in Carloway (Cox 2002, 307–8, 349), but suggests that they are later loan words from mainland Scottish Gaelic (Cox 2002, 107). This could be taken to support the assumption that Gaelic was the local pre-Norse language, as argued by Campbell for Argyll (Campbell 2001, 289–90). However, although there has been some debate as to whether any of the surviving Gaelic place names are pre-Norse or not (Cox 1991; Jennings & Kruse 2005, 284–5), more recently, consensus opinion appears to be that none are provably pre-Norse in date (Cox 2002, 114–18), an argument that has been used to support the proposal that the incoming Scandinavians committed genocide (Jennings & Kruse 2005, 293). As the matter stands at present, the earliest certain linguistic evidence from the islands is the widespread stratum of Old Norse place names, more common in the northern islands of Lewis and Harris, than in Uist and Barra to the south (Crawford 1987, 97).

The Old Norse language, however, regardless of the likelihood that it continued to be the predominant language of law and the aristocracy until the Treaty of Perth, was clearly in the process of augmentation or replacement by Gaelic well before AD 1266 (Cox 2002, 115–18). It would seem likely that the islands were largely bilingual for at least the latter part of the period, and possibly throughout the whole of the 450 years. The shifts of the high status language, the 'official' language, from Gaelic or Pictish, to Norse in the ninth century, and then from Norse, to Gaelic or Scots in the thirteenth century, provide us then with two conscious cultural changes. During the latter shift, it is demonstrable, from the documentary record, that, whilst there was some social and geographical mobility

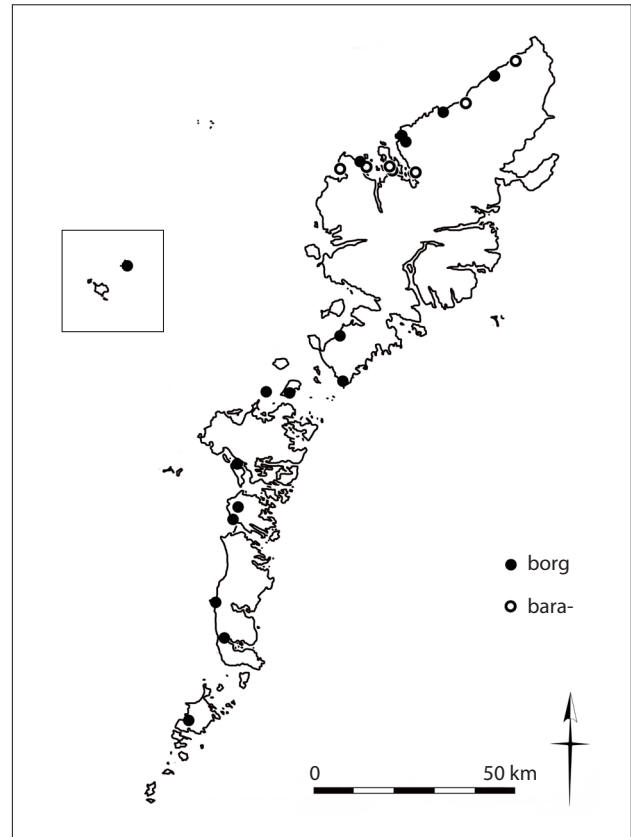


Figure 20.2. 'Borg' and 'bara' place names.

across the West Coast, this was limited, and there was no large scale change in the aristocratic populations (McDonald 2008, 103–26).

The place names that the incoming Scandinavians gave to the landscape that they encountered provide us with a glimpse of its character, and their attitude towards it. They fossilize memory, allowing us, for once, to be aware of some of the thoughts involved. One of the most striking aspects of the toponymic evidence is the use of the Old Norse word *borg*, meaning 'fort'. It was used as a place name to identify many of the Iron Age fortifications on the islands (Fig. 20.2), and was adopted into Gaelic as the loan word *broch*.

The archaeology

The later part of the Long Iron Age (c. 800 BC–AD 800) in the Hebrides was marked by the continued occupation of brochs, as a focus of high status settlement. Only two major modern broch excavations have taken place in the Outer Hebrides, at Dun Mhulan (Dun Vulcan – Parker Pearson *et al.* 1999) and Traigh na Beirgh (Harding & Gilmour 2000), with recent

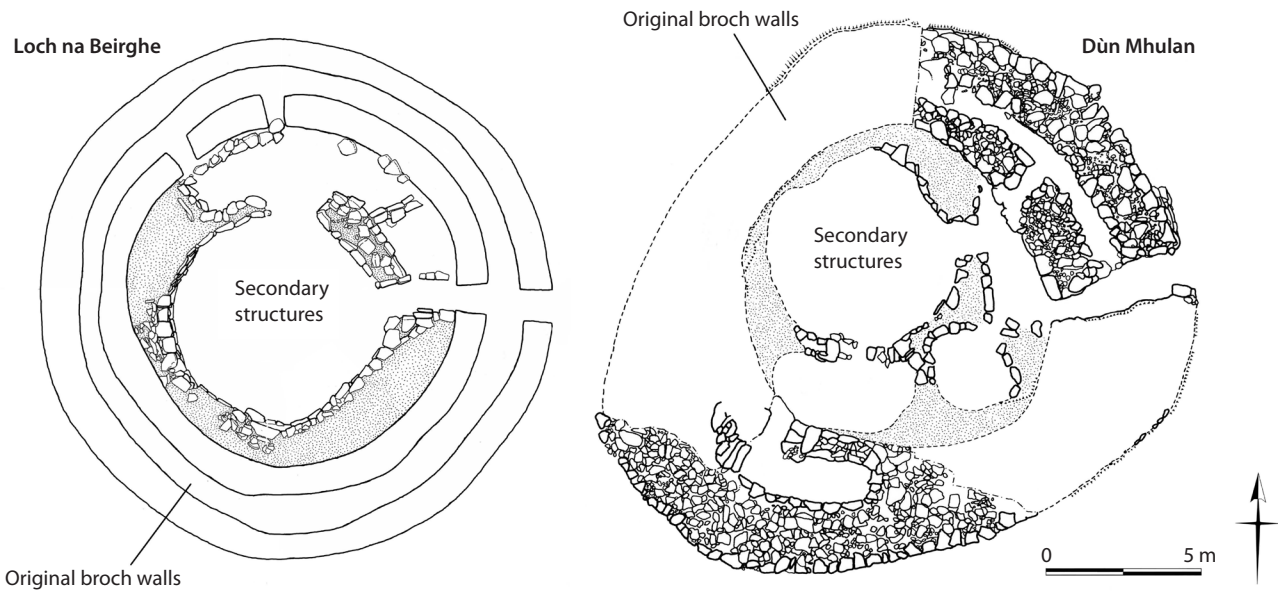


Figure 20.3. *Dun Mhulan and Loch na Beirghe.*

sampling of a third (Colls 2012, 17–20), but both major sites showed the same pattern of occupation, where the circular wall of the broch enclosed an inserted, later, curvilinear, cellular structure occupied until at least the beginning of the ninth century, as demonstrated by the associated Late Iron Age material culture (Fig. 20.3). In both these cases the site was abandoned in the early ninth century, and contained no archaeological evidence of a Scandinavian character (Parker Pearson 1999, 196; Harding & Gilmour 2000, 14). A similar pattern of late Iron Age occupation, with a curvilinear structure inside the broch, and subsequent abandonment, appears also to be visible on some unexcavated sites, for example Dun Bhuirgh in Lewis (Dun Borve).

However, despite the relative lack of detailed excavated evidence, there is quite a lot of stray find evidence from eroding broch sites in the islands. At least 37 brochs or probable broch sites are known in the Western Isles (Western Isles SMR), and with the exception of a sherd of pottery from the excavation of an intra-mural cell at Dun Charlabhagh (Tabraham 1977, 156–67; Lane 2007, 12), these sites have not produced distinctively Viking Age or Norse finds. This is in marked contrast to the pattern in the Northern Isles, for example at Scatness in Shetland (Dockerill *et al.* 2010), and elsewhere (Raven 2005, 196). Indeed, the six excavated Viking – Norse period settlement sites in the islands, Bornais (Sharples 2005), Kilpheder (Parker Pearson *et al.* 2004, 137–44), An Udail (Crawford & Switsur 1977, 124–36; Crawford 1981, 259–69), Bostadh (Neighbour & Burgess 1996, 113–14), Barabhas (Cowie

& MacLeod Rivett 2010), and Drimore (MacLaren 1974), at least two of which, Bornais and An Udail, were arguably high status local foci in the Viking and Norse periods, are all on either green-field sites, or the sites of earlier, non-monumental Late Iron Age settlements. The advent of Scandinavian (Viking/Norse) influence at these sites is clearly marked by a shift to rectilinear architecture, in some cases directly on top of the remains of the circular and sub-circular structures of the Iron Age. So the situation is not one of lack of continuity of settlement over the period of the beginning of the Viking Age, but appears rather to involve the conscious abandonment of high status Late Iron Age settlements, apparently in the first century of the Viking Age. This point has been vigorously demonstrated (Raven 2005, 190–2) for South Uist, and is equally applicable throughout the Outer Hebrides.

It is important to emphasize, at this point, that the abandonment of brochs as centres of occupation did not equate to removal of the structures. The survival of broch walls until the present day demonstrates this fact, and indeed many of the brochs which have been dismantled would appear from local oral traditions to have survived until the post-Reformation period, or later yet, until the twentieth century. An example of this is the local story, recorded in the nineteenth century, of the partial destruction of Dun Charlabhagh (Dun Carloway – Fig. 20.4) as the result of a sixteenth-century clan skirmish relating to a cattle raid (Thomas 1890, 387–8) – references to the use of mortar in the walls (Thomas 1890, 385) may verify that there was historic occupation, and that this was relatively permanent

(Raven 2005,194). So the landscape of the islands, throughout the 450 years of Scandinavian sovereignty, was visually dominated by the monumental, unused, empty remains of the Iron Age elite housing, continually referred to in the place names and vocabulary of everyday speech.

Under these circumstances, it is interesting to note that there is evidence for large Norse buildings relatively nearby both of the two excavated broch sites of Dun Mhulan and Beirgh. In the case of Dun Mhulan, the excavated site of Bornais is 1500 m to the northeast, whilst, in the case of Beirgh, aerial photographs and walk-over survey (Armit 1992b, 63) have located the remains of at least two 20 m long rectangular buildings, with bowed long walls, 200 m east of the broch, the size and form of which conforms to what is known of high-status Norse buildings, rather than to later architecture.

Although the broch at Dun Mhulan is no longer visible from Bornais today, as it is dismantled and concealed behind sand dunes, it would have been clearly visible in its upstanding state, the most prominent object on the flat machair land surrounding it.

Importantly, it would also have formed a distinctive and necessary sea marker for shipping, dominating the best landing place along the west coast of South Uist. The name of the township, i.e. the whole area of the surrounding land, Bornais, describes the headland where the broch is located: Old Norse *borgnes* – headland of the fort. The broch at Beirgh would also have dominated the immediate landscape and shoreline of the rich agricultural land of the Bhaltois Peninsula, and the Scandinavian settlement there. In both cases, apparently high status, culturally Norse, sites are located well within visual range of the abandoned monumental Iron Age remains.

The shift of language towards the end of the Norse period was also marked by a change in the use of brochs. In this case, the dating of the shift is ambiguous, and therefore its meaning is perhaps less transparent. The broch at Dun Mhulan was reoccupied at some point in the Middle Ages, initially thought to be c. AD 1300 (Parker Pearson *et al.* 2004, 90), but now thought to be somewhat later, possibly in the sixteenth century (N. Sharples, pers. comm.). A rectangular building was constructed on the outside wall of the



Figure 20.4. Dun Carlabhagh (Carloway).



Figure 20.5. *Reconstruction of Dun an Sticer, artist David Simon, © Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (used with permission).*

broch; any corresponding internal structures may have been destroyed by the twentieth-century reuse of the interior (Parker Pearson *et al.* 2004, 90).

This development is paralleled in a large number of other broch sites throughout the islands, one of the best-known of which is the site of Dun an Sticer in North Uist (SMR 2497, NMRS NF87NE1, NGR NF 8972 7768) (Fig. 20.5). This is an island broch, in a freshwater loch, which was reoccupied at the latest in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century, and is associated with strong local oral traditions about one Hugh Macdonald (a' Chleirich) at that time. A rectilinear structure was inserted into the interior of the broch, with further buildings built onto the outside (Beveridge 1911, 139, also see Raven 2005, 234, 314). A very similar structure is visible in the remains of Dun an Oir (SMR 1358, NMRS NG09NW3, NGR NG 0358 9961), on the island of Taransay. This broch or dun is incorporated into a later, probably medieval head dyke, enclosing the township of Paible, and has an inserted rectilinear structure inside it, with the remains of other rectilinear structures outside the wall.

Although not every broch or dun was reoccupied in the Middle Ages, this pattern is widely visible. Extensive survey of the medieval landscape of South Uist has identified reoccupation of Iron Age fortifications at many sites throughout the Middle Ages. Oral history and analogy with medieval reoccupation of brochs and other high status Iron Age sites in Argyll and elsewhere on the Western Seaboard suggests that this trend had its origins in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, but it continued and increased through to the early 1600s. This study emphasized the difference between castles, and these reoccupied, medieval duns, suggesting that the former represented areas of contact

between the islands and the outside world, whilst the latter related to internal, clan concerns (Raven 2005, 188–245, 307–61; 2012, 134–59).

In Lewis, the distribution of broch sites is overwhelmingly western, predominantly focussed around, though not on, areas of machair and their associated settlements and pastoral resources. Some, though not all, of these brochs were reoccupied in the Middle Ages. This western distribution is in marked contrast to a string of medieval east coast promontory sites (McHardy *et al.* 2009, 63–6, 71–81), which appear to have been built on previously unoccupied sites, for example Dun Eistean (Barrowman 2015).

Discussion

Clearly many brochs were neither suitable nor needed for reoccupation. However, setting aside practical considerations such as varying water tables and loch levels, which may have been particularly relevant issues for island duns and brochs in an environment of slowly subsiding land and rising sea levels (Ritchie 1985; Dawson 2003), the abandonment and subsequent reoccupation of such high status sites is fascinating.

Brochs in the modern landscape provide a focus of oral tradition and storytelling. Their remains are so monumental as to be unavoidable, and the place names indicate that this was even more the case in the years between AD 800 and 1266, when they clearly formed dominant land and sea marks in continual reference. Interestingly, this period, of just over 450 years, corresponds to the suggested duration of an historically valid oral tradition (Büster & Armit, this volume), so it is reasonable to suggest that the abandonment or conquest of these landmarks would have been either

a theme or a taboo in the storytelling of the Hebridean Scandinavian communities. The monuments, and the events and people associated with them, are unlikely to have been ignored; their status apart from the Norse settlement pattern would have identified them as something different, and other, and potentially, it would only be towards the end of the period that the associated traditions shifted away from history towards myth.

The abandonment of these sites is more firmly dated, and more fully archaeologically recorded, than their reoccupation. A shift away from curvilinear to rectilinear architecture provides a very clear marker of Scandinavian influence, and is a useful *terminus post quem* for unexcavated structures, with the possible exception of some transhumance sites. In the excavated cases, the cellular structures within the walls of the brochs have not provided evidence of Scandinavian influence, or of occupation later than the ninth century. Abandonment was therefore not casual or gradual, but conscious, deliberate, and probably rapid, though without any obvious evidence of destruction.

Dating the reoccupation of such sites is more difficult; the dearth of well-dated evidence from the medieval Western Isles leaves us dependent upon excavations of sites in the Inner Hebrides and Western Mainland (Raven 2005, 194), many of which are also not closely dateable. The published ceramic dates for Dun Mhulan (Parker Pearson *et al.* 2004, 90) are, as mentioned, in the process of revision, based on emerging finds sequences from the contemporary, nearby, settlement site at Bornais (N. Sharples, pers. comm.). One of the few sites with relatively firm dates is that of Finlaggan, on Islay, in the Inner Hebrides (Caldwell 2010). This site was the *caput* of the post-Norse, medieval Lordship of the Isles, the political and legal focus for the whole of the Inner and Outer Hebrides, from before the thirteenth century. The settlement consisted of two islands in a freshwater loch, the inner of which was at least a partial crannog, with a broch or massive circular dun on it in the late, pre-Norse Iron Age. On top of this was a thirteenth century castle, which itself was soon replaced by a hall. There was no evidence of occupation of the site between the ninth and thirteenth centuries.

The existence of such a site at the centre of the Lordship of the Isles fits a template for the creation of similar sites elsewhere in the Lordship, and indeed, the similarity between Finlaggan and island sites in the Outer Hebrides such as Dun an Sticer is very marked. The MacSomhairle Kings of the Isles (ancestors of the MacDonald Lords of the Isles) held their island lordship under the Norwegian Crown, and later, following the Treaty of Perth, under the Scottish Crown, a position

that created divided loyalties and complex political ties (McDonald 1997, 103–26), and their Gaelic-Norse cultural identity was marked in a variety of personal names and marriage ties linking Scotland, Ireland and Norway (McDonald 1997, 103–26). In this context, it is clearly feasible that the reoccupation of the Late Iron Age site at Finlaggan was an expression of an increasingly Gaelic cultural orientation, a concrete reference to a remembered past beginning to merge into myth, and a reinforcement of rights to, and connections with, the land of their Lordship. This argument can be equally well applied to the lineages and descendants of Somerled (Somhairle), such as the MacDonalds and Clanranalds, and their clients of the Western Isles, in an equally ambiguous cultural and political situation. Excavations at Bornais and Cille Pheadair (Kilpheder) in South Uist, for example, revealed different assemblages of finds on two contemporary Norse settlement sites (Parker Pearson *et al.* 2004, 144), with stronger Scandinavian cultural and trade links at Bornais, the larger and probably higher status settlement, and trade links to the West of England at the smaller farmstead of Cille Pheadair. This reinforces the suggestion that, for the upper social stratum of thirteenth century Uist, material culture including probably architecture, was a conscious expression of political, and with it cultural, allegiance.

Questions

One of the major unresolved questions that has bedevilled the writing of this chapter is whether or not the pattern of abandonment and reoccupation of brochs conforms to the same dates and processes on the Islands as it does on the Mainland of Scotland. Much of the dated excavated evidence comes from sites in the Inner Hebrides, Argyll and the Western Seaboard, where a complex pattern of broch and fort reoccupation from the twelfth century onwards becomes more widely established in the course of the Middle Ages (Raven 2005, 193–5). However, most of the medieval deposits at these sites have been poorly excavated, since they were secondary to the prehistoric research aims of their excavators. Much of the excavated and securely datable evidence from these sites is from the earlier end of this date range (e.g. Kildonan, Kintyre (Fairhurst 1939, 20–10)). Other excavated evidence, such as pottery recovered from the tower inserted into Dun Cuier in Barra (Young 1956, 294–6), may be later, but often the phasing cannot be securely dated. The pattern itself is undeniable, but whether it was consistent throughout the whole area, or whether it reflected local variations in the dates at which Norse political control or influence waned remains moot.

Leading on from this question, a further complication may be emerging within the Hebrides themselves, where differences in the post-Norse historical trajectory of the islands, both under the Lordship of the Isles, and following the fifteenth-century forfeiture of the Lordship to the Crown of Scotland, may be reflected in the reoccupation of brochs and other Iron Age fortifications. It might be possible to argue, for example, that the reoccupation of broch and dun sites on this model in the Isle of Lewis marks the political disruptions and uncertainties of the sixteenth century, rather than the cultural changes of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

South Uist's arable land, and main area of settlement, is predominantly sited on the west coast, where the east coast is rocky moorland rising to a high hill range, before dropping steeply into the Minch. There, the sites chosen for reoccupation in the Middle Ages were located on the western side of the island, but mostly inland between the arable and pastoral zones of land use, and often on routes into the hills and summer upland pastures. This geographical relationship is perhaps best shown at a pair of sites, Dun Raoiill and Caisteal Bheagram, both of which are lordly sites on artificial islands. Although there is no specific evidence for a broch at either site, the islands on which they are placed betray prehistoric origins, and considered together, they are well placed to inform our understanding of the forces driving the reoccupation of such sites in the Middle Ages. Both are situated within what appears to be a single lordly demesne, or estate containing extensive upland pastures and hunting grounds. According to oral history, Dun Raoiill may have a longer history of use; it is an artificial island surmounted by a drystone rectangular tower and extends over a nearby natural island containing more conventional buildings. Caisteal Bheagram, on the other hand, is mentioned in documents from the end of the 1400s through to the 1700s, when the local magnates, the Clanranald family were being eclipsed by the wider Clan Donald lineages more closely related to the Lords of the Isles. It is an island containing a mortared castellated tower and a number of other drystone rectangular buildings. It is west of Dun Raoiill, and more closely associated with the arable/settlement zone. The two sites are linked by a series of causeways, marking out a direct route. Whilst occupation of these two sites may be later and reflect higher status concerns than other reoccupied broch sites the location and relationship between them suggests that there may be a form of peripatetic and seasonal occupation, and that the relationship with the pastoral zone and routes between the coastal and moorland zones established in the Iron Age continued (Raven 2005, 341–50).

In Lewis, arable land is more dispersed, on the eastern as well as the western coastline, and there is a much broader spread of moor and pasture. Here, there are similar examples of reoccupied sites on the transition to, and routes up to, the pastures, such as Loch an Duin, Steinacleit. However, much of the evidence for reoccupation of the western coastal broch sites stands in contrast to a string of Late Medieval, or Early Modern fortifications on the east coast, as mentioned above. These east coast sites are built on previously unoccupied sites, but whether they are analogous to the castles of Uist & Barra (Raven 2005, 158) elsewhere is unclear. Excavation (Barrowman, R. 2015) and survey (McHardy *et al.* 2009, 63–6, 71–81) indicate that these sites were largely of drystone construction, using vernacular styles of architecture. The excavations at Dun Eistean (Barrowman, R. 2015) indicated that this site was probably built during the mid-fifteenth century, and occupied in two phases, the later of which was dated as late as the third quarter of the seventeenth century (Barrowman, R. 2015). These dates conform to periods of extreme local political instability, the earlier of which coincided with, and resulted at least in part from, the end of the Lordship of the Isles. These late medieval fortifications in Lewis are often on sea stacks and on the eastern, Minch coastline, providing visibility over the seaways and the harbours of the east coast.

It has to be noted here that broch reoccupation should be seen against the backdrop of castle building. Hebridean lords were certainly capable of building castles when they felt the desire to, as reflected by those at Borgh in Benbecula, Stornoway and Ciosmul in Barra. However, these reflect entirely different concerns. With the possible exception of Borgh, they do not appear to be concerned with dominating the immediate landscape. Instead, unlike the late medieval fortifications discussed above, they are almost entirely coastal and reflect a concern with exploiting safe harbourages and fishing. As lords could and did feel the need to castellate in certain circumstances, the reoccupation of brochs and use of non-castellated sites can only be seen as a deliberate choice and one which conveyed a different message. One difference may be that brochs allowed for lords to relate more directly with pastoral resources, highly important in a cattle economy, and create a visual discourse with their clansmen as they moved through the landscape. In this environment, they clearly did not feel the need to demonstrate their day to day authority through the exploitation of feudal, European, castellated architecture (Raven 2005, 264–306).

Whilst the specific circumstances surrounding broch reoccupation must certainly have varied, it

would seem likely that the changing political context provided an important impetus to express and assert a changing ethnicity. With the shift away from Norway towards a more southern, Gaelic outlook, Hebridean lords were often keen to rewrite their family histories, in the case of the MacNeils, for example, they denied their Scandinavian origins and adopted a genealogy that tied them to Ireland and the centre of the Geadhealtachtd; this helped them assert that their claim to Barra pre-dated the interruption of the Vikings. The MacLeods were perhaps happier to express their individuality and retain some Norse associations, but they focussed no less on adopting a Gaelic identity (see discussion in Raven 2005, 144–5). The reoccupation of monuments that clearly belonged to a pre-Norse age can be seen as a strategy for emphasizing the naturalized and Gaelic roots of land-holding families, at a time when a shifting political climate could have seen existing authority challenged and new lords transplanted to the Isles. The use of brochs as the conceptual ancestral seat of the Hebridean lordships is evident elsewhere on the Western Seaboard, perhaps verifying this possibility.

In our discussions of these questions, we are prone to refer to the Norse of the Outer Hebrides, but the families and kinship groups in power in the islands in the thirteenth century, the MacRuairidhs, Clanranald, MacDonalds, MacLeods, Morrisons, MacNeills, and MacAulays, had genealogies including individuals with both Gaelic and Norse names, and nearly half a millennium of Hebridean life behind them by the time that the islands became a part of Scotland. For these people, then, we must assume that identity and allegiance in a given situation were to a large

extent a matter of choice, and often multiple. Some of the MacDonald kinship left the islands following the Treaty, while others remained (McDonald 2008, 103–26); similar, but unrecorded, choices must have been made by other individuals and families as well. In the changed political reality that faced the upper classes of the Outer Hebrides in AD 1266, expressing Gaelic aspects of their identities, and manipulating their surroundings and material culture to emphasize those aspects, would have strengthened their links to the land they controlled, and to the new cultural environment.

Conclusion

The late thirteenth-century change between Norwegian and Scottish control in the Outer Hebrides, and its impact upon the culture and archaeology of the islands remains under-researched and poorly understood. However, in looking particularly at the reuse of earlier, pre-Norse, high status buildings, we can do little better than to quote the Dun Mhulan report:

The very act of construction of a new building within the ruins of a by then ancient broch must have been a clear statement of identity with place, succession and authority' (Parker Pearson *et al.* 1999, 92)

This comment was about a later Iron Age (Pictish) building built within a broch, but how much more does it resonate with the introduction of a new architectural form, a new type of building altogether, into the context of buildings abandoned for nearly 500 years.

Chapter 21

Memory and material representation in the Lismore landscape

Simon Stoddart, Caroline Malone, David Redhouse,
Mary-Cate Garden, Matthew Fitzjohn & Megan Meredith-Lobay

The association of the Garden with Time was inspired by the island of Lismore which has been linked to the translation of the Gaelic *Lios Mòr*, or 'great garden' (Fraser 2004, 244–5). As mentioned in the introduction, horticulture also brings with it a particular sense of cultivated, cyclical time that seemed doubly appropriate. In modern times, different gardens have different levels of structure. In the romantic British tradition, it is tactically placed monuments that give fixed points to an otherwise 'natural' landscape. Could the monuments of Sardinia, Scotland and indeed Lismore respond to the same concept?

As mentioned in the introduction, Richard Bradley (1993; 2002) has provided seminal analysis of the way in which attention to the past by prehistoric societies can be read from the spatial disposition of different monuments. In the case of Lismore, these are not focused into particular parts of the landscape such as in the case of Tara that Bradley cites extensively and which provides an excellent example of the growth of a monument micro-landscape. The aim of this chapter is to show how the placing of monuments forms a series of cycles of time differentially placed across the landscape and recalled in later periods (cf. Stoddart 2013, comparing Tara and Tarxien).

Historians may be sceptical about the extent to which archaeologists can reconstruct the memories of landscape, and even be doubtful about the degree to which there was intentionality even in the placing of historical monuments next to the prehistoric (Meredith Lobay 2009). However, analysis done by two of us (Garden and Fitzjohn) has provided invaluable information on how the current islanders react to archaeology. This is an ethnography of heritage similar to the work of Chapman (1971) whose seminal work (only written up long after the fieldwork in the 1930s), deciphered the strata of time defined by the people of Milocca on the larger island of Sicily. Archaeological sites were exiled to a time

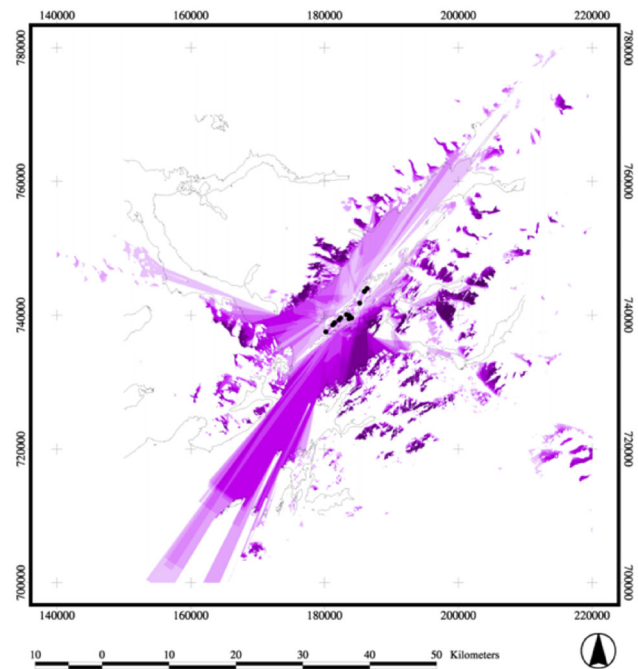


Figure 21.1. *Lismore: viewsheds from Neolithic cairns. Crown Copyright/database right 2006. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

of the Saracens, while modernity emerged after '48, that major political threshold in the development of Europe (Stoddart 1998). We could argue that the archaeological sites of Lismore have been exiled to Celticity, whilst '45 and later clearances in the nineteenth century (<http://www.isleoflismore.com/history/baligrundle/baligrundle.shtml>) provided an equally important threshold in the island's political development.

The island of Lismore (Fig. 21.1) lies like a long ship setting sail for Mull from the southern shore of the Great Glen, a geological fault-line that metamorphoses



Figure 21.2. Aerial view of Trefuir (Tirefour) under excavation.

southwestwards into Loch Linhe. It is a mere 2.5 km wide and 15 km long, unusually, within Argyll and more broadly Scotland, dominated by a Dalradian limestone geology which gave it a different character, including fertility compared with nearby areas.

The Island of Lismore was the subject of a Historic Scotland and McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research Cambridge sponsored programme of landscape investigation between 2000 and 2008. The programme started by flying the Cambridge aeroplane with overlapping aerial (1:6,000) photography in 2000, accompanied by a desktop assessment by one of us (Redhouse) using the information readily available in Canmore (<https://canmore.org.uk/>) and then integrated with Digimap. This was followed by a survey of the major broch monument of Trefuir, including registration of its deterioration. A more general condition survey was undertaken of the whole island and a more detailed study of the central portion by Paul Pattison, accompanied by geophysics. Two major fieldwork years then followed in 2004–5 that included the excavation of the outer parts and entrance of Trefuir and

selected parts of other representative sites that had been identified during the broader survey. The final year of work entailed the consolidation of the broch in 2008, in collaboration with the local community who had by then opened their museum, supported by Historic Scotland and Forward Scotland.

Cycles of time

The programme of work identified five major cycles of time which will now be outlined and interpreted. The *first* entailing the likely colonization of the islands in *c.* 8000 BC, involving a complex interrelationship between rising sea level and rising land (released of the weight of ice) (Saville 2004, 17) was not directly investigated by the project; although a pollen sequence was recovered from one of the lochs by Rupert Housley (as we revise this article the loch is under new investigation by the Royal Holloway geographers (Matthews *et al.* 2021)) that from the limited dating and pilot analysis appears to reach back to this early period. This first period can, therefore, only be inferred from the very

limited records of Lethbridge (1950) who worked on the offshore island middens and by comparison with discoveries in the Western Isles (Gregory *et al.* 2005). The nearest evidence to Lismore is from MacArthur cave and Druimvargie Rockshelter in Oban which, although originally discovered in the 1890s (Anderson 1895, 1898), have now been dated to 7400 BC (Saville 2004, 19). The *second* relates to the prominent burial cairns (Fig. 21.1) that define the upland spine of the island from northeast to southwest, casting a comprehensive viewshed 360 degrees around the island. The only available information on these derives from the Royal Commission volume (Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland 1975) and excavated sites from outside the island (Saville 2004, 200) from which it can be inferred that time has moved on 4,000 years to *c.* 4000 BC. The *third* phase dating provisionally to 300 BC onwards was investigated by the current work in much more detail, adding a new richness to the evidence in hand and will be reported in more detail below. This comprises the construction of the two candidates for the nomenclature broch (Fig. 21.2–3) and the accompanying complexity of other types of Argyll monuments from this time onwards. This memory cycle arguably morphs into the early

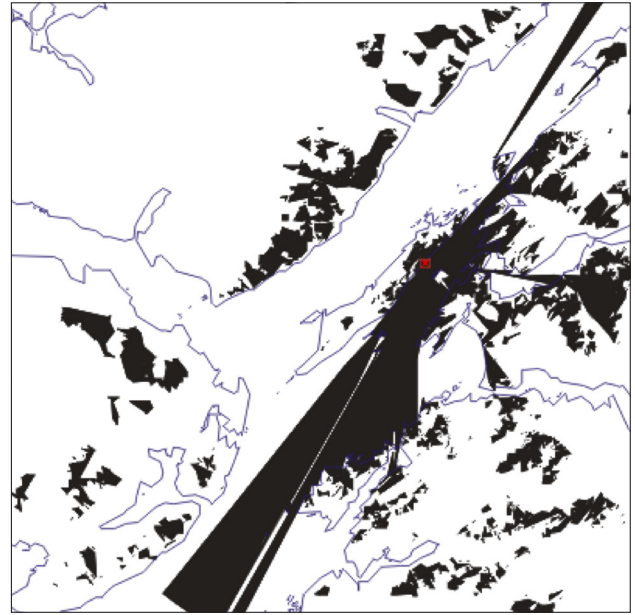


Figure 21.3. *Lismore: viewsheds from brochs.* Crown Copyright/database right 2006. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.

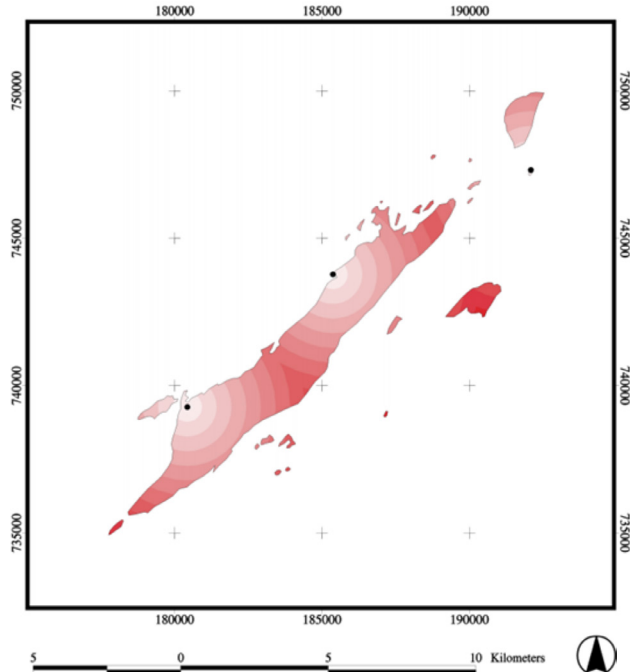


Figure 21.4. *Lismore: location of medieval castles.* Buffering of two principal castles, showing a major contrast with the brochs in their position looking out into deep water. Crown Copyright/database right 2006. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.

historical period when memories are supported by documentary records, including those associated with the advent of the local saint St. Moluag, whose monumental centre emerges out of the prehistoric landscape, marked by a more inland construction of place. It is a matter of how memory is constructed whether this third phase should be seen as an emergence or a new beginning, a question investigated in more detail elsewhere (Meredith Lobay 2009). A *fourth* phase is clearly distinct, when the viewsheds of the newly constructed fourteenth century castles, inserted by outsiders, were deliberately placed to face out into the deep water of the loch (Fig. 21.4), a radical break with the palimpsest of the previous period. In this cycle, a number of these monuments emerged as cartographic landmarks in the course of time. The final fifth phase of memory is the response of the modern inhabitants, reacting to the question of how they treat these different elements that they have now chosen to place as visual memories in the repository of the community museum.

Interrogating the *third* cycle

The monument of Tirefuir provides the focal point of knowledge of the third cycle outlined above. It is a monument that was consistently recognized by contemporary and later society, but interpreted in varying ways. It is accepted as one of the most upstanding monuments in Argyll and thus acknowledged as a

proven example of a complex round house (Armit 2004, 52) or broch depending on the terminological tradition. The dating of the site by radiocarbon (Kaljee 2021) shows a bridging of the *third* and the *fourth* cycle during its history (300 BC–AD 1600), providing a scale against which other developments can be calibrated, in a way that is not solely a product of the bias of research. The site's involvement in earlier memories of the *second* cycle was limited to the discovery of a residual arrowhead, demonstrating nevertheless a tantalizing glimpse of a range of Neolithic activity that went beyond the celebration of death.

The site of Tirefuir was not investigated inside or under its walls during the current campaign for reasons of ethics and conservation. Some caution thus needs to be applied to the fact that the earliest date for the monument so far derives from the lower part of the midden terrace deposits which built up in the yard in front of the entrance of the structure. If this date is to be considered at least a working hypothesis for the date of construction of the monument, then this cycle of monument construction began at *c.* 300 BC. It does seem a reasonable hypothesis that midden deposits represent fairly the activities inside the monument, perhaps even more precisely than any deposits that might later be found to be dominant in the interior, which was probably thoroughly reworked (see Romankiewicz & Ralston this volume). These deposits show a mixed economy of cattle, sheep/goat and pig, as well as barley. As remarked in the endnote, middens are part of the memorialization and celebration of the monument itself, an apparently intentional strategy.

The 'altering of the earth' in Bradleyan terms was relatively limited on the site of Tirefuir, but the central monument was not only shrouded on its southwestern side by a yard supported by an earlier midden, but also received the insertion of a later adjunct structure. This structure seems to have been in use during the early centuries AD, but rests on a fill dating to *c.* 50 BC.

The most active long term focus of the main monument was its entrance. Some very interesting detail of the door pivot and the adjoining paving was uncovered, providing vivid details of the habitual workings of the monument. In this main thoroughfare, any earlier deposits contemporary with the external midden appear to have been removed, leaving traces that only dated back to 100 BC. At the other end of the spectrum, the later stratigraphic deposits in the entrance date to *c.* AD 1600, unsurprisingly showing how fundamental this same thoroughfare was for the continued employment of the internal space. The entrance court where deposits date from AD 100 until 700 seems also to have been subject to the same constraints. Earlier deposits appear to have been removed

or not encountered; these same early deposits seem to have been deliberately marked by the placing of a distinctive Roman Head stud fibula (Hull type 149B), also known from Newstead. The evidence from the micro fauna in the upper fills of the entrance and bank suggest that structure was latterly a roost for owls, a species not particularly tolerant of human presence, and indicative of the later deployment of the site more as a memory than for directly practical uses.

One further important 'altering of the earth' was the construction of an outer bank to the monument in AD 700. This provided an extra defence, or at least boundary, to the entrance. The use of the monument at about this date may also be related to the discovery of a decorated pin, broadly contemporary on stylistic grounds to this period, even if its context was unstratified. These latter periods are, of course, closely related to the early Christian activity (see Meredith Lobay 2009) which shifted inland to the clachan next to one of the largest Neolithic burial mounds.

The fourth cycle

Evidence for the fourth cycle, the construction of the two castles of Coeffin and Achanduin, formed a major shift in the orientation of the island, taking into consideration the very different maritime connectivity of this later period, when deeper hulled ships no longer hugged the coast, but confidently headed for deeper water on a more regular basis. This temporal cycle has been the subject of investigation by the late Denis Turner whose results have now been published (Turner 1998; Caldwell 2017). Although only Achanduin has been systematically investigated, both appear to have substantially modified in the 1290s in response to different political orientations and authority. Archanduin is a 22 m square rectangular enclosure castle roughly orientated on the compass, a tower at the eastern corner and entrances in the northeastern and northwestern sides. The interior had both a masonry and wooden range. The builders (*contra* received wisdom) were probably local lords, in all probability the MacDougalls of Lorn, responding to the wider political context, in the same way as that which motivated the construction of similar castles such as Duart on Mull, Castle Roy on the Spey on the northeastern approaches to the Great Glen, Skipness on the east coast of Kintyre to the south, and Portencross also to the south in Ayrshire. Oram (2008) sees an earlier ancestry drawn from Castle Sween on Loch Sween to the southwest. In this way, Archanduin was a typical node in a network of political memory. Their visibility, depending on the prevailing weather conditions, may have been enhanced by whitewashing, providing a

considerable gaze across the loch, particularly across the loch towards Mull.

A coda to this cycle of memory is found in the cartography of the island. At first in the sixteenth century it is only the island itself that is recognized (e.g. Nicolas de Nicolay Paris 1583), a level of detail that depends partly on scale (only the island is shown in the Mount and Page London map of 1715 which only shows Castle Duart). Enabled by increased detail of scale Tyr Four (as shown by Blau's map of 1654 from Amsterdam) begins to emerge as an important maritime landmark along with other features from the sea, as clearly demonstrated by the British Admiralty maps dating to the 1860s. The site was sufficiently notable to be sketched by one of the most famous British Artists of the nineteenth century, Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775 – 1851), on his tour of Scotland.

The fifth cycle

The fifth cycle relates to the reception by the contemporary and near contemporary world. A series of interviews undertaken by two of us (Fitzjohn and Garden) informs us of the relative clouding of deeper time in the public imagination (Fig. 21.5). The intangible modern heritage (sheep and cattle) register more highly than the recent built environment such as the church and the community hall. The broch is equally weighted with the liminal lighthouse, albeit above the level of the one shop on the island and the ferry quay. External money has been brought into the island to foster community memory by the construction of a museum and archive, but it is the active community life, while altogether more transitory, that is all the more closely related to the sense of island identity. Even though the project left the broch more consolidated than we found it, it does not register as high in the public imagination and memory as the external archaeologist might suspect. It belongs to another

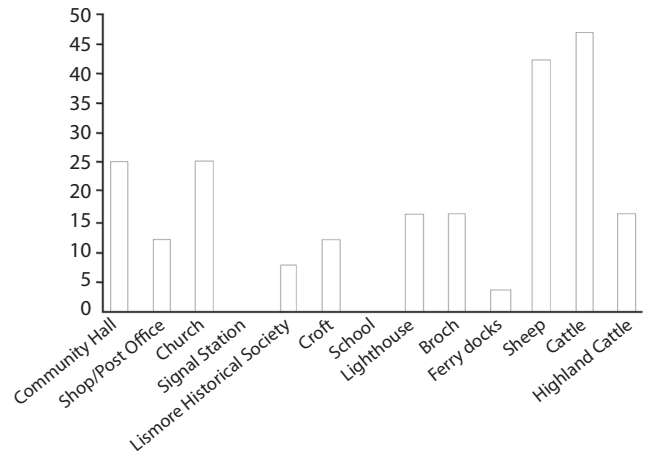


Figure 21.5. *Lismore: modern identity and monuments.* Weight given by 35 participants to different material symbols of identity (24 adults – 13 men, 11 women – ranging from late teens to early nineties and 11 children from Lismore Primary School).

world as Liz Pratt (2020) found during similar studies in the west of England.

Conclusion

The example of Lismore provides a salutary lesson that the monuments which archaeologists consider so important do not feature so prominently in the minds of the local modern inhabitants. It is possible that Tirefour may have grown in the memory of the local people, now that a trail has been constructed to the site. However, memories even of those who most recently investigated the site have been readjusted to the political present in a way that recalls the Tiv rather than modern literate society. Perhaps the imminent full publication of the project will provide another literate layer in the fertile layers of memory.

Chapter 22

Nuragic memories: a deep-seated pervasive attitude

Alessandro Vanzetti

The popular attitude towards prehistoric monuments in Sardinia has been to consider them as testimony of a great past, as represented by the names attached to them, e.g. *domus de janas* (witches' homes), *tombe di giganti* (giants' tombs), *Nuraghe sa domu 'e s'orku* (home of the ogre). Actually, this past, with its alleged memories, is coming to be differently inserted into modernity. The insulation of the monuments is becoming heavier: a) because of a different involvement of people in their own landscape, as urbanism became a crucial part of human life; b) because of land management projects, both on the agrarian and development sides; c) because of tourism, and touristic economic expectations by people; d) and what more, because of contrasting attitudes between academic scholars, superintendency archaeologists, amateurs and skilled popularizing writers. While these are general processes in Italy, Europe and beyond, the specificity of insular Sardinia makes it a particularly well-expressed battleground and showcase of the conflicting attitudes presented.

Gardening time is not without counterpoints

The conference presented in its basic statements a positive view of the 'gardening of time', as 'tending a garden is a long process involving patience, accretion and memory. Scholars argue that memories are also cultured, developed and regained'. This inherently positive statement of gardening, as a wise and sound activity, can sometimes appear as an elitist position, like the one held by academia-embedded scholars: specifically the cultural (and social) assumption of the past, and its loss and regain, can be seen as one inherent contradiction to the positive perspective of the gardening of time.

A nice reversal of the metaphor of the gardening concept was proposed by the possibly most influential

and sharp thinker, poet and philosopher that Italy has ever had: Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837). In his *Zibaldone* or *Hodgepodge*, written between 1817 and 1832 (Leopardi 2001), he reports the other side of gardening, let's say the dark side of it. His narrative aims at remarking the negativity of life, but I am interested in the implied concept of 'gardening'. He remarks that plants in any garden are suffering. And then he describes the activity of the walking man, of the romantic girl, of the Gardener: 'Meanwhile, you mangle the grasses with your steps; you crush, you knock, you squeeze their blood, you crash, you kill them. That delicate and gentle maiden keeps sweetly uprooting and breaking stems. The gardener is wisely severing, cutting sensible limbs, with his nails, with iron tools.' (Leopardi 2001, [4176] 22 April 1826; translation by author).

The Gardener is therefore a person who, while trying to put a wisely planned order into things, transforms and directs the Garden, often not caring for the plants' wellbeing. It is obviously possible that this dark-side of gardening depends in some way on the Italian Garden Style – which Leopardi knew well – that is made of order and discipline, and of cut and shaped plants and bushes, with an authoritarian-artistic view. On the contrary, the British garden style is apparently more free and natural, but still a regulated pattern, with its precise lawns, bushes, woodlands and paths; dialectics (and empiricism) with nature are anyway wider, and this attitude can possibly explain the positive view proposed by the conference itself. Other gardens, like the French, Japanese, or Persian ones could explain even more. Gardening, in practice, as well as in metaphor, either positive or authoritarian, is, therefore, in any case a selective process, including some amount of top-bottom decision.

As archaeologists, we are perfectly aware of how much the discipline is embedded in its social and

cultural milieu, and it is easy to recall the relevance of archaeological projects for specific ideologies and social or cultural dynamics: the cases of Nazi research at Biskupin, or of the Great Zimbabwe debate are two well-known examples (Bahn 1996), but also Mortimer Wheeler's British Empire perspective on Indus Civilization has been recalled as a case of directional and top-bottom gardening of the past (Vidale 2005). We are obviously conscious, particularly after the processual and post-processual polemics (Clarke 1973; Hodder 1982a) that there is not simply one past, about which everybody could agree, and that the gardening of time is not only a positive, unilinear accretion of data, but it is also a matter of choice and particular project. The accretion of data does anyway take place and has a proper sense, as data cannot be reduced to cultured perception, but constitute instead something out of us – and represent the inherent connection of archaeology with the Earth Sciences; something which is anyway open to contradictions, and to opposing views, across time. Ancient contradictions can possibly be perceived archaeologically, for instance in contrasting patterns, in persistences and removals, like the *Damnatio Memoriae* cases most easily prove. But more frequent are the contemporary contradictions between scholars, and between scholars, amateurs, skilled popularizing writers, politicians, etc.

Coming back to Sardinia, contradictions, on a historiographic perspective, are very frequent in its archaeology and history, both historically and now, between specialists or specialists and Institutions, but now mainly between specialists and amateurs. Some possible reasons for this will be pinpointed later.

Sardinia seen by a non-Sardinian anthropologist

Alberto Mario Cirese (1921–2011), not born a Sardinian, was the first professor of History of Folklore in Sardinia, in 1957, until 1972: from his position, he had a peculiar and deep-grounded view of Sardinian popular culture and society, as a socialist and a participant observer anthropologist. What is more, Giovanni Lilliu, the great Sardinian archaeologist, a Sardist militant and a Christian-Democratic politician, after voting against Cirese for the chair, became a great friend of him, a reciprocal esteem which can contribute to remark on Cirese's acquired capacity of insight into Sardinia (Cirese 2006, 10). He, when studying Sardinia, was impressed by its specificity, which appeared to him not simply dictated by insularity; he thought that it was embedded in the relative lack of distance between high and lower classes, that is, in the persisting sense of community, that

was characteristic of Sardinians, and which stood as a primary fact, notwithstanding other existing and important internal divisions (Cirese 2006 (1969)). In the 1960s, the debate concentrated on class struggle; nowadays cultural points of view take the fore (coast vs mountains; city vs villages), as the Marxist perspectives have gone into the background. These apparently different analyses should anyway be considered somehow an integration of social facts, seen from different perspectives, and not much distant indeed: the cultural divide contains many embedded elements appropriate for Marxist class analysis.

Cirese (2006 (1963)) remarks that the apparent conservatism of the Sardinian cultural world led to two different approaches:

- On the one side to the exaltation of this assumed tenacity of culture, an attitude that had the consequence of underestimating the changes and the transformations of cultural subsystems, and to refer much too often to Classical antiquity or the Near East contacts, as a direct source for allegedly persistent modern local behaviour;
- On the other side, to the deliberate rejection of this conservatism, considered as a consequence of the underdevelopment of the region, of its history-less time, mainly in mountainous areas.

He further remarks that fervour of debate and 'absolute' statements are particularly strong in Sardinian scholars. These contrasting approaches are clearly dependent on moral judgements, which could be considered of scarce interest in the present context, but they appear to me relevant in terms of our question of the gardening of Sardinian (nuragic) time.

The Sardinian physiognomy derives from the way of reaction to external contributions, and from the internal capacity of development. [...It is] the result of a peculiar way of being in the Mediterranean history (Cirese 2006 (1963), 22–3).

This apparently generic statement (external reaction...internal development) can be properly located in Sardinia, and it appears to be one of the causes of the actual debates, both between archaeologists, and with amateurs and stakeholders: the history of Sardinia has so many disparities, embedded in a single and cohesive social (and cultural) frame, to result in many ways paradoxical.

Sardinian archaeology seen by a non-Sardinian archaeologist

Emma Blake is another non-Sardinian (nor Italian) scholar who devoted a crucial part of her research to nuragic Sardinia. One of her papers (Blake 1998) is particularly illuminating for this discussion, like other ones by the same author on Sardinia are in other respects. It presents some arguments I agree with and would like to point out here.

The author stresses that *Nuraghi* cannot be reduced to unambiguous interpretation in terms of 'real' originary use and reuse, as they were progressively inserted in different networks, and got different meanings, in the different phases of their life. This has implications for the definition of attached memory.

In the nuragic period, the period we always first think of, *Nuraghi* would have changed from a basically domestic character to a symbol of social differentiation. Furthermore, the attention recently brought on their late nuragic cultic use, at least since the Early Iron Age (e.g. Ugas & Paderi 1990), was not stressed by Blake. During the Punic phase, a consistent reduction in domestic use, and progress in abandonment and cultic use, suggest to Emma Blake this label: a beleaguered survival. The Roman period would see a reappraisal in frequentation and reuse of *Nuraghi*, even if with some radical transformations: this is the case of the use of internal spaces for funerary depositions, in Su Nuraxi di Barumini; or of the insertion of the *Nuraghi* as representative features in a meaningful landscape, like in the case of the villa enclosing Santu Antine *Nuraghe* near Torralba; or of the Aidu Entos *Nuraghe* near Bortigali, bearing the latin inscription locating the people of the Ilienses. These cases would reflect 'manifestly political gestures', such that 'reuse of the *Nuraghi* was not a mere passive ethno-cultural continuity, but constituted a purposeful statement by the local populations as they forged a Romano-Sard identity'. (Blake 1988, 64) One can doubt this identity, but it is clear that monuments were part of the forcefully peaceful landscape of Roman Sardinia.

The medieval period would mirror the contrast between the new religion and traditional cult forms, with *Nuraghi* and other testimony of the past being consecrated by new symbols, like the cross engravings (e.g. at Su Lumarzu nuragic spring, Bonorva), and the building of churches in appropriate locations, conveying the esprit of place, and possibly the remaining popular interest in the monuments (S. Sabina *Nuraghe*, Sardara). Everybody, as well as Blake, quotes the famous letter by Gregorio Magno, of the sixth century AD in which the Barbaricini are described as pagan people, still adoring wood and stone. But

the medieval period is also a phase of modest and marginal reuse of the monuments, becoming stone quarries and secondary habitations, while progressively decaying.

In modern times, in the nineteenth century, when Alberto La Marmora, the Piedmont army officer exiled in – and later in charge of – Sardinia, debated the Antiquities in his book *Voyage en Sardaigne* (La Marmora 1826), most of them were in use, occupied by herders or for other purposes, displaying the new insertion in the modern landscape.

During the twentieth century, and specifically after World War II, the process of abstraction from everyday life has progressed, and now *Nuraghi*, and other monuments, protected by the State through Soprintendenza, are testimony of an ancient world, in terms diverted from 'a network of spaces, natural and social. Now they are increasingly conceptually isolated' (Blake 1998, 67). This is the Heritage phase, hallmarked by the inscription of Su Nuraxi di Barumini in the World Heritage List of UNESCO, in 1997 (one could ask why only one *Nuraghe*, and only in 1997, and nothing more of the nuragic past): we must be aware of the transformation that we have been applying and apply to monuments, and of the connected risks.

Blake further remarks that the construction of an imposing monument, like a *Nuraghe*, but also like the Giant's graves, or the Domus de Janas rock-cut graves, necessarily shapes the territory. They define relevant places of human interaction, with some conditioning characteristics; they are landmarks which form a puzzling presence to cope with: it is easily seen that the *Nuraghe* since its construction worked as a catalyzer of subsequent activities, even when we can guess that its meaning had radically changed from the initial one, and even when possibly no original situated memory of it existed anymore. 'Looking at several key phases in the *Nuraghe*'s existence, this paper...demonstrate[s] that, while the narrative of the *Nuraghe* unfolds temporally, evocations of its age and origins alone do not account for its significance. Rather, it is its spatiality that guides its ongoing identity-formation, its relentless becoming' (Blake 1998, 60).

Memory of ancient places of Sardinia: major medieval break

The Pre- and Protohistoric Heritage is indeed very present in Sardinia: it includes huge and imposing monuments littering the landscape, both built (*Nuraghi*, giants' tombs, dolmens) and dug out (chamber tombs) or both (monumental wells and springs), huts with stone foundations, villages, standing stones, etc.

The names attached to monuments rarely reflect a directly transmitted origin, as probably is the case for *Nuraghe* (Lilliu 1962), seemingly attested as ‘Nurac’ in the Roman Age epigraph on Bortigali’s Aidu Entos monument (Moravetti 1998a, 237). Other monument category names refer to a popular origin, such as for the *domus de janas* (witches’ homes) or the *tombe di giganti* (giants’ tombs); the same is typical of some specific names shared by both *Nuraghi* and graves, like *sa domu ‘e s’orku* (home of the ogre). Even post-protohistoric monuments come to have problematic but evocative names, as it happened to us during our excavations near Bonorva, where we excavated around and inside a simple rural building locally named *Sas Presones* or *Sas Presones Romanas* (Roman Prisons). We found out that it had originally been a Roman Age bath, partly still standing to the roof (Ialongo *et al.* 2007). We do not know if the name ‘prison’ has any connection with a temporary function, or if it depends on a popular interpretation, as the building had been indeed modified (without leaving evident traces of its primary bathing function), by closing almost all of the doors, and it had no windows, a fact that could be suitable for a prison. Neither we know if the ‘Roman’ attribution is a recent, erudite one, but the mix of indications suggests that its name was probably the consequence of a popular, or partially erudite reconstruction of meaning for a puzzling building, without any persisting memory of its real function.

This attitude, shared by prehistoric and classical monuments, can be assumed as the consequence of a major removal, and of break in continuity, whose depth we can trace up to the medieval religious and social fracture, with the diffused fight against the potential sacred places of the pagan people adoring wood and stone, so appropriately quoted by Gregorio Magno (cf. above).

First millennium BC breaks

Even after the post-colonial debate has shown that some ethno-cultural definitions used by scholars have been more assumed by them than found as evidence (Van Dommelen 1997), it is a matter of recurrent debate whether the transformation of the Sardinian identity had been generalized by a disruption of the nuragic social system brought already by the Phoenicians (Usai 2007; Stiglitz 2010; Tronchetti & Van Dommelen 2005; cf. the debate in Van Dommelen 1998, 85), or later by the Punics or the Romans. Lilliu’s points of view have been very influential, as he remarked, still in the last edition of his ‘La Civiltà dei Sardi’ (Lilliu 2003 (1988)) that the Phoenician contact had no shattering effect on the nuragic world; on the contrary, it would be the

Punic warfare in the sixth century BC, that determined the major crisis of the indigenous world.

In recent years, it became moreover evident that a relevant transition already took place during the nuragic period, corresponding to the Final Bronze Age, leading to relevant shifts in shared meaning (Campus *et al.* 2010). It is generally assumed that no new *Nuraghi* were built after the Final Bronze Age, while on the contrary village culture and sanctuaries took the fore, in local communities, particularly during the Early Iron Age; traditional Giants’ tombs were probably no more built in the Iron Age, and funerary depositions inside them decreased or ceased at all (Bernardini 2011b). At the same time, *Nuraghi* are symbolized and reproduced as stone and metal models, taking part in ritualized and cult activities. The best example of this use is the shrine inside room E of Su Mulinu *Nuraghe*, where the monument becomes a cult place, and its symbolic representation is reproduced inside the embedded shrine (Ugas 1989–1990; Ugas & Paderi 1990). Its sacred use would last at least from the Early Iron Age (if not since Middle Bronze Age) until the late sixth century; after an apparent stop, from the third century BC, the room was used again, with a cultic function at least from the first century BC until the second century AD. Other cases of cult places inside *Nuraghi* are reported by Lilliu (2003, 501–2).

Continuity of sanctuaries into the archaic age is demonstrated, after the Phoenician coastal towns were settled, during the Early Iron Age; Nicola Ialongo (2010) has efficiently shown that, after c. 700 BC, votive deposits change, with a reduction, or even disappearance, of bronze display. We can further quote the recent study by Lela Manning Urquhart (2010), which – even if the study proposes the questionable attribution of some contexts to a post-Early Iron Age date – remarks that after the end of the eighth century, the use of nuragic sacred areas saw a decrease, ‘until a diffused dismissal during the sixth century BC’ [Manning Urquhart 2010, Fig. 4.2]: ‘by 600 only half of the earlier Iron Age sanctuaries were still being used [...] during the sixth century, a handful of sites [...] would continue to be used, but even most of them are abandoned by 525–500 BC’ (Manning Urquhart 2010, 202–3). Some memory in the cultic sphere has therefore to be assumed, but in a changing social context, during Phoenician-dominated phases and then in the Punic powerful intrusion.

As for the resumption of sanctuaries in the later Punic or Roman Age, like in the quoted case of Su Mulinu, other situations are even more complicated: at Genna Maria near Villanovaforru (VS), a cult is located inside the *Nuraghe*, from the late Punic period onwards, fourth century BC (Lilliu 1988; cf. Van Dommelen 1997). Here we have both an interruption and

a change in use, introducing cult: is this linked to the 'memorialization' process (i.e.: transformation of places into memorials) active since the Early Iron Age, in nuragic society, or is it a new independent action?

A more systematic survey of the situation has shown the complexity of the pattern (Stiglitz 2005). For the present goal, we can by now state that:

- A memorialization process came into being at the end of the Bronze Age, involving the whole of nuragic society. *Nuraghe* monuments shifted from subjects of shared memory to memorials, and similar processes can be identified in other subsystems: both the recurrent characters represented in *bronze* *zetti* figurines, occurring in cultic places, suggest they represent memorials of personalities, possibly even transfigured into divine figures and the Mont'e Prama statues strongly support a memorialization attitude;
- A persistence, even if with a transformation and decrease in use, of sacred places took place during the archaic age;
- After the transformations during the sixth century BC, some resumption of cults, and some introduction of new cultic use in nuragic monuments took place;
- Non-homogeneous cases of continuity and discontinuity have been identified in the settlement record (Blake 1998), during the first millennium BC.

Summing up, after the flourishing of the nuragic complexes during the central second millennium BC, whose constant use, testified by the continuity of internal stratigraphies (like at *Nuraghe* Arrubiu central hearth: Lo Schiavo & Sanges 1994), shows a persistence of memory, with enforcing commemorative traits, first millennium BC interruptions and changes in use can be the testimony of contrasting and competing issues about memory, marking contrasting views of the past. Since this process of memorialization of nuragic society, memory becomes more and more selective, possibly coming to be effective almost only in the cult sphere, from the Punic to the Roman periods; new cult places prevail, like main temples in towns and in the landscape, but some reuse of imposing monuments and indigenous sacred places is still clear: the punic Antas temple dedicated to Sardus Pater is superimposed above one of the few known cemeteries of the nuragic early Iron Age.

By the medieval times, the redefinition and reappropriation of the religious landscape was completed, and as such lasted until the present day. On a broad period perspective, this is the culmination of the contrasts in the view of the past that started at least in the seventh century BC. Removals and breaks are evident over a period of more than 1,000 years, even in front of a repeated reconstruction of the meaning of the imposing monumental landscape, and of the purported stability of the Sardinian traditional world discussed by Cirese (see above): a long-term gardening of time.

Modern 'museification' and 'memorification' of the Sardinian heritage

The interaction, re-actualization and creation of memories (memorification instead of memorialization) bound to nuragic imposing monuments was a recurrent phenomenon in the centuries, as can be proved by the contextual presence of archaeological materials of various chronologies. Nowadays, the scientific discovery of the nuragic monuments, started at least with Alberto La Marmora's survey, in the early nineteenth century, has been further developed after World War II, thanks to the Italian legislation, which is fully protective of visible monuments. The present state of knowledge and protection shows an accurate definition of the monuments, with a high number of excavated sites, and – what is more – an impressive number of accessible monuments, often under surveillance and with admission fees: even without considering the 'blockbuster' and most relevant monuments (such as Su Nuraxi di Barumini, Losa, Arrubiu and Santu Antine *Nuraghi*, S. Cristina well, Santa Vittoria sanctuary, etc. etc.), almost each municipality has one or more potentially significant monuments, implying a notable conservation effort and some expectations of touristic promotion. Many societies employing young archaeologists, which keep open the archaeological sites, are dependent on the regional financial support by the Region (Law 14/2006) and have been put at risk of closure, in the case of any end of this support.

Sardinia is an over-typical case in the culturally rich Italian landscape: it has even an excess of cultural supply, facing a rather stagnant touristic demand, with a slightly lowering number of visitors in recent years (Fig. 22.1; SISTAN data, Italian Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali). Tourism in Sardinia focuses on the wonderful coast and sea, but it almost ignores most of the beautiful inland territory, where economic activities, agriculture and even the famous Sardinian pastoralism cannot provide a widely distributed wealth.

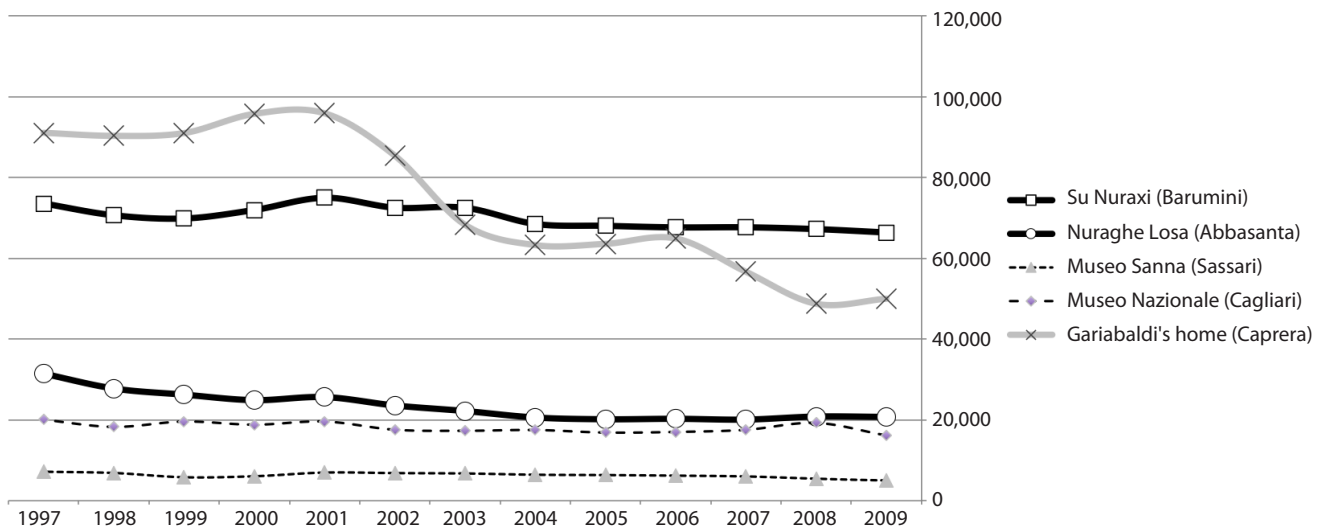


Figure 22.1. Trends in number of visitors of the main archaeological museums (dotted black lines) and sites (solid black lines) directly managed by the State, in Sardinia (3-years mobile averages). The historical site of Garibaldi's home (solid grey line) is included for comparison. The values for the museums and Garibaldi's home include only fee admissions, as they are a better marker of touristic contribution. SISTAN data, Italian Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali. Source: <http://www.statistica.beniculturali.it/Pubblicazioni.htm> (last accessed 21.12.2021).

As a consequence, inland rural Sardinia is becoming depopulated, and major and minor towns, as well as many coastal areas, have received a strong settlers' flow from the 1950s to the 1990s. If we look at an important area for nuragic Sardinia, dense of monuments, such as the so-called 'Valle dei Nuraghi', where Santu Antine Nuraghe stands, its demographic balance is dramatically falling, to levels lower than at the end of the nineteenth century (Fig. 22.2; data from ISTAT),

even if some villages have a rather flourishing economy (Thiesi, Bonnanaro), and the area matches the average of the Sassari Province, in terms of annual income per person (data of the Italian Ministero dell'Economia e Finanza, 2010). This means that the monuments are more and more alone, without a progress in cultural employment or economic return.

In fact, if we look at the economic performance of Sardinia, much has been done since the unification

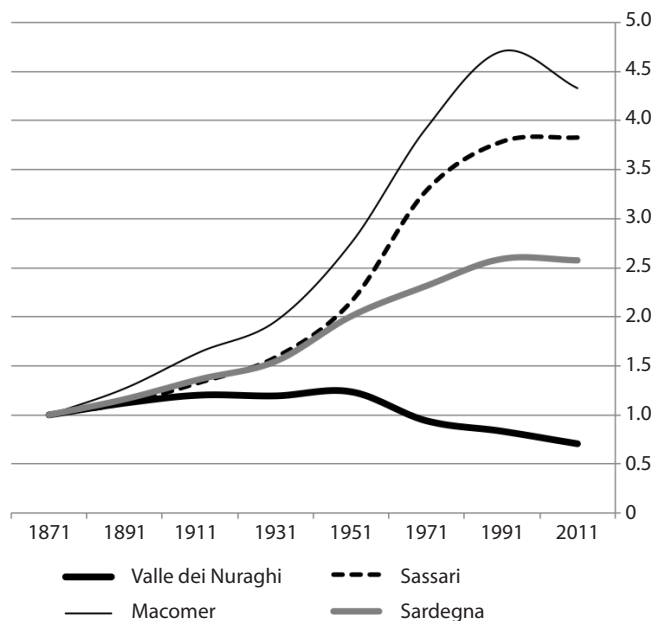


Figure 22.2. Demographic trend of whole Sardinia (solid grey line), compared to the major town of Sassari (dotted black line), the minor town of Macomer and the sum of the Valle dei Nuraghi municipalities (Bonnanaro, Bonorva, Borutta, Cheremule, Giave, Ittireddu, Mores, Thiesi, Torralba); Y values are percentages and 1871 value is set = 100%. ISTAT data. Source: <https://www.tuttitalia.it/> (individual search by administrative unit); https://ebiblio.istat.it/digibib/Sommario%20Statistiche%20Storiche/SBL0509344Comuni_e_pop_cens1861_1951.pdf (last accessed 21.12.2021).

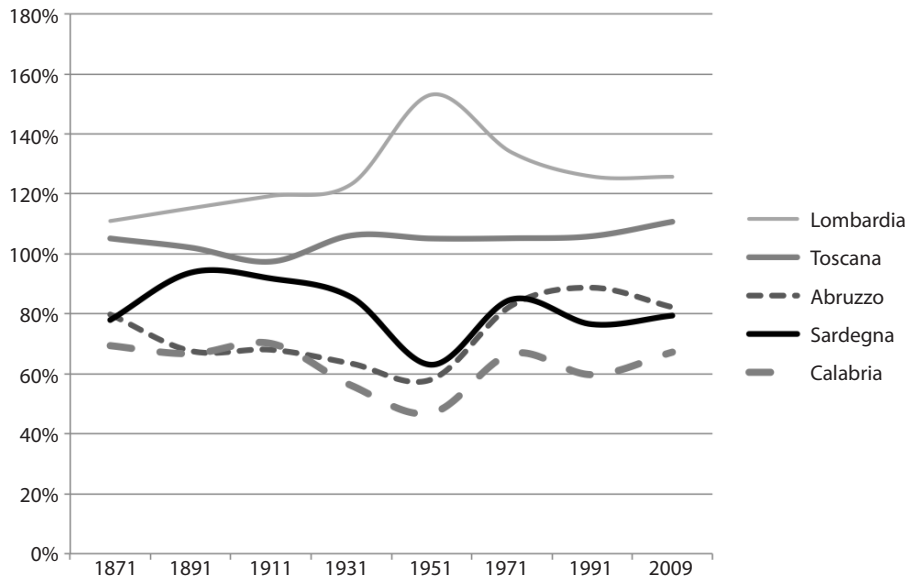


Figure 22.3. Average GDP per person of Sardinia (solid black line) and of selected Italian regions; Y values are percentages and the Italian average is set = 100%. Data: Brunetti et al. 2011, appendix.

of Italy (Fig. 22.3; Brunetti *et al.* 2011), but wealth is concentrated on the coast and in towns, while the depopulated centers of the interior are the poorest ones, mainly inhabited by old people with low pensions (Fig. 22.4, data from the Italian Ministero dell'Economia e Finanza, 2011). The discontinuous economic progress of Sardinia has brought some relative improvements, as Sardinia has now the highest GDP per inhabitant of Southern Italy and Sicily, but nevertheless lower than any region of Northern and Central Italy (data from ISTAT). If we add this situation to the already discussed internal population and economic disequilibrium, we can realize how much fragmented the traditional socio-cultural structure of Sardinia has become.

Therefore, the marginalized social and economic conditions of inland Sardinia stimulate idealized revivalist aspirations in the local populations, which come to be dependent on the dreams of a former greatness, such as shown by the monuments. In this context, private archaeological looting, aiming at finding bronzes, possibly the *bronzetti* figurines, to be sold on the illegal market, is still widespread in Sardinia, as well.

The existence of a strong Sardinian National feeling, a markedly proud attitude, a certain distrust of non-island people and in general of the State, are all components converging towards a partly anarchic and contrasting world of vital feeling, projected on the Antiquity, as the redeemer of present conditions. The constantly resisting Sardinians ('costante resistenziale sarda') about which Lilliu spoke, are as much a reality, as a creation (Lilliu 1971, 2003 (1988)). This situation, instead of reducing the perception of discontinuity with the past, appears to increase it: the past is seen through the eyeglasses of a dramatic fall, due to

external powers and violence, and we can see some of the points highlighted by Cirese, surfacing again.

Prominent amateurs and touristic operators are among the critical people, producing a parallel history and mythology of Sardinia, and sometimes even achieving political support, with an economic return. The case of the success gained by books and photographic exhibitions, not only asserting that Sardinia was Atlantis, but even finding some support in geologists, for the hypothesis that a tsunami could have destroyed the nuragic society, is but the most refined example of the amateurial perspective. It is in fact incredible the number of internet blogs and forums, books and booklets which debate about Shardana, archaeoastronomy, extraordinary building techniques, and so on. In practical terms, the distrust of the external powers and the State tends to extend to the archaeological specialists, seen as people not caring for the greatness of the past, and not producing the great transformation expected to generate wealth, and respect. I think I have learnt from Antonietta Boninu, who spent her life fighting for the assumption of responsibility by the Institutions and people in front of the 'excess in cultural supply' of Sardinia, that there is here a great divide between thought and action. This, more often than not, results in tensions between stakeholders, local communities and the Soprintendenza, sometimes reaching a heated level of confrontation.

As an example, I can recall my personal experience in the research of the Bonorva area (SS_2004–2009). Part of the work took place inside the Mariani Estate, a stretch of land that underwent profound transformations, from a hunting property and a forest, to almost total deforestation, and lastly to bovine stock-keeping,

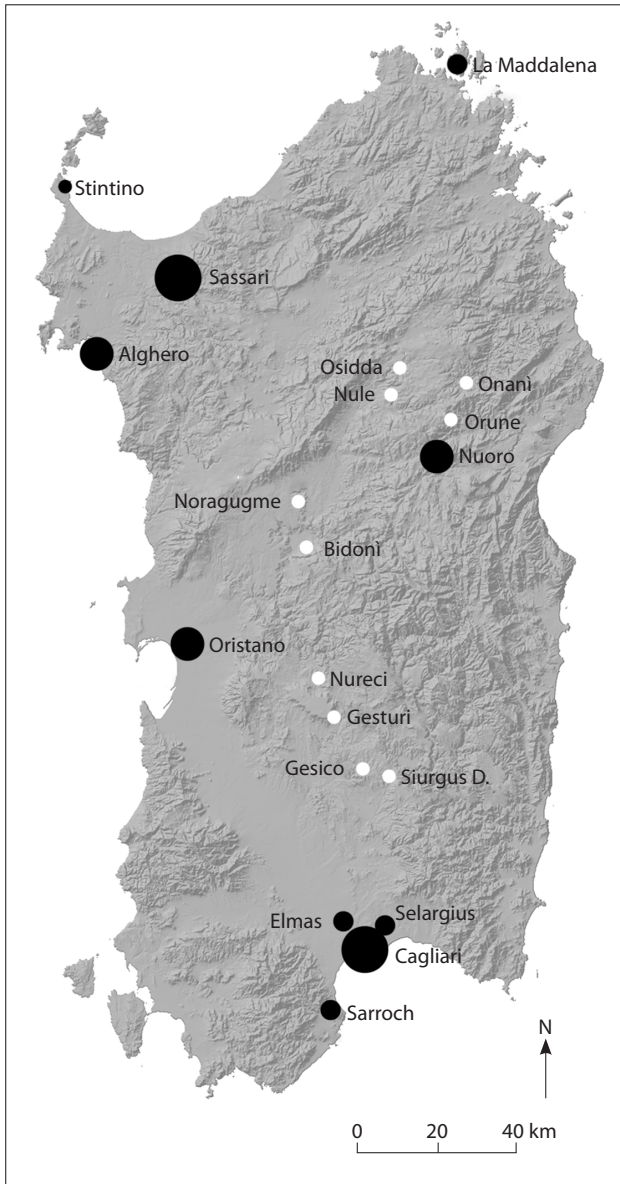


Figure 22.4. Sardinia: the 10 municipalities with the highest average income per person (in black) and the 10 municipalities with the lowest average income per person (in white); tiny dots, villages < 4,000 inhabitants; small dots, towns between 4,000 and 30,000 inhabitants; medium dots, towns between 30,000 and 45,000; big dots, towns over 45,000 inhabitants. Data from the Italian Ministero dell'Economia e Finanza, 2010. Source: <http://www.comuni-italiani.it/20/statistiche/redditip2010.html> (last accessed 21.12.2021).

opened also by bulldozer removal of the outcropping boulders and rocks, now left in elongated heaps bordering pastures. Bigger monuments were still standing and preserved, like three *Nuraghi* and the

underground *domus de janas* Tombs; even a Neolithic village could be identified as rather well preserved, but the landscape had undergone radical transformations, with scarce care by local herders. One of the *Nuraghi* had until recently been reused in a pastoral context, with attached pens, and bulldozer interventions. The whole area is a Municipality property since 2002, but has been continuously claimed by local herders, in a sort of no-man's-land status, until recently (2012).

In this context, while major monuments are more or less preserved, the landscape has been subject to massive alterations, and the smaller elements of the built environment have been at risk, in a competitive economic context, faced by the depopulation of the land. In this context, our team excavated Sa Pala Larga tomb 7, a wonderfully preserved painted chamber tomb (*domus de janas*), inserted inside an extremely significant cemetery, in an almost hilltop location, with difficult accessibility (Usai *et al.* 2011). The discovery of the painted tomb sparked contrast and debate between local amateurs, touristic operators and the Soprintendenza, as the grave had to be sealed for protection, pending restoration and adequate infrastructure for possible future visits. This debate expanded in the social media, spanning from claims of wrong decisions by the Soprintendenza to the quest for the reopening and touristic development of the site, claiming the scientific interest and possible economic return; the problems posed by the site location and its delicate conditions were definitely overlooked by amateurs, and the experts (archaeologists, restorers) not recognized as such. Obviously, the opening to the public of the cemetery and of the painted tomb depends on projects and financial support, which should be sought through a coordinated effort, but tensions by the local population concentrated on a short-term desire for immediate returns.

Conclusion

The components of memories of nuragic Sardinia are many, and include different views, and perspectives, in front of the puzzling monuments coming from the past. We have seen that phases of competing memories can be identified at least since the process of memorialization of nuragic monuments started, at the end of the Bronze Age. Competing and selective memories, as well as appropriation and memorialization acts, are to be seen as active during the first millennium BC, and further on, until the definitive late antique christianization of the region, as shown by the different use and qualification of the monuments. I have argued that this was a long term process, developing until the almost complete removal of memory eventually applied.

After World War II, in parallel with the extraordinary activity of Giovanni Lilliu, the nuragic monuments came to the fore, but the modern legal, economic and demographic conditions, progressively contributed to the isolation of the Heritage from its external context. This process is a general problem, which in Sardinia comes to be amplified also by the 'excess in supply' of cultural monuments. Newly emerging forms of memorification of the nuragic world result in intense contrast between specialists, amateurs (sometimes very heated), Institutions, and sometimes touristic operators and landowners. Globally, notwithstanding intense debate, and even careful descriptions of the contexts, the monuments are increasingly alone, inserted in a changing landscape, under pressure of different interests.

It is clear that in fact the Heritage, even if protected and recognized, is becoming scarcely embedded in the local depopulated rural contexts, while the attached memories mainly come from scholars or from prominent amateurs.

In my opinion, there are here many competing attitudes, as Leopardi remarked, but there is little of the alleged conservatism both quoted and denied by Cirese. The compact tissue of Sardinian society is fragmented, too, by demographic and economic factors, paving the way for deregulated and authoritative

positions, like many of those held by amateurs, and possibly by some archaeologists. A similar situation has taken place in other regions with a vulnerable economy and an attitude towards revivalist dreams, such as for instance in Calabria, where often natural stone blocks are reported as mysterious cultural products, or amateurs blame researchers for inadequate understandings. In Sardinia, leaving aside the socio-economic conditions, the amateur perspective is enhanced by the extraordinary monuments, and by the fascination they exert; which is certainly also one of the reasons why we, as archaeologists, care so much about them. For this reason, we should invest many efforts in making the Heritage a more integrated element of the living communities.

Acknowledgments

I owe Antonietta Boninu most of my insight into Sardinian facts, if I have any; this chapter is sadly dedicated to her powerful memory, hoping she would have appreciated my arguments. F. Campus, A. Depalmas, V. Leonelli have given to me other basic hints, I don't know if correctly understood. M. Gallinaro and N. Ialongo have read and commented drafts of this chapter; the responsibility of the text is anyway totally mine.

Chapter 23

Endnote: gardening time in broader perspective

Ethan D. Aines & Simon Stoddart

One of the predominant themes of this volume is time, and more specifically what is to be done with it. Sean Carroll, the theoretical cosmologist's recent (2010), popular work made the case that from a physical perspective *time* is ostensibly *change*. When we observe the passage of time, Carroll argues, we are observing a natural consequence of the second law of thermodynamics, that there are more ways for a system to become disordered, or entropic, over time than there are ways for it to remain the same. Therefore, we are experiencing change when we speak of experiencing the passage of time. As many authors maintain, we can very precisely measure this change through chronometric means – at the atomic level, measuring the decay of an isotope, or at the cosmological level, marking the passage of seasons – but we cannot measure the *experience* of this change, as it is by no means objective (Gosden 1994; Lucas 2005).

In this volume, time has been discussed as being cultivated – *gardened* – though in other conceptions time can be discussed as being spent, wasted, as being finite or limited, or even as being consumed, as for the Chronophage, the orthopteran demon that rides atop the Corpus Clock, *devouring* time itself in King's Parade, Cambridge. The cultivation of memory is one of the defences that many cultures around the world employ in the face of this unstoppable consumption; this unending change. We are constantly aware of the past, and of time as a finite resource, and as people, we have to deal with or confront this. Laurent Olivier writes that as a natural consequence of facing the vestiges of the past that surround us, people strive continuously to 'transcribe' themselves onto the environment and into history beyond the limit of what we know will be finite lives (Olivier 2011, 15–16). This urge, he contends, explains the 'unshakable power conveyed by monument building'. Monument building 'was not done simply to create permanent structures

capable of withstanding the forces of deterioration; it was just as much an attempt to link them, through the very sight on which they were built, to the most remote origins of which they were supposedly the continuation' (Olivier 2011).

But we struggle with these same issues today as much as the monument builders of the past did. The proliferation of memory studies within archaeology, and particularly heritage, mirrors other disciplines. We tentatively suggest that this reflects the preoccupation of the age in which we live, as much as its importance in the Ancient Past. Europeans who experienced the traumas of the Second World War are now disappearing as direct receptacles of memory, and are now memorialized by their immediate descendants, as key centenaries come into focus. The crucial forty-year time-gap (of which see more below) was crossed in the 1980s, setting off this trend of the recall of memory. Furthermore, globalization has profoundly affected senses of identity, so that many seek more localized and memorialized roots.

This preoccupation with the memories of other ages has had a long history. Towards the second half of the nineteenth century, amid concerns of a rapidly transforming society, many older Americans found stability by turning back in time to trace ancestral heritage (Ellis 1975). Along with burgeoning familial research, new traditions such as family reunions were born as Americans reached not only into the past but also contacted dispersed kin as a means of reinforcing the foundations of their identity in a time of societal transformation (Taylor 1982). Many American genealogies therefore exhibit a similar phenomenon to the gaps observed in African societies (of which more below), whereby the selective and uneven tracing of particular lines (whether patrilineal, matrilineal, and more often an ad-hoc bi-lineal mixture), bring American families closer to 'famous' ancestors from whom

they can draw certain defining moral characteristics. It is possible to observe a more localized form of political imagination – a genealogical imaginary (Kramer 2011) – arising within the boundaries of the family. Today, with the advent of specialized memory tools like genealogical software and crowd-sourced family trees as on Ancestry.com, these ‘gaps’ may be filled. Yet the proliferation of genealogy as a pastime in more recent years and the rise of at-home DNA testing suggests nineteenth-century Americans were not the only ones experiencing a great disjuncture from idealized pasts.

Theoretical approaches to memory

The issue of collective memory in prehistoric archaeological contexts can be approached from a variety of theoretical sources, some more and some less appropriate to the task. Philosophical, historic, sociological, and ethnographic sources each have their advantages and disadvantages, though the first two approaches (the first based, at least in part on the second) place Western and somewhat anachronistic ideas at the fore. While other methods such as cognitive psychology and artistic expression present themselves, the focus here shall primarily be on the first four mentioned.

Maurice Halbwachs, the French philosopher, sociologist, and colleague of Émile Durkheim, presented some of the earliest and most complete writings on collective memory, later assembled in the 1952 volume *On Collective Memory* (Halbwachs 1992 [1952]). One of Halbwachs’s most important contributions is the concept that memory is not possible outside of a social framework. Even individual memory and imagination are forms of social memory because they occur within the milieu of social influence (Halbwachs 1992, 49). Importantly, family, whether consanguine or fictive, forms one of the major loci of collective memory. Halbwachs writes, ‘No matter how we enter a family... we find ourselves to be part of a group where our position is determined not by personal feelings but by rules and customs independent of us that existed before us’ (Halbwachs 1992, 55). Drawing on the work of Fustel de Coulanges (1864), Halbwachs illustrates how even religious expression, often seen to operate on a higher ideological level, finds its primary dissemination *within* the family (Halbwachs 1992, 63). Some sociological and historic models of memory, drawn from nineteenth- and twentieth-century examples, tend towards a top-down model, but Halbwachs clarifies the processes of memory at a variety of different levels.

Two of the most important historical studies of collective memory may be found in the work of Jan Assmann (1991, 1995) and Paul Connerton (1989, 2009). Assmann focuses on what he terms ‘cultural memory’,

or the need for collective identity to reside in, and be passed on through, ceremony. Assmann also highlights the importance of memory landscapes, writing that ‘Memory needs places and tends towards spatialization’ (Assmann 1991, 25; cf. Bachelard 1964; de Certeau 1984; Casey 1987; Nora 1989). As Yates (1966) also emphasizes in her monograph on mnemotechnics and the creation of ‘memory palaces’, from a cognitive perspective, *place* is the basis of all memory. Another important aspect of Yates’ work on the *ars memoriae*, is the concept of spatial memory functioning well in sequences. Individual landmarks in the memory are significant, but even more significant is the progression through a series of semiotized landmarks within a landscape, whether internal as in the sense of the memory palaces or external as in the sense of a familiar journey or choreography. Consequently, as we shall explore further, ‘entire landscapes may serve as a medium for cultural memory. These are not so much accentuated by signs (monuments) as raised to the status of signs, that is, they are *semiotized*’ (Assmann 1991, 44; cf. Strehlow 1970). Political imagination, or the extent to which a group visualizes itself in regards to a shared, somewhat fictive past (Assmann 1991, 111), also takes on a prominent role in Assmann’s work (cf. Anderson 1983, 6).

Connerton (1989) focuses on bodily practices (*habitus*) and, like Assmann, commemorative ceremonies. The latter are (more or less) ritual performances through which social memory is sustained. The use of commemoration in late eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century France (Connerton 1989, 10) and Germany between the First and Second world wars (Connerton 1989, 43) are two major foci. As Hobsbawm (1983) and Lowenthal (1985) note, these periods were times of rapid transformation in which the social patterns and traditions of the past became dislocated. The past, to use Lowenthal’s phrasing, became a *foreign country*. Therefore, Connerton’s examples are highly applicable to heritage studies, but may be more difficult to apply fully to prehistoric societies except through more general analogies. Assmann also bases many of his observations upon literate, although ancient, cultures in the Middle East and North Africa. This raises the question that the application of theoretical models derived from historical studies may not provide the best basis for understanding prehistoric societies. We suggest that we can become overly general when discussing collective memory, and thus lose the unique contexts in which commemorative practices may take place. On the other hand, the use of overly specific examples risks directly comparing prehistoric societies with the disjuncture from the past that occurred over the course of nineteenth- and twentieth-century urban life.

The impact of literacy?

The primary responsibility of archaeologists when applying Halbwachs, Assmann, and Connerton's theoretical approaches in prehistoric studies is to understand that these have historical, literate biases. As they caution, the transmission of memory in literate societies relies on highly specialized practices (eg. writing and historiography), and thus in pre-literate societies we may expect the transmission of memory, in lieu of such specialized practices, to be subject to greater and greater distortion as time goes by.

The concern with memory in the Western Tradition has deeper origins that are connected with the advent of literacy. The Etruscans (Piffig 1975; Stoddart 2007–9) had a profound sense of historical time whose format was finalized as they sought absorption in the Roman world. A central facet of this construction of time was the *saeculum*, a period ranging from 123 to 100 years in length (Table 23.1), a term adopted by the Romans (Varro *De Lingua Latina* 6.11; Forsythe 2012) who admired their temporal religiosity. Romans' use of the 'saeculum' or the end-point when the last surviving member of a generation and the last carrier of its particular memories had died amounted to some 80 years. 'Half the generational limit of 80 years – that is 40 years – seems to represent a critical threshold.' for memory. So basically, after 40 years a person who witnessed a significant event in their adulthood will now be retired and will focus more on the memory of the past.

On the other hand, Lillios (2003, 129) cautions against viewing prehistory in stark contrast to the historic period as it could lead to the assumption that prehistoric societies were 'memory-challenged', when in fact they may have had hitherto unrecognized specialized mnemonic materials.

A hard-wired time depth to memory?

Assmann places the maximum fidelity of 'living' memory at around 80 years, and some anthropological studies bear this out (1991, 37). Bradley (2003, 221) estimates the maximum extent of stability stands at somewhere between 100 and 200 years, while Vansina recounts that the shortest living memory he encountered as an anthropologist was of the Aka of Lobaye, reaching back only one generation (1985, 24). Working in an archaeological context at Deir al-Medina in Upper Egypt, Meskell (2003, 37) claims the same of the workers whose family commemorative practices reached back scarcely two generations. Interestingly, they *could*, however, 'remember' Amenhotep I and his mother, regarded as founders of the village, stretching back

many generations. This points to memory practices operating at different scales within the same society relating to different types of foci for that memory.

Against these broadly general agreements, there is strong ethnographic evidence that hunter gatherer and by implication other prehistoric memories can be very deep in certain circumstances. Australian ethnography recalls that myths can carry cataclysmic events back from deep time (Hirsch 2006). At a more general level, Minc (1986, 103) has shown how 'oral tradition clearly provided one enduring means for the preservation of hard-won survival experience between occurrences of resource crises'. Hegmon and Fisher also emphasize that long-term information on resources were similarly embedded in ritual codes (Hegmon & Fisher 1991, 141).

The importance of context for memory

Recent developments in neuroscience show that memory at an individual level requires context. The human brain constructs memory out of the experience of repeated and multiple contexts, which may be sensory, and may be related to repeated visits to places or may be socially constructed.

Paul and Laura Bohannan noted cases of socially embedded 'structural amnesia', to use Barnes's (1947) phrase (see also Forty & Küchler 1999, Connerton 2008), when living with the Tiv of central Nigeria in the late 1940s and 1950s (Bohannan & Bohannan 1953, Bohannan 1952). The recitation of genealogies was of central importance in disputes among the Tiv, as they established claims about the past. Noting this, the British colonial administrators carefully recorded these genealogies only to find that they shifted and changed over time (Bohannan 1952). Jack Goody has written, based on the work of Malinowski (1926), that this type of genealogy acts as a 'social charter' that is more reflective of current and ongoing institutions than they are faithful historical records (Goody 1968, 33). More recently, Jan Vansina (1985) has discussed the 'floating gap' that occurs between these fictive genealogies and more distant, 'mythical' founding ancestors (as in the example from Meskell above). These gaps may be obvious to ethnographers, yet are reported to go unnoticed by those recounting them (Assmann 1991).

Consequently, as the previous two cases would suggest, an important, third source of theorizing collective or cultural memory presents itself in ethnographic work and the observation of memory systems at play in living societies. One of the most important studies of the interchange between memory and place is William Basso's (1996) ethnography of the Western Apache, *Wisdom Sits in Places*. Through exploration of

toponyms and the stories behind them, Basso examines spatial conceptions of history and myth and the ways in which knowledge of place is closely linked with one's knowledge of self (Basso 1996, 34). Some of Basso's informants report being figuratively 'stalked' by the landscape, as they reflect on the moral lessons of its features as they pass through it or remember it from afar. They may, through memory and introspection, be led to more moral or traditional ways. As Basso writes, 'insofar as places and place names provide Apache people with symbolic reference points for the moral imagination and its practical bearing on the actualities of their lives – the landscape in which the people dwell can be said to dwell in them' (Basso 1996, 102).

Of great importance to archaeologists is the idea that people do not need man made monuments to act as mnemonics in a landscape. In the case of the Western Apache, '...geographical features have served for centuries as indispensable mnemonic pegs upon which to hang the moral teachings of their history' (Basso 1996, 62). Furthermore, this suggests that landscape may be as much an internal concept as it is an external reality. Recovering memory-relationships in a landscape is therefore attended by great difficulty when we cannot speak with the subjects of our studies. Prehistoric landscapes, although we share them with our forebears and walk in their vestiges today, may be truly lost to us. A phenomenological approach, as promoted by Tilley (1994, 2010), can only go so far. Although our bodies are homologous to prehistoric men and women's bodies, our internal world-views are not. Richard Bradley (2000) calls attention to the fact that 'natural' places, equally present in the minds of people, are no less the object of archaeological study than monuments that were intentionally constructed. Indeed, some natural places can be simply touched delicately by culture to mark that presence (Stoddart 2012). Basso and Bradley both emphasize the need to be imaginative when exploring the linkages between landscape, place-making, and memory, and their research cautions that, as with many things in archaeology, we cannot see the whole picture.

Bloch (1971) also presents a clear case study of the ties between land, kinship groups, and memory in his study of the Merina of the northern part of the central plateau of Madagascar between 1964 and 1966. At the time of Bloch's study, the Merina saw themselves as a society beset by rapid social change, instigated in part by missionaries, colonialists, and foreigners in general. The introduction by these outsiders of new ways of doing had resulted in a disjuncture between 'Malagasy times' and the present. One of the major ways in which life was different in the 1960s than in the past was the dispersed nature of the Merina people, with most

families living away from their ancestral lands. Even if a family had been in a given location for four or five generations, they still thought of themselves as 'guests' or 'strangers'. A family felt they only 'belonged' to the place where their particular kinship group kept their family tombs. Because it was impossible to act fully within both the traditional ways of life, those of the ancestors, and modern ways, with their economic and political advantages, many Merina people existed with a tension between the two. However, through death, this tension dissipated. The act placing the dead in the ancestral tomb was 'the final act of atonement by at last transforming the social being into an actor in the imaginary society of ancestors' (Bloch 1971, 216). Consequently, through death there was a spatial, social transformation.

In Bloch's case study it is possible to find similarities with prehistoric societies, and particularly with Alasdair Whittle's concept of tethered mobility in the Neolithic (1996, 1997). According to Whittle, one of the primary functions of ditched enclosures may have depended much upon the 'symbolic representation of community cohesion' (1996, 190). Consequently, 'through reinforced attachment to specific places, chosen times for communal gathering and ritual, pre-determined ways of seeing and experiencing ordered space, people were encouraged to maintain the rhythms and obligations of tethered mobility' (1996, 192). Through both ethnography and archaeology, it is possible to see the connection between people and the places to which they retain a deep connection through memory and ritual practices, although they may live elsewhere.

Significantly for the archaeological study of memory, as these multiple examples suggest, there is no universal way to remember, and cultural memory practices take on a great array of forms. Certainly there are some *generalities* we can trace across cultures, but memory and how groups of people choose to remember and to forget are often highly contextual. Some of the ways in which people recollect, re-remember, and often imagine their own pasts, and the ways in which they choose which members of society are part of the in-group and which are not, present a predominant, recurring theme. Building on the ideas of Halbwachs, it makes sense that memory – being entirely socially mediated – would take on as many different forms as there are different social groupings around the world, despite similar cognitive processes involved. These various studies also highlight the importance of scale when discussing memory and point to the fact that these scales are by no means uniform. From the formations of familial histories to the foundational stories of nations and religions, a great variety may be

observed, and importantly, larger scale configurations of memory are often experienced differently from one smaller-scale setting to the next.

Memory in archaeological studies

Many archaeological studies of the inventive ways in which past societies were aware of and used their own pasts in the active maintenance of their identities have sprung from this font of theoretical work over the past two decades. This closely mirrors trends within the social sciences in general (Assmann 1990, xi). Several articles, edited volumes, and monographs stand out among this work (Bradley 1987, Ingold 2002, Van Dyke & Alcock 2003, Yoffee 2007, Hamilakis 2014, Chadwick & Gibson 2013) and each has contributed to an understanding of the ways in which the archaeological palimpsests observed at many sites are 'rarely... accidental and innocent' (Van Dyke & Alcock 2003b, 1). Indeed, the juxtaposition of later monuments with earlier ones on the same sites are frequently so obvious and impactful that they cannot be ignored. Some examples include the construction of churches on Roman buildings (Morris & Roxan 1980), the relationship between Iron Age and early Medieval landscapes (Meredith-Lobay 2009), the placement of Anglo-Saxon boundaries along earlier ritual routes (Malim *et al.* 1997), and the alignment of prominent Late La Tène route-ways through earlier Hallstatt burial mounds (Stegmaier 2017). Longterm continuity of population and practice presents one possible explanation for the observed collocation, yet as many of the ethnographic and historic examples illustrate, 'continuity' is rarely simple and often created. Convincing evidence for a break in continuity followed by *using* past monuments as part of the political imaginary has been provided in many of these cases.

Another commonly observed phenomenon is the use of former monuments and buildings for innovative practices and novel interpretations. One example is the siting of the Anglo-Saxon moots and later hundred courts at prominent prehistoric monuments in England including hillforts, causewayed enclosures, and burials mounds. Three examples in East Anglia are the moot-hill at Grime's Graves (a bronze age tumulus), the hundred court at Wandlebury (an Iron Age hillfort), and the meeting site at the Bronze Age tumulus at Mutlow Hill along the route of Fleam Dyke. As Semple explains, these sites were viewed with awe and caution as a species of space associated with past supernatural activity (2008, 2013). Settlements were consequently often placed a comfortable distance away. Prehistoric tumuli were also often used for early Anglo-Saxon burials, and toponymic analysis has illustrated that

people had different vocabulary for contemporary burial mounds and ancient, reused ones (Semple 2008; 2013; Chester-Kadwell 2007).

Votive deposition, as a long-term practice emerging from earlier prehistory, takes place through a large repertoire of forms and mediums, some of which directly reference the past while others resemble past depositional practices yet provide an array of innovative forms. As Bradley (1990) writes, hoarding and votive deposition have never satisfactorily been shown to be unitary practices throughout prehistory and may have taken place for a variety of different reasons. The deposition of Iron Age prestige metalwork, including tripod-cauldrons, at Bronze Age palaces by 'ruin cults' on Crete provides an interesting example. The deliberate placement of these depositions only in the public areas of the former-palaces leads Prent (2003) to believe that local cultic practice reflects a 300-year memory from the times when the palaces were still in use. Although the placement of votive depositions can often be shown *not* to be *random*, deliberate placement does not necessarily mean deliberate continuity, as in the case of the small Late Iron Age coin hoards placed in and near Bronze Age burial mounds at Mutlow Hill in Cambridgeshire, and near Narborough in Norfolk, among other examples (Aines 2020). The occurrence of coin hoards, as a new medium in Late Iron Age Britain at older sites, potentially represents a hybrid practice that makes creative use of the past. The Iron Age Salisbury hoard, which includes Bronze Age artefacts and numerous miniature weapons, makes multiple references to the past (Stead 1998). At Nettleton Top, in similar depositions, some of the miniatures found take on the idealized forms of what Iron Age people imagined certain Bronze Age weapons, including shields, looked like, yet they do not resemble any known Bronze Age typologies (Farley 2013, 109). The deposition of heirlooms provides yet a different example of memory practices at the family level (Lillios 1999). The recurrence of hoards at certain sites again and again in multiple periods, such as Ken Hill, Snettisham, illustrate another potential form of commemorative practice. Yet in a warning against such interpretations, Martin Rundkvist (2015) writes about similar depositional practices around Lake Malaren in Sweden, where memory notwithstanding, people have been throwing things into rapids from the Neolithic period until the modern era because of cross-cultural allure. Meskell (2003) refers to these types of places as 'numinous' locales.

As some of these examples show, as much as continuity, we may also find dislocation from the past and the invention of traditions. Meskell (2003), for example, traces the importance in Graeco-Roman

culture of paying obeisance in sites that were awe-inspiring. On one such site, at Deir al-Medina near Luxor, rather than the worshipping in the foundations of a grand temple, devotees found themselves in the ruins of a worker's village, failing to recognize they were not in a former holy place. 'In this sense,' Meskell writes, 'they were not performing an act of cultural memory but were constituting new, hybrid forms of commemorative practice' (Meskell 2003, 50). Bradley illustrates similar phenomena in both the Boyne Valley and in North Umbria where after a long intervening period between prehistory and the middle ages, older sites were reactivated in new ways for political benefit (Bradley 1987).

The materiality of monuments

Taphonomic biases strongly influence our interpretations of memory in the past. The foremost among these is the physical materiality of the monuments. Many, though not all, of these examples revolve around long-lived monuments built from stone and earth. Because of their durability, both *brochs* and *Nuraghi* were the focal points of memory for the people who inhabited them and have remained focal points for the archaeological study of memory because of this defining characteristic. The properties of stone differ from those of wood, for example, and the endurance of stone itself becomes a symbol of longevity and the endurance of memory, both 'living' and 'dead'. They may have formed 'memory monuments', a more prominent sub-class of what Ian Hodder has classified as 'memory houses' (Hodder 2012), with the important distinction the dead are buried elsewhere, so it is the monument (and its refuse) that provide the source of memory rather than the direct presence of the individuals who once lived there.

Mike Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina's ethnographic landscape exploration of the semiotics of Stonehenge, as compared with nearby Durrington Walls and Woodhenge, brings these issues to the fore. By relating these monuments to the homes, tombs, memorial stones, and building traditions in highland Madagascar, they build a careful ethnographic analogy that provides one basis for understanding how construction choices and materiality may be deployed to emphasize certain symbolic concepts. As they write, 'Whilst the meanings of things can be arbitrary and open to continuous reinterpretation, the physical properties of materials such as stone, wood, water and fire are such that they resist certain interpretations and understandings and invite others. In such cases, their materiality may be a significant element of their metaphorical associations' (1998, 310).

Consequently, they illustrate how wood is often used for the structures of the living, whereas stone is often for the structures of the dead (1998, 308). They argue that Stonehenge was therefore not a monument to an ancestor cult, but the focal point of a mirror realm in which ancestors feasted and enacted other rituals in the stone reflection of the nearby wooden sites where the living did the same. Consequently, the transition of certain wooden hengiforms to stone over time may have reflected some of the same life cycles, from life to death, from transience to permanence, experienced by humans and human communities (1998, 324).

However, ideas like permanence and impermanence are mediated by embedded social practices and may differ from one culture to the next. Both Ise Grand Shrine, in Mie, and Izumo Grand Shrine, in Shimane, Japan are notable for their scheduled 'restoration' every 20 and 60 years, respectively (Bock 1974). In 2013, restoration works were carried out at both shrines in the same year, when they were completely rebuilt to the exact specifications of the originals on an adjacent plot of land as they have been for centuries. At Ise, this was the sixty-second iteration of the main shrine over the past 1,240 years. Much like the metaphorical ship of Theseus – or even the literal *Vasa*, kept alive by incredible sleight of hand – this raises interesting questions about survival and identity. Metaphysical questions aside however, the rebuilding of the shrines has helped to pass on ancient woodworking techniques and architectural styles that would have otherwise been lost (Smith 2013a). Symbolically, the rebuilding of the shrines reflects the Shinto belief in the transitory nature of life and the renewal that follows death.

Similarly, the monumental totem poles of the Pacific Northwest, which symbolize kinship groups, myths, and living individuals relevant to the local, different tribes, are traditionally made from cedar and gradually decay as part of their natural 'life-cycles.' Gloria Cranmer Webster, a Kwakwaka'wakw, notes that while Western conservators have sought to protect totem poles from the ravages of time, the idea of preservation is diametrically opposed to the traditional indigenous view that totem poles, like all other objects, should be allowed to decay and move on once they have served their purpose. Repairing or re-painting totem poles happened rarely in the past because in order to do so, a potlatch had to be held at the same expense as erecting a new totem pole, but *without* any additional prestige passing to its owner (Rhyne 2000). Rhyne emphasizes, therefore, that this approach is not a sentiment, but a deeply embedded social practice.

In these examples, the symbolic nature of wood is not necessarily different from Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina's interpretation, but both emphasize the

impermanence of wood as it mirrors the impermanence of life and the inevitability of death and regeneration. Therefore, it could be argued they are semiotically more complex than a simple life/death dichotomy. Yet at the fore are issues of materiality and ideas of decay, degeneration, and ruin (cf. Olivier 2011, 56–7; Olsen & Pétursdóttir 2014).

Both brochs and *Nuraghi*, however, are not monuments of death, but the dwellings and gathering places of the living. The durability of dry-stone buildings, when properly cared for, is immense. Yet in certain cases, memory was not necessarily carried by the buildings themselves, but in the daily, habitual practices of the living that occurred in and around them. Parker Pearson and Sharples (1999) have explored the ways in which refuse and middens may have communicated the longevity and status of certain brochs – ideas explored elsewhere in this volume – including Dun Vulcan in South Uist, Scotland. Here, while midden material ought to have been valuable for enriching the nutrient-poor soils of the machair near Dun Vulcan, instead it was allowed to accumulate over centuries until the midden beside the broch reached up to the height of the door. One can imagine the luxuriant, green of ruderal species that covered the midden, and the ways in which this, quite apart from the materiality of the broch itself, would have been a sign of the antiquity of the house and of a certain type of wealth that would allow for the conspicuous consumption of fertile soil in this manner. Almost like a coat of arms, the midden would have illustrated the long prestige of those who lived there (Parker Pearson pers. comm. 2019).

The afterlife of monuments

In archaeological work over the past two decades, the ‘turn to things’ and the cultural biographies of things (Kopytoff 1986, Gosden & Marshall 1999, Olsen 2010, Hodder 2012b) have been enormously productive, and very little needs to be said of these approaches here. In short, objects have social lives of their own, and may go on to lead new lives, as it were, that may not have originally been conceptualized by their makers (Olsen & Pétursdóttir 2014). In this way, monuments as *things* and landscapes as *things*, may be said to have agency, although the origins of this agency (does it lie with the things themselves or the people who perceive them?) has been debated to some extent. Monuments are large scale implementations of these ideas.

Within this frame, monuments, such as brochs and *Nuraghi*, as symbols of national or regional identity have the immediate advantage of presenting a literal facade of continuity with the past. Intangible heritage

may come and go, move around, and be ‘appropriated,’ but stone presents a more stable image upon which to base these ‘imagined communities.’ Brochs and *Nuraghi* may therefore no longer be ‘used’ in the sense they once were, yet their use (even if primarily by archaeologists and the promulgators of heritage) as symbols of cultures past and remembered continues in their afterlives. They provide material, enduring reminders of the unique circumstances of the two nation’s pasts.

In this way, monuments provide the settings in which real and fictive histories are set, and thus enable us to give a spatial dimension to the past. The Scottish antiquary and polymath James Anderson, for example, identified the broch of Mousa on Shetland as the location where, as recounted in Ossian’s *Fingal*, the bloodthirsty chieftain Grumal was imprisoned for his misconduct (Smith 2013). While Grumal may have been created as part of Macpherson’s mythomoteur (cf. Assmann 1991, 64–5), it makes no difference. When we stand in the foundations of these ruins, we can imagine what may have happened here, as Anderson did. Shanks (2012, 100) highlights the frequency of this type of antiquarian engagement and terms it ‘place/ event’, building on the definition of Bernard Tschumi (1994). As Shanks (2012, 103) explains, this type of engagement focuses ‘upon the question: this happened here; or did it, could it have?’ This relates closely to what Assmann (1991, 111) terms the political imagination, or the extent to which ‘a group – whether it be a tribe, race, or nation – can only be itself to the degree in which it understands, visualizes, and represents itself as such’. In consequence, monuments fulfill other roles outside the scope of their original builders’ intentions and act as the spatial tethers between this modern world with its national intricacies and the past accessible only through imagination.

Conclusion: monuments for memory

James Whitley (2002) has objected to using ‘ancestors’ as a means of blanket interpretation in archaeology, yet his emphasis on folklore and ancient written sources overlooks the multitude of ethnographic studies that illustrate the foundational importance of ancestry to the identity of many cultural groups around the world.

Instead, he favours the hypothesis that veneration and fear of otherworldly beings motivated certain practices in prehistoric societies. These fears abound in literature, folklore, and even toponymy (see for example Semple 1998, Chester-Kadwell 2008), but in relevance to individual archaeological contexts, these ideas need to be examined on a case by case basis.

However, ancestor veneration alone does not account for all forms of commemoration. Ancestry provides an important sphere of a community's identity, but collective memory may ossify around other events including victory (Sclifman 2001), defeat (Nelson 2003), and times of both plenty (Adamcyk 2002) and poverty (Masalha 2012). Studies of heritage abound with cases, and these examples are by no means comprehensive. The American artist Heather Ossandon, whose art explores both mundane and ceremonial ritual, asks 'What deserves to be remembered, venerated, and why?' in the introduction to her exhibition playfully entitled *Commemorative Plates of Shitty Things*, which recalls, among other events, her brother's second open-heart surgery (Ossandon 2014). Lowenthal (1985) also discusses the commemoration of, and even nostalgia for, terrible times in the past.

While these forms of commemoration involve remembering people – potentially ancestors, but unknown persons as well (Hobsbawm 1983, Inglis 1999) – motives may be multifaceted and ulterior. We conclude with a cautionary question. Did ancient societies need monuments at the heart of cultural and collective memory and in commemorative practices or is it archaeologists who need monuments to identify

memory in the past? As Basso's work, and several other examples herein, illustrate, memory can be held within in ways that leave few physical traces.

Yet going back to the idea of resisting the change that is inevitable with the passage of time, the cultivation of memory in monumental architecture undeniably alters the perception of time and of the environment for those who engage with them. As settings and through their material durability, the architectural elements within built environments, whether urban or monumental, add gravitas to power. We are reminded through the maintenance required, through the patina that these environments acquire over many years, that before us someone has walked here: an ancestor, a forebear, a predecessor to part of the identity we assume in such a location. There are locations that can, for a moment, seem to resist this change and in which, rather than being consumed, time can grow. As the late gardening correspondent for the *New York Times* Allen Lacey once wrote, 'Gardeners, like everyone else, live second by second and minute by minute. What we see at one particular moment is then and there before us. But there is a second way of seeing. Seeing with the eye of memory, not the eye of our anatomy, calls up days and seasons past and years gone by' (Lacey 1992, 16).

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Gardening time

Gardening may seem worlds away from *Nuraghi* and brochs, but tending a garden is a long process involving patience, accretion and memory. Scholars argue that memories are also cultured, developed and regained. The monuments in Scotland and Sardinia are testament to the importance of memory and its role in maintaining social relations.

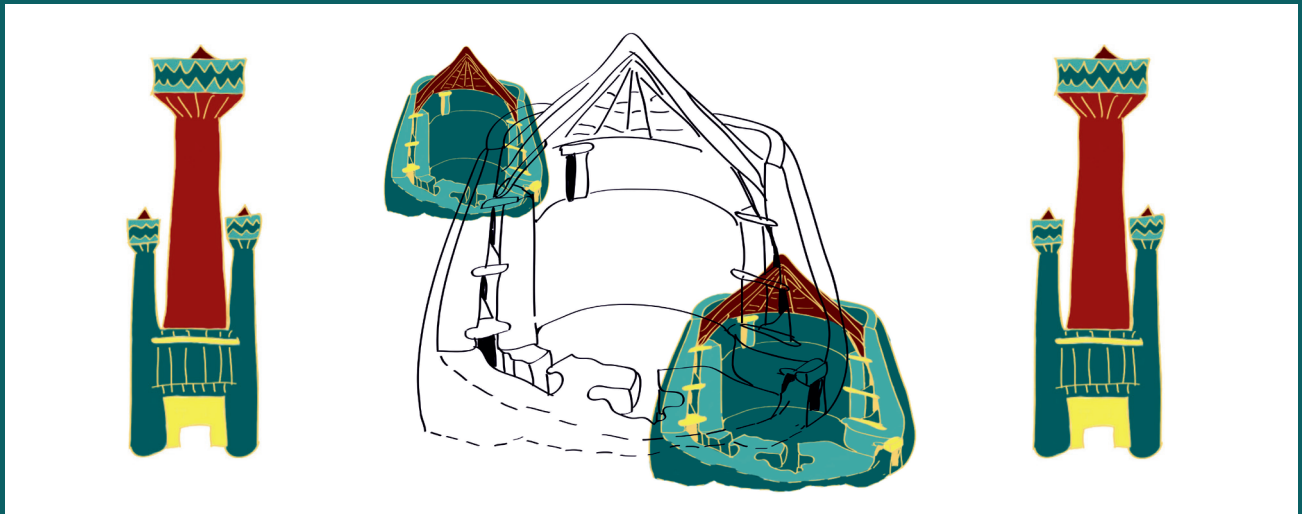
This collection of twenty-one papers addresses the theme of memory anchored to the enduring presence of monuments, mainly from Scotland and Sardinia, but also from Central Europe and the Balkans.

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