

Investing in Sculpture: Power in Early-historic Scotland

By MEGGEN GONDEK

THE SCULPTED STONES of Scotland have been used as a means of exploring Early-medieval art and ideology. Archaeological studies have also considered stone monuments within their physical setting, using landscapes to inform their social and political meanings. The following study looks at carved monuments in the context of their distribution and the relative amount of investment involved in their production. To understand the latter, a system of assessing relative investment in sculpture is devised and tested in three regional studies: Argyll and Bute, southern Pictland and Dumfries and Galloway. The resulting patterns and concentrations of investment in sculpture are then examined for underlying changes in structures of power. The patterns emphasise smaller units of power and combinations of secular and ecclesiastic control, and highlight the dynamic nature of power structures in Early-historic Scotland.¹

There is a great variety of sculpture datable to the 6th–11th centuries in Scotland. Forms range from simple incised boulders to elaborately carved free-standing crosses, monolithic cross-slabs, and composite monuments. The last published catalogue of sculpture for all of Scotland, J. R. Allen and J. Anderson's *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, introduced the long-lived system of classifying sculpture on the basis of Pictish symbols, a group of abstract and animal motifs associated with eastern and northern Scotland: Class I stones bear only Pictish symbols; Class II bear both Pictish symbols and a cross; and Class III includes all other monuments without Pictish symbols.² George and Isabel Henderson recently argued for the abandonment of this classification as it imposes a superficial chronological assessment of the sculpture and is also relatively meaningless for sculpture without Pictish symbols.³ As shorthand, it will probably endure as the classes are firmly embedded in the literature, but here a conscious effort will be made to avoid such terminology using instead 'symbol stone' for Class I, cross/cross-slab with symbols for Class II, and more

¹ This paper is, in part, taken from the author's unpubl. Ph.D. thesis: M. Gondek, Mapping Sculpture and Power: Symbolic Wealth in Early Historic Scotland, 6th–11th centuries AD (unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow, 2003).

² J. R. Allen and J. Anderson, *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, 3 parts (Edinburgh, 1903), I, xxxii and II, 3–5. See also the 1993 Pinkfoot Press reprint (Balgavies, 1993). All references here are to the original 1903 publication.

³ G. Henderson and I. Henderson, *The Art of the Picts* (London, 2004), 10–11.

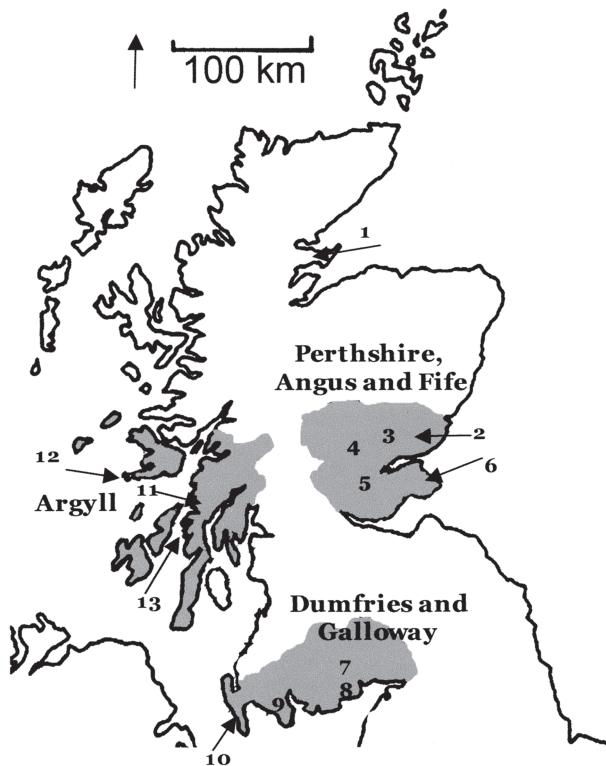


FIG. 1

Map of study areas and principal places mentioned in the text.

- 1 Hilton village. 2 St Vigeans. 3 Meigle. 4 Dunkeld. 5 Forteviot. 6 St Andrews. 7 Hoddam. 8 Mote of Mark. 9 Whithorn. 10 Kirkmadrine. 11 Dunadd. 12 Iona. 13 Loch Caolisport.

individually descriptive terms (e.g. free-standing cross, cross-slab, shrine panel) to discuss Class III monuments. Although generally a part of any discussion on Early-historic Scotland, relatively few studies have attempted to integrate the nature and distribution of sculpted stone monuments into the structures and networks of power, ecclesiastical or secular, behind their creation. Regional studies such as D. Craig's analysis of sculpture in south-western Scotland, which showed the demarcation of ecclesiastical estates associated with Whithorn (Dumfries and Galloway), indicated the value of considering sculpture in its physical and social landscape for interpreting Early-medieval society.⁴ Sculpture in its landscape context as an indicator of power has also been explored in relation to monuments with Pictish symbols, both with crosses and without.⁵ Such studies have stressed the location of monuments within the landscape as indicators of land ownership or estate affiliation and hence as markers

⁴ D. Craig, 'Pre-Norman sculpture in Galloway: some territorial implications', 45–62 in R. Oram and G. Stell (eds.), *Galloway Land and Lordship* (Edinburgh, 1991); see also S. T. Driscoll, O. O'Grady and K. Forsyth, 'The Govan School revisited: searching for meaning in the Early Medieval sculpture of Strathclyde', 135–58 in S. M. Foster and M. Cross (eds.), *Able Minds and Practised Hands* (Leeds, 2005).

⁵ See in particular: S. Driscoll, 'Christian monumental sculpture and ethnic expression in early Scotland', 233–52 in W. Frazer and A. Tyrrell (eds.), *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain* (London, 2000); M. Carver, 'Why that? Why there? Why then? The politics of Early Medieval monumentality', 1–22 in H. Hamerow and A. MacGregor (eds.), *Image and Power in the Archaeology of Early Medieval Britain* (Oxford, 2001).

articulating power. The present study also considers sculpture as an indicator of landscapes of power in Early-historic Scotland, but approaches it from the particular angle of production.

A piece of sculpture is the end-product of a process of creation and investment on behalf of the commissioner(s), carver(s), designer(s), quarriers, and others. It is a statement of power not only because of the immediate visual messages of the completed monument, but also because it represents the culmination of a series of socially loaded processes. This is most obvious in elaborate monuments, but similar steps, to differing degrees, are involved in the production of any sculpted stone. An investigation of sculpture to reveal landscapes of power needs to approach monuments in a way that recognises the different levels of power and investment involved in their creation. With the process of production in mind, a theoretical scheme of ranking sculpture was devised to enable comparison and differentiation between monuments based on relative investment in production. The goal of comparing and contrasting levels of investment is to reveal concentrations of power at particular sites and regional patterns of investment. Exploration of these patterns should then be able to inform political and ideological landscapes.

The scheme of ranking sculpture developed here rests on the assumption that in the Early Historic Period the economy was embedded in society and that social *actions* as well as products had economic value and worth. While Early-medieval economics are often seen through methods of consumption and exchange, the act of production is equally deserving of attention. People ‘also enter into and construct social relations in the process of production; [that] the realm of production is not isolated from ideological and cosmological concerns’.⁶ The society and economy of Early-historic Scotland is, in the general lack of native sources, considered in terms of contemporary Irish law texts and later historical documents.⁷ These sources suggest the economy was largely agricultural and rooted in the importance of the personal bond represented by the patron-client relationship of reciprocity and redistribution. Thus, a wider definition of ‘economic interest’ can be used for the Early Historic Period that expands economic calculation to all types of goods, materials, and actions. This type of symbolic capital or symbolic worth is linked to traditional economic worth.⁸ The use of material wealth generated symbolic wealth, for example when leaders hosted ritual feasts to ensure the loyalty of followers. Material wealth in the form of food, generous helpings of alcohol and presents guaranteed greater numbers of loyal relationships that made the leader symbolically (and in reality) wealthy, though poorer in immediate material terms.

⁶ J. Moreland, ‘Concepts of the Early Medieval economy’, 1–34 in I. Hansen and C. Wickham (eds.), *The Long Eighth Century* (Boston, 2000); see R. Hodges, *Dark Age Economics* (London, 1982) for a summary of Early-medieval exchange.

⁷ For summaries of Early-medieval society in Ireland and Scotland see M. Gerriets, ‘Economy and society: clientship according to the Irish Laws’, *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Stud.*, 5 (1983), 41–61; N. Patterson, *Cattle Lords and Clansmen: The Social Structure of Early Ireland* (London, 1994); S. M. Foster, *Picts, Gaels, and Scots* (London, 1996 and revised ed. 2004).

⁸ P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge 1977), 177–80.

Considering the resources invested in carved stones as symbolic capital enables investigation of how patronage and the use of resources worked together. The production and display of a stone monument was a visual representation of patronage and social relationships. The commissioner of a monument could be ecclesiastic or secular, although the division between these two groups may have been rather blurred as many elite members of society might be part of both power networks (St Columba being a good example). Those who commission the monument might not even be the same people or persons whose patronage allows for a monument to be created. An abbot, for example, may decide to have a monument created, but the ability for the monastery to carry out the act may rely as much on secular patronage of the house as the inherent wealth of the monastery itself. Such combinations of commissioners and patrons would seem to be a potential factor in the messages displayed in the finished monuments. Through the creation of a carved monument, opportunities could arise for possible relationships between the commissioner(s), carver(s) and patrons(s), the commissioner(s) and the monastery or church that displays the monument, and those relationships that supplied labour, food, and services for the duration of the production period. Such relationships were literally set in stone, declared, and displayed when a monument was erected. Where this occurred in the landscape was a meaningful choice linked to underlying networks of power.

ASSESSING INVESTMENT IN SCULPTURE

The creation of a comparative scheme assessing the amount of time and resources invested in each sculpted stone allows for a general comparison of the symbolic capital devoted to individual monuments. The comparison of social and economic investment in monuments, when embedded in the landscape or shown graphically in maps, can point to areas and centres where resources were concentrated. Such an approach to sculpture is not free from problems. The methodology discussed here is a tool to compare monuments to each other and uses a relative assessment of time and investment. Its purpose is not to define a monument as realistically taking one year or two weeks to create. We do not know how long it took to create any stone monuments in the past, as there are no documents that describe even an idealised, step-by-step process.

A recent project, however, has allowed considerable insight into the carver's craft and logistics of constructing an Early-medieval carved stone. The Hilton of Cadboll Stone Reconstruction Project sponsored the reconstruction (Fig. 2) of the Hilton of Cadboll slab, a massive, elaborately decorated 9th-century Pictish cross-slab. The upper portion of this massive upright slab (c. 2.36 m high and 1.37 m wide) was found in the late 18th century at a ruined chapel on the Tarbat Peninsula of Easter Ross (Highland).⁹ Its cross-face was defaced in the 17th century for re-use as a grave marker for 'Alexander Duff and

⁹ Hilton Reconstruction Project: <http://www.pictishstone.freeuk.com> last visited 27 July 2004.



FIG. 2

Barry Grove's Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction while still in the workshop.
Photograph: Helen Saunders.

his three wives', and in 1921 it was gifted to the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh.¹⁰ The call for a reconstruction was the result of community desire to have a representation of the sculpture in Hilton. The project commissioned the artist and stone-worker Barry Grove, a master carver experienced in reconstructing and recreating Pictish-style sculptures. (The reconstruction was finished in 2005. Carving of its missing cross-face was informed by the discovery during archaeological excavations in 2001 of the missing lower portion of the original slab, carving surviving on both sides, and thousands of other defaced carved fragments.)¹¹

The ranking scheme for sculpture described here is based on relative estimates of time involved in creating sculpture in relation to the reconstruction of one side of the Hilton of Cadboll upper portion. The creation of a sculpted

¹⁰ S. M. Foster, *Place, Space and Odyssey: Exploring the Future of Early Medieval Sculpture* (Rosemarkie, 2001).

¹¹ H. James, 'Pictish cross-slabs: an examination of their original archaeological context', 95–112 in Foster and Cross (eds.) op. cit. in note 4; H. James, 'Investigation of the Setting and Context of the Hilton of Cadboll Cross-slab. Recovery of the Stump and Fragments of Sculpture (Project 1078)' (unpubl. rep., University of Glasgow, 2001) <http://www.guard.arts.gla.ac.uk/1078/downloaditems/DSR.pdf> 2001; for an interim biography of the slab and the new reconstruction, see S. Jones, *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place: The Case of Hilton of Cadboll* (Edinburgh, 2004).

stone can be divided into several steps, including designing the monument, sourcing the stone, quarrying, transporting to the carving site, dressing, setting out the design, erecting the stone, and carving. After carving there is a possibility the sculpture was painted.¹² Each step could be undertaken by different people or groups or by the same individual. Designing and laying out the design of the complex monuments would require a craftsperson of considerable skill, knowledge of current popular motifs and imagery, understanding or access to ideological and liturgical discourse and, if not the commissioner, contact with the patron or patrons of the sculpture. The likely environment for a designer to emerge from is either a monastery or secular settlement with access to current intellectual and ideological networks, manuscripts, metalwork, wooden carvings and possibly pattern books that would serve as a corpus of designs and motifs from which to work. Designers might also draw upon resources that might be produced outside an ecclesiastical context: metalwork, such as brooches, and symbol stones.¹³

An estimated period of time for quarrying suitable stone, once located, is a matter of days involving the labour of several people. The amount of resources involved would be relative to the type of stone and the size of the block quarried. In Scotland, the Old Red Sandstone supergroup dominates large areas of bedrock making identification of quarries for particular Early-historic sculptures difficult.¹⁴ The amount of resources involved in quarrying also depends on the subsequent distance the stone will be transported. Because quarries are so difficult to identify, the aspect of transport from quarry to carving/display site is equally problematic to assess and thus cannot be uniformly considered for each sculpture in the study, although it was a step potentially loaded with symbolic and economic meaning. The time and resources devoted to dressing a stone in preparation for carving is directly related to how big the monument is and how many faces are to be carved. Some monuments were never dressed or quarried as carving took place directly into rock outcrops or natural boulders.

Although the finished products suggest general centres or places where carving occurred ('schools'), workshops where the act of carving took place have not been identified archaeologically.¹⁵ The process would leave little for detection except perhaps possible quarry scars and stone waste, material that could be collected and re-used elsewhere for road metalling, for example. It is also uncertain as to whether carving would take place before or after the

¹² J. Lang, 'The painting of pre-Conquest sculpture in Northumbria', 133–46 in S. Cather, D. Park and P. Williamson (eds.), *Early Medieval Wall Painting and Painted Sculpture in England* (Oxford, 1990).

¹³ Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 15–29.

¹⁴ For recent geological research on monuments, see S. Miller and N. Ruckley, 'The role of geological analysis of monuments: a case study from St Vigeans and related sites', 277–91 in Foster and Cross (eds.), op. cit. in note 4; N. Ruckley and M. Carver, 'Stone for carving: the Tarbat Geological Research Project', *Tarbat Bulletin*, 4 (1998) <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/arch/staff/sites/tarbat/bulletins/bulletin4/stone.html>; A. Hall, Hilton of Cadboll, report on potential geological contribution GUARD 1078 (unpubl. rep., University of Glasgow, 2003).

¹⁵ There are, admittedly, few excavated monastic sites. The large-scale excavations at Portmahomack have yet to reveal any definitive stone-carving workshop space, although the sculpture shows with little doubt that carving took place there. See M. Carver, 'An Iona of the east: the Early-medieval monastery at Portmahomack, Tarbat Ness', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 48 (2004), 1–30.

erection of an upright monument. The main faces of some monuments, such as Hilton of Cadboll, have different extents of carving at the base. Carving at a low level on an erect monument would seem to be logically difficult, but perhaps needed to ensure high relief is not snapped off in the stressful process of setting a stone upright. Any large upstanding monument would require a considerable amount of labour and resources to erect, but again the relative lack of archaeological evidence for primary, or indeed secondary, settings means the process remains largely conjecture. Even the erection of the modern Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction, which did not attempt to replicate Early-historic engineering, was a major undertaking involving excavation of the hole, setting of the foundation and moving and securing the slab.¹⁶

The manufacturing process itself forms the basis of the relative scale of resources involved in creating sculpture devised here. From studying the Hilton Reconstruction Project, designing, quarrying, dressing, and carving a monument appear to be the most resource-intensive (in time and/or labour) components of the process that can be assessed from surviving sculpture. These four steps are the factors chosen for assessing relative resource investment. When moving beyond distribution dots representing location to an interpretative level of resource investment, a jump must be made from ambiguous textual interpretation to measurable numeric analysis because comparative graphics work on a numeric scale. A textual to numeric transition is not a comfortable one to make. There is a flexibility and ambiguity in language that does not translate into numbers, which appear more final, unyielding, and ‘scientific.’ The actual numeric value I have assigned to each step is arbitrary, except in relation to each other and the overall scheme (Tab. 1). It is however based on the relative time taken for each stage in the Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction.

The numeric values for each step are weighted according to which activity required more resources and/or labour. Although the value of labour or skills may be considerably different depending on the social ranking of the individual involved (e.g. if a stone carver could be considered equal to a nobleman), this is not included with this assessment. It is unknown how different skills and abilities

TABLE I
NUMERICAL SCHEME FOR ASSESSING RESOURCE INVESTMENT

	Designing	Quarrying	Dressing	Carving
Investment				
None	0	0	0	0
Minimum	10	10 greatest measurement < 1.0 m	20	200
Moderate	20	20 greatest measurement < 1.5 m	40	400
High	30	30 greatest measurement > 1.5 m	80	800

¹⁶ See R. McCullagh, ‘Excavations at Sueno’s Stone, Forres, Moray’, *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 125 (1995), 697–718 for a discussion of settings and erection of monuments and Jones, op. cit. in note 11 and James, op. cit. in note 11 for discussion of Hilton of Cadboll.

were ranked or if we could equate artistic talent, for example, to an automatically more valuable carver and higher labour investment.¹⁷ The designing value reflects the amount and difficulty of the overall decoration. The quarrying value is related to the size of a monument. When only a fragment of the monument survives, this value is based on a best estimate of the original size. When fragments are recognised as belonging to the same monument, they are grouped together. The type of stone and its inherent hardness will also have an effect on quarrying and all subsequent manipulation of the material, with harder stone requiring more investment. However, the identification and publication of stone-type is not consistent, making this a difficult aspect to consider equally across the sample. Because of this, stone-type is not explicitly factored into the assessment of resources. Dressing is partly based on size parameters and on how many faces have been worked. The carving value derives from the number of carved faces, size of the monument, and the type of carving on the monument (e.g. incision, false relief, low relief and high relief). Designing and quarrying have the same weighting; while designing may take longer, quarrying probably involved more labour. Both the dressing and carving processes increase exponentially as the monuments become larger and more complex. Based on the information from the Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction, carving may take up to ten times longer than dressing.¹⁸ This situation could be reversed, however, if a well-dressed slab bore a simple incised cross.

In addition to this relative assessment, another numeric scale was created based on the complexity of the carving on the monument. This emphasised the difference between individual sculptures (Tab. 2). These assigned values (Tab. 1) added together and then combined with the Complexity Scale (Tab. 2) give the number used in the comparative studies. The following equation was created to give a number representing the relative degree of resources invested in each sculpture: $(\text{Designing} + \text{Quarrying} + \text{Dressing} + \text{Carving}) \times \text{Complexity Value} = \text{Relative Investment}$. Multiplying by the Complexity Value was considered the best method

TABLE 2
NUMERICAL SCHEME FOR ASSESSING THE COMPLEXITY OF A MONUMENT

Complexity Scale	Explanation
I	Singular motif or small area of ornament, minimal planning involved, rougher lines or incision
II	Multiple motifs or larger area of ornament, some planning in design, more complex or time-consuming carving methods
III	All-over surface ornament, high level of planning in design, complex carving methods, but with rougher finish
IV	All-over surface ornament, high level of planning in design, complex carving methods with fine lines

¹⁷ D. MacLean, 'The status of the sculptor in Old Irish Law and the evidence of the crosses', *Peritia*, 9 (1995), 125–55.

¹⁸ B. Grove, pers. comm.

of accentuating the difference between the resources involved in a complex sculpted stone, such as a free-standing cross, and a simpler incised cross. An example shows how the scale is applied (Fig. 3). When more than one monument occurs at a site, the monument assessments are combined and the result is a map with weighted distributions of contemporary investment.

The degree of published information on individual sculpted stones in Scotland is highly variable. For example, the sculptures from Argyll are well documented, having appeared in the comprehensive RCAHMS Argyll Inventories and the more recent compilation of sculpture from western Scotland by Ian Fisher, but no complete published inventory has appeared for sculpture in Fife since 1933.¹⁹ This issue has affected the choice of case studies, as regions were chosen in relation to modern boundaries and the accompanying archaeological inventories. Each case study is of a region with a considerable amount of recorded stone sculpture, even if the records themselves vary in quality. Assessment for each monument considered here was based on published drawings, photographs and descriptions supplemented by first-hand observation of some monuments. In addition to variability in the published record, a study concerned with relative distribution of sculpture must consider the degree of loss since the Early Medieval Period. The known numbers and distributions of Early-historic carved stones in Scotland is arguably one of the more complete datasets of Early-historic material culture — what survives has largely been recorded at some level. However, the number of monuments we have today is not the same as that which once existed, especially when we consider the wooden sculpture that surely once co-existed with the stone. Survival is not the only issue in using current distributions, as many sculptures are no longer in their original settings, having been re-used as building stone, broken up, or moved. Complicated life histories for individual monuments, such as the Crieff Burgh Cross (Perth and Kinross), highlight the problem of movement and new excavations, such as those at Portmahomack (Highland) can and will alter the known numbers and distributions of sculpture.²⁰ With Christian sculpture, a general location of a churchyard can be relatively safely assigned even if the exact position is no longer known.²¹ Although the sample is not complete and some movement of sculptures has occurred, the surviving monuments can be utilised for meaningful

¹⁹ RCAHMS, *Eleventh Report, with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Fife, Kinross, and Clackmannan* (Edinburgh, 1933); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments Volume 1 Kintyre* (Edinburgh, 1971); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments Volume 2 Lorn* (London, 1975); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments Volume 3 Mull, Tiree, Coll and Northern Argyll (excluding the Early Medieval and Later Monuments of Iona)* (Edinburgh, 1980); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments Volume 4 Iona* (Edinburgh, 1982); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments Volume 5 Islay, Jura, Colonsay and Oronsay* (London, 1984); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments Volume 6 Mid Argyll and Cowal, Prehistoric and Early Historic Monuments* (Edinburgh, 1988); RCAHMS, *Argyll: An Inventory of the Monuments Volume 7 Mid Argyll and Cowal Medieval and Later Monuments* (Edinburgh, 1992); I. Fisher, *Early Medieval Sculpture in the West Highlands and Islands* (Edinburgh, 2001).

²⁰ M. Hall, K. Forsyth, I. Henderson, I. Scott, R. Trench-Jellicoe and A. Watson, 'Of makings and meanings: towards a cultural biography of the Crieff Burgh Cross, Strathearn, Perthshire,' *Tayside and Fife Archaeol. J.*, 6 (2000), 154–88; Carver, op. cit. in note 5.

²¹ R. M. Spearman, List of carved stones (unpubl. Excel spreadsheet, Edinburgh, 1997).

archaeological analysis.²² For this study, I assume that the evidence for Early-historic sculpture is partial, but an acceptable representation from which to argue, particularly when looking at concentrations of sculpture. The study also represents a moment in time as 'scores' for sites will change with new discoveries, but an approach that considers investment and the creation process in terms of analysing sculpture may be applicable to future datasets.

Another difficulty in such a wide-ranging analysis of sculpture is the question of date. The dates assigned to sculpted stones cannot be exact. Ascertaining dates for sculpture is a complicated endeavour and rarely attempted in print by archaeologists or even art-historians despite these methods having considerably furthered our understanding of the data. Comparison between monuments in terms of material investment is most meaningful when the monuments are relatively contemporary.²³ Material investment in the 6th century cannot be compared to material investment in the 11th century due to social, stylistic and technological variables. An early symbol stone may have had as much monumental significance as a later elaborate free-standing cross, for example, even though there may be a great difference in the amount of material investment in the two monuments.

There are two general chronological trends within the sample of monuments that are seen to have ramifications for chronology within an art-historical framework. The first of these is a simplification of the changes in technology, where later monuments display more complex carving methods. Thus, in a highly simplified scheme, incised designs are followed by low relief, which is then followed by highly modelled relief. The problems of this scheme based on carving technology are clear, as simpler techniques do not disappear from the carver's repertoire just because some carvers use high relief. Incised crosses, for example, may date to almost any time after the introduction of Christianity. Inscriptions augment chronological argument through the rare occurrence of historical personages, but more often through palaeographical analysis. Perhaps the more significant chronological trend is stylistic change, which can be assessed using art-historical methods. In Scotland, stylistic changes and dating are most interwoven for the corpus of sculptures from regions associated with the Picts. Here the most important stylistic changes are the appearance of the cross along with Pictish symbols, the disuse of Pictish symbols on cross-slabs and the appearance of different forms of monuments. These forms and styles, however, are not necessarily chronologically distinct or ordered and their use will vary from region to region.²⁴

The appearance of sculpted stone monuments in Scotland is bound together with questions concerning the introduction of Christianity and

²² See particularly: E. Campbell, 'A cross-marked quern from Dunadd and other evidence for relations between Dunadd and Iona', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 117 (1987), 59–71; E. A. Alcock, 'Pictish stones Class I: where and why?', *Glasgow Archaeol. J.*, 15 (1989), 1–21; I. Smith, 'The origins and development of Christianity in North Britain and southern Pictland', 19–37 in J. Blair and C. Pyrah (eds.), *Church Archaeology: Research Directions for the Future* (York, 1996); Carver, op. cit. in note 5.

²³ Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3 for most recent discussion of art-historical views on dating.

²⁴ C. Curle, 'The chronology of the Early Christian monuments of Scotland', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 74 (1939–40), 60–116; I. Henderson, *The Picts* (London, 1967), 106–17; Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 159–95.

conversion.²⁵ Stones with crosses, considering the lack of documentary sources and definitive 'church' sites, are a major source for understanding the spread of Christianity.²⁶ Symbol stones are generally considered non-Christian, but should not necessarily be considered either *pre*-Christian or *anti*-Christian.²⁷ The association of symbol stones with burials, particularly square cairns, is not definitive, although in several instances the association may be primary.²⁸ However, one of the earliest archaeological dates for a symbol stone is from a re-used 6th-century structural context at Pool on Sanday (Orkney).²⁹ For relief sculpture, iconographic studies have produced differing arguments for fine-tuning and altering the chronology of Insular art.³⁰ The variety of archaeological associations, the potential for regional differences, and the ambiguity of art-historical chronologies illustrate the complexities of dating sculpture.

The foundation for dating used here is the relative chronology as defined by art-historical methods, most notably those developed by Isabel Henderson, tempered with what archaeological dating is known about the sculptures.³¹ Overlapping ranges of dates can be used relatively effectively to depict trends in stylistic and technological changes and to reflect the social changes behind them. Three generalised periods — Phase I (6th–7th centuries), Phase II (8th–9th centuries) and Phase III (9th–11th centuries) — were selected to best represent the trends in monument production. The use of date ranges also goes some way to diffuse the regional differences in sculptural trends. The 6th and 7th centuries are characterised by symbol stones and simpler incised cross forms such as linear crosses (rather than the incised outline crosses that may be later based on their forms). Although linear incised crosses, for example, may have a long period of use, there is little archaeological evidence (as opposed to art-historical arguments) for late examples, and there are forms, such as the cross with expanded terminals, that appear to be a regional and chronological characteristic.³² The 8th and 9th centuries are characterised by the floruit of high-modelled relief sculpture seen on the free-standing crosses and cross-slabs. These overlap with monuments of the later 9th–11th centuries, which may be characterised by relief carving with less fine lines and rougher modelling. Even general dates cannot be postulated for some monuments, as they are lost, too incomplete, or too uncharacteristic, although this accounts for the exclusion of less than 10% of monuments recorded in the regions discussed here.

²⁵ Smith, op. cit. in note 22; Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 167–74.

²⁶ I. Henderson, 'Monasteries and sculpture in the Insular pre-Viking Age: the Pictish evidence', 75–96 in B. Thompson (ed.), *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain* (Stamford, 1999), 95.

²⁷ Allen and Anderson, op. cit. in note 1, I, xxxix–xl; K. Hughes, *Early Christianity in Pictland* (Jarrow, 1970); Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 167–74.

²⁸ P. Ashmore, 'Low cairns, long cists and symbol stones', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 110 (1980), 346–55; Alcock, op. cit. in note 19; Henderson, op. cit. in note 26, 75; A. Mack, *The Association of Pictish Symbol Stones with Ecclesiastical, Burial, and 'Memorial' Areas* (Balgavies, 2002).

²⁹ J. Hunter, 'Pool, Sanday: a case study for the Late Iron Age and Viking periods', 173–93 in I. Armit (ed.), *Beyond the Brochs* (Edinburgh, 1990), 185.

³⁰ L. Laing, 'The date of the Aberlemno churchyard stone', 241–52 in M. Redknap, N. Edwards, S. Youngs, A. Lane and J. Knight (eds.), *Pattern and Purpose in Insular Art* (Oxford, 2001); Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 10–12.

³¹ Henderson, op. cit. in note 24; Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3.

³² Campbell, op. cit. in note 22, 108–10.



FIG. 3

Example of assessment of relative wealth in monument production from Kilmory Knap, Mid-Argyll (suggested date 8th–9th century; height 1.57 m, width 0.52 m). Complexity Level: I, Designing: 10, Quarrying: 30, Dressing: 20, Carving: 200, Relative Investment: 260. *Photograph: author.*

Having confronted the problems associated with using sculpture as a sign of investment — representivity, dating, and how to assess investment — a database was created for the study and used to map the relative investment in sculpture in three regions of Scotland over the three main chronological periods. Each region falls within a different political hegemony of Early-historic Scotland: Argyll and Bute of the Dál Riata, Fife and Tayside (Angus, Dundee City, Perth and Kinross) of the Picts, and Dumfries and Galloway of the Britons. Each carved stone was assessed individually. Stones of comparative date are grouped together by location and appear as weighted symbols on the following maps (Figs. 4–6). These weighted symbols depict centres for investment in stone sculpture and symbolic wealth. Because the symbols represent investment, rather

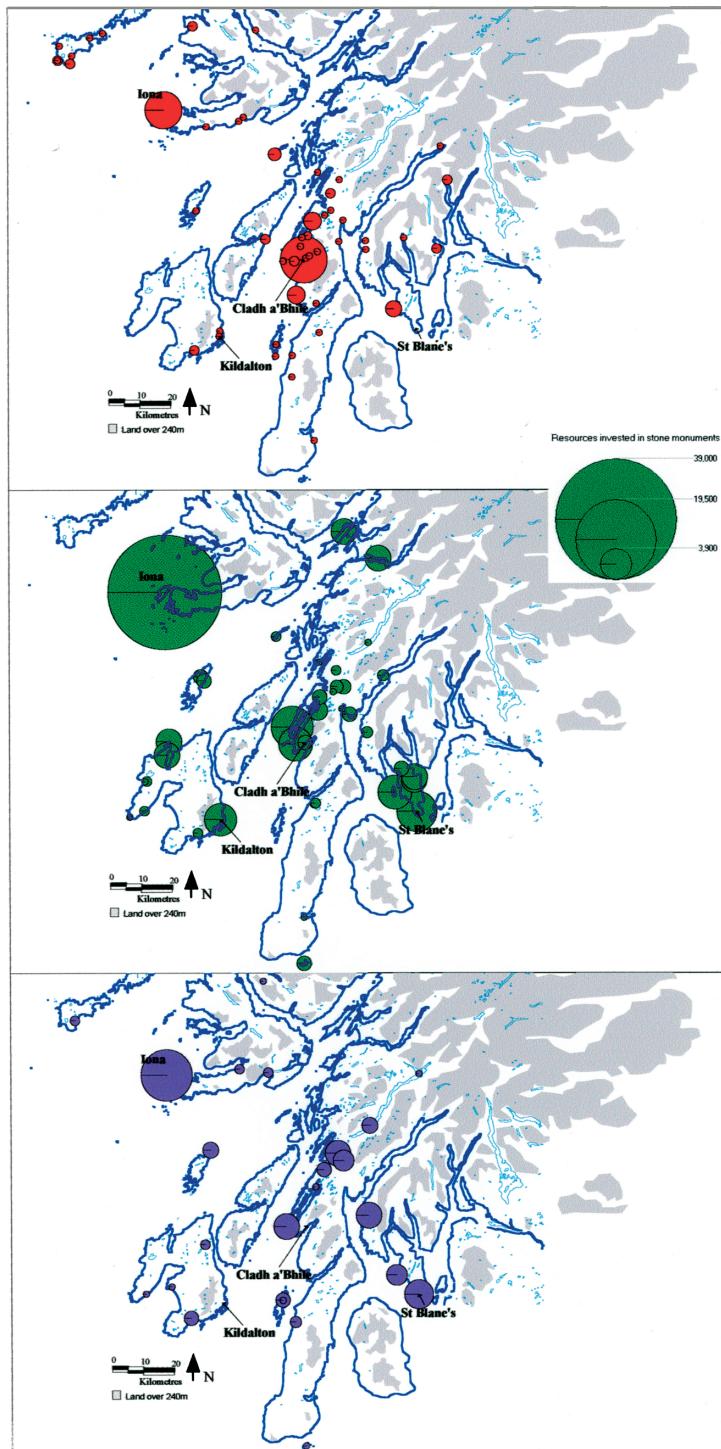


FIG. 4

Resources invested in sculpture in Argyll. All symbols weighted to same scale. Top: Phase I. Middle: Phase II. Bottom: Phase III.
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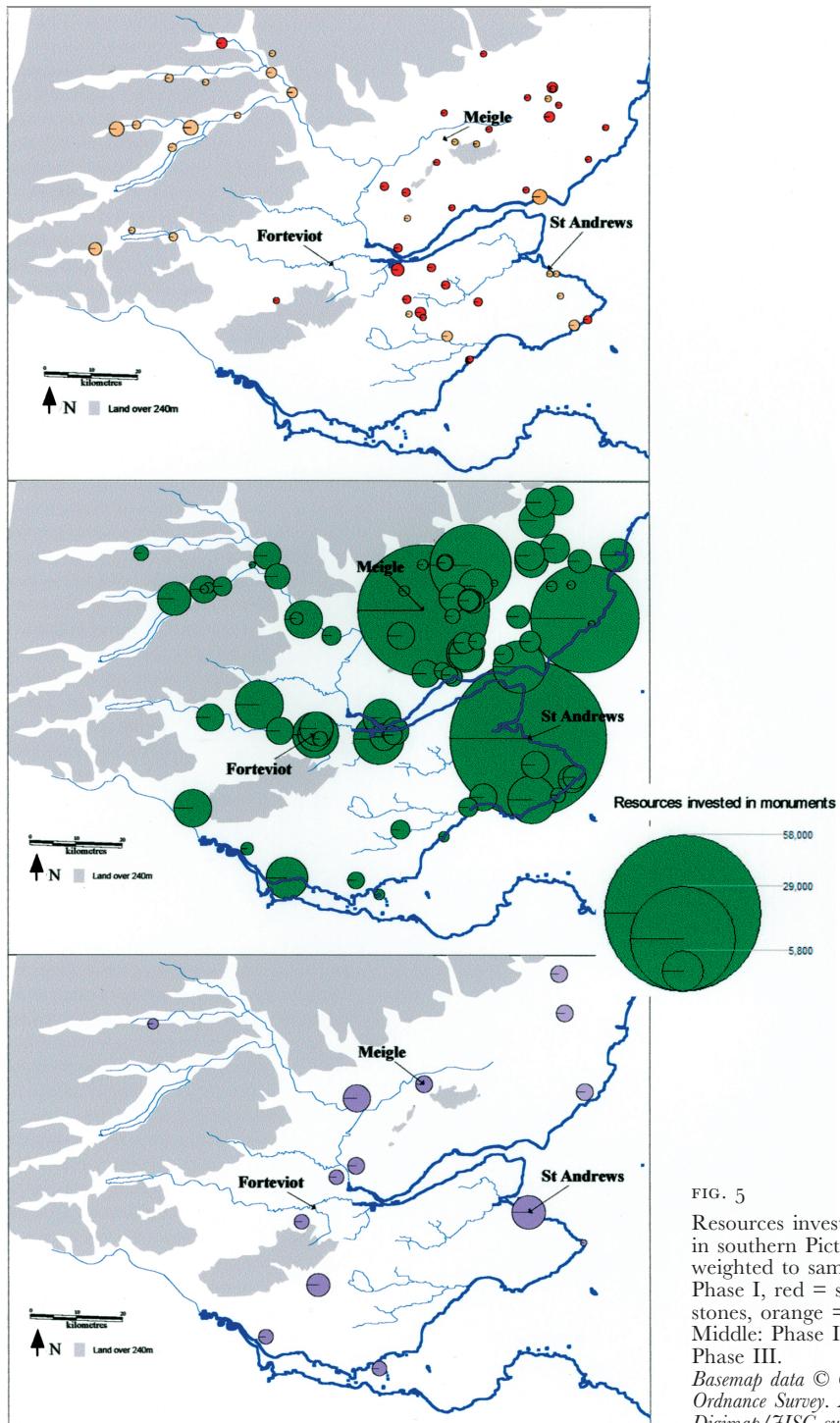


FIG. 5

Resources invested in sculpture in southern Pictland. All symbols weighted to same scale. Top: Phase I, red = sites with symbol stones, orange = cross-slabs only. Middle: Phase II. Bottom: Phase III.

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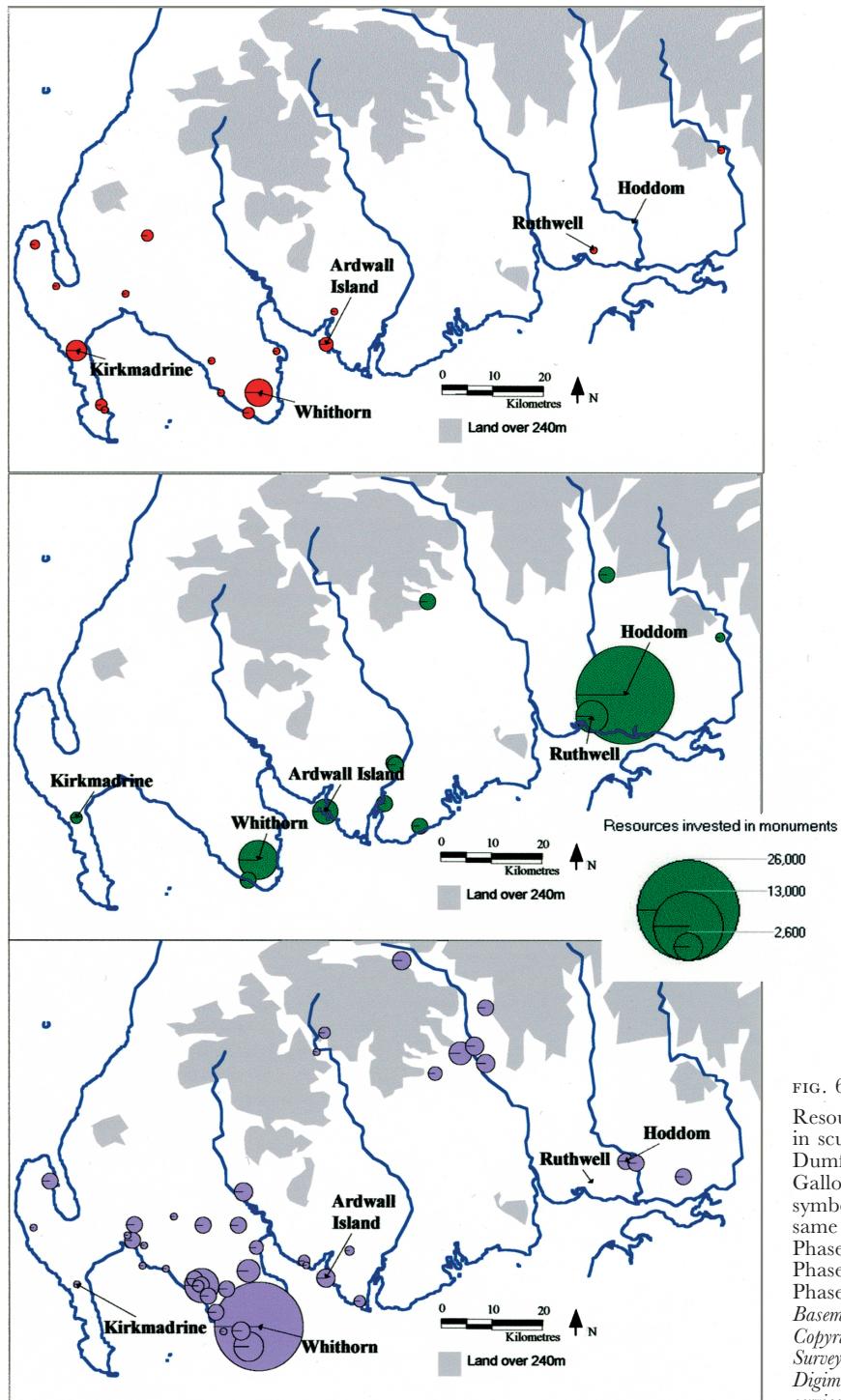


FIG. 6

Resources invested in sculpture in Dumfries and Galloway. All symbols weighted to same scale. Top: Phase I. Middle: Phase II. Bottom: Phase III.
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than weighted symbols showing numbers of sculptures at a site, an immediate graphical distinction can be made between, for example, a site with one elaborately carved cross-slab and one that has a more roughly carved slab, which would appear the same on a weighted distribution based on numbers of monuments. The stories of investment in sculpture that emerge, when combined with other archaeological, art-historical and historical evidence, show that each region developed different attitudes towards ideological and political changes that manifested in the use and creation of symbolic wealth (i.e. sculpture). While these stories of change are unique, there are some shared strategies and patterns between them. The resulting landscapes of power highlight the fluidity and variety of strategies chosen by those in power, whether their choices were made consciously or not.

DÁL RIATA

The modern administrative district of Argyll and Bute (henceforth Argyll) is thought to be roughly comparable to the Early-historic territory of Dál Riata. Traditionally, Dál Riata is an Irish-derived political grouping where Gaelic was the spoken language.³³ Within Argyll are historically documented political and religious centres such as the fort and inauguration site at Dunadd, the fort at Dunollie and the great Columban monastery at Iona. As the maps of investment show (Fig. 4), the nature and display of power through sculpture changed significantly over time. Phase I, the 6th–7th centuries, shows a fairly widespread distribution of minimal investment sculpture with two notable exceptions. The most marked rise in sculptural investment occurs in Phase II, beginning in the 8th century. This is followed by a general decline in investment in monument production in Phase III, the later 9th–11th centuries. The overall pattern of investment over time in Argyll is perhaps not surprising as this area is probably one of the most thoroughly studied in Scotland in terms of its sculpture. One fully expects Iona to dominate in the 8th and 9th centuries and for investment in sculpture to tail off in the 10th century because of declining quality, in some cases, of the carving, and the interest in investing symbolic wealth in other areas. The value of an approach that considers investment is that it highlights how dramatically dominant Iona was. It also highlights the less obvious, smaller-scale stories of investment.

In particular, patterns of investment in sculpture in 6th- and 7th-century Argyll show two main concentrations with several more minor sites in the landscape around them. Iona and Cladh a'Bhile are the two sites dominant in terms of sculptural investment. However, it should also be noted that the fort at Dunadd, which itself has some carving on its ‘inaugural outcrop,’ was dominant in investment in other media, particularly fine metalworking, acquisition of imported ceramics and the construction of the settlement itself.³⁴ Both Iona

³³ A. A. M. Duncan, *Scotland: the Making of a Kingdom* (Edinburgh, 1975), 41–2; although see E. Campbell, ‘Were the Scots Irish?’, *Antiquity*, 75 (2001), 285–92 for arguments against an Irish immigration.

³⁴ A. Lane and E. Campbell, *Dunadd: an Early Dalriadic Capital* (Oxford, 2001).

(22 sculptures) and Cladh a'Bhile (26 sculptures) have a large collection (relative to the phase under discussion here) of sculpted monuments, generally incised slabs individually requiring relatively minimal investment. The most elaborate of these is a pillar from Cladh a'Bhile (no. 1), which probably dates to the later 7th century on art-historical grounds.³⁵ The significance of Cladh a'Bhile's collection, the second largest in Argyll, has been noted, but accessibility has hindered physical investigation of the site.³⁶ However, even without physical investigation, this approach clearly validates the burial-ground's significance, particularly in Phase I. The prominence of one site over the other is not the critical factor in this comparison, but rather the prominence of these two sites generally over other contemporary sites. Sculptural evidence suggests that Iona and Cladh a'Bhile are relative equals in Phase I. The investment in sculpture shows that Cladh a'Bhile was acting as a draw for monumental investment in this region of southern Argyll on a par with Columba's monastery to the north. This analysis of investment appears to complement Ewan Campbell's analysis of the distribution of the motif of a simple incised cross with expanded terminals. The motif, which occurs most frequently at Iona and also on a cross-incised quern from Dunadd, suggests that Iona's influence was at first concentrated within northern Argyll.³⁷

Iona is relatively well documented, has seen significant if piecemeal excavation and has long dominated any discussion of early Christianity in Scotland.³⁸ Little is known historically of Cladh a'Bhile and it has not been subject to any excavation. It is a small cemetery on the coast of Loch Caolisport, identified by Anna Ritchie as a lay cemetery due to a lack of associated ecclesiastical remains.³⁹ St Columba's Cave, which has incised crosses on its walls stylistically linked to Cladh a'Bhile and which produced Early-historic finds, lies a little over 2 km to the north-east. The link to Columba may have a late origin and association with a different early saint is possible.⁴⁰ At Keills and Eilean Mór, also in Mid-Argyll and close to Cladh a'Bhile, the dedication is to Cormac, an Irish saint possibly from Leinster.⁴¹ That Dál Riata, or part of it, was already Christian when Columba arrived is clear from Adomnán's *Life*,⁴² and it appears that a centre of some significance was already located on the shore of Loch Caolisport.

The growing strength and success of the Columban cult is articulated by the large amount of investment in carved stones of the 8th and 9th centuries at

³⁵ R. Trench-Jellicoe, 'The Skeith Stone, Upper Kirlenny Fife, in its context', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 128 (1998), 495–513, at p. 502.

³⁶ RCAHMS (1992), op. cit. in note 19, 5–7 and 53–61; A. Ritchie, *Iona* (London, 1997), 90; Fisher, op. cit. in note 19, 8.

³⁷ Campbell, op. cit. in note 22.

³⁸ RCAHMS (1982), op. cit. in note 19; and for a review of the excavations, see J. O'Sullivan, 'Iona: archaeological investigations, 1875–1996', 215–43 in D. Broun and T. Clancy (eds.), *Spes Scotorum: Hope of Scots* (Edinburgh, 1999).

³⁹ Ritchie, op. cit. in note 36.

⁴⁰ C. Tolan-Smith, *The Caves of Mid Argyll* (Edinburgh, 2001), 25–72.

⁴¹ D. MacLean, 'The Keills Cross in Knapdale, the Iona School and the Book of Kells', 175–97 in J. Higgitt (ed.), *Early Medieval Sculpture in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 1986), 186.

⁴² Adomnán of Iona, *Life of St Columba*, ed. and trans. R. Sharpe (London, 1995), 22–3.

Iona. There is no other ecclesiastical site in Argyll that rivals Iona in terms of sculptural investment in Phase II, indicating that the monastery was the principal ecclesiastic power in the region and that other sites were minor and some probably confederated to it. Cladh a'Bhile, for example, no longer stands out, even in its immediate landscape, the focus having shifted to the other side of the peninsula. Iona's dominance may also be seen in the transference of stylistic features such as the snake and boss motif, which is found on Iona's free-standing crosses and also appears on the Kildalton Cross, Islay, which has been considered as an integral part of the Iona group of crosses.⁴³ The presence of other early foundations in the region thus appears reduced in the later 7th and 8th centuries by the growing prominence of the Columban cult, visible in hagiography and artistic influences. Although perhaps exaggerated by the discontinuation of the analysis into Cowal and Strathclyde, Figure 4 also shows a high degree of investment in sculpture on the island of Bute that is almost equal to the investment devoted to sculpture in the area of Knapdale. In some ways this is a factor of recent excavations at Inchmarnock, a small island off the W. coast of Bute, where several unique incised stones have been recovered. However, there is also an impressive, if now rather fragmented, collection of relief-carved monuments from Rothesay and St Blane's at Kingarth.⁴⁴ In Phase III, the later 9th–11th centuries, investment in the production of new sculpture in Argyll dropped significantly. The map of investment shows a relatively dispersed distribution of monuments, most of which are one or two examples of moderate investment. These more evenly distributed and less grand manifestations of symbolic wealth through the medium of stone sculpture possibly reflect the weakening of Iona's dominance, or more likely the weakening secular power structures offering support to Iona and other sites, as well as the potential for new trends of investment of symbolic wealth, such as in buildings or military efforts.

The story of power in Argyll told by the sculpture shows a dramatic rise in the power of one site, Iona, at the expense of others in the 8th century. The more dispersed investment in sculpture and the strength of a site such as Cladh a'Bhile supports the emerging perception of a 6th–7th-century Dál Riata that is much more politically and ecclesiastically heterogeneous than is pictured by Adomnán in his account of the life of St Columba. Rather, Adomnán's writing in the later 7th century suggests the investment in sculpture in the 8th and 9th centuries was perhaps part of a programme of kingdom-building and assertion of power and wealth for both Iona and the dynasty of Cenel nGabráin.⁴⁵ The investment on Bute during Phase II, when considered in the light of recent work on the character and strength of the leaders of Cowal in the late 7th century and their potential rivalry for the kingship of Dál Riata, suggests that sculpture may

⁴³ RCAHMS (1982), op. cit. in note 19, 18; RCAHMS (1984), op. cit. in note 19, 203–11.

⁴⁴ Fisher, op. cit. in note 19, 73–82; C. Lowe, Medieval Inchmarnock Archaeological Research Project, IMK99 (unpubl. online rep., web-site: <http://www.headlandarchaeology.com>, last visited 7 July 2005).

⁴⁵ J. Fraser, 'The Iona Chronicle, the descendants of Áedán mac Gabráin, and the "principal kindreds of Dál Riata"', *Northern Stud.*, 38 (2004), 77–96.

have been a part of consolidating and creating ecclesiastical and secular power networks, identities and territories more widely in Argyll. What emerges is the building of a kingdom in the later 7th and into the 8th and 9th centuries, not the kingdom in full-established form as might be surmised from the hagiography. The comprehensive domination of monumental investment and symbolic wealth at Iona, then, appears to stem from two inter-related factors. The first is the spread of the Columban *paruchia* itself. The second is the patronage and support of secular leaders. Adomnán emphasised the symbiotic relationship between secular leaders and the Columban *familia* in stories about kings in the *Life of Columba*. In the *Life*, in 574, Áedán mac Gabráin becomes king of Dál Riata and Columba ordains him at Iona, after being chastised by an angel. The ideology behind the anecdote, if not the historical veracity of the actual ceremony, implies that the Cenél nGabráin and the kingship of Dál Riata were intricately connected to the Columban *familia* by the later 7th century when Adomnán was writing. We also see Columba meeting with the Pictish king Bridei and appearing in a vision to the Northumbrian King Oswald.⁴⁶ Powerful kings are linked with the saint to establish precedents and genealogy for the involvement of Iona into political affairs in the later 7th century. Archaeologically, links between Iona and the inaugural centre and fort of Dunadd are indicated by the orpiment found at Dunadd, which is used in the production of manuscripts, and the occurrence of a cross-marked quern that shows stylistic affinities to crosses from Iona.⁴⁷

Secular support for the monastery, or even secular patronage of particular monuments, seems to be the key to Iona's control of investment. Secularised sacred monuments in Ireland offer a slightly later and more overt comparison. Inscriptions link the Uí Néill kingship with a group of elaborate high crosses in the Irish Midlands, which date to the mid- to later 9th and early 10th centuries.⁴⁸ The high cross (c. 10th century) at Durrow, a Columban foundation, exhibits secular characteristics in its royal inscription, border location, and scenes of idealised biblical kingship, including King David enthroned with weapons and hunting dogs, contemporary symbols associated with authority.⁴⁹ David iconography occurs on the St Oran's and St Martin's crosses at Iona, the free-standing cross from Kildalton, and on the cross-slab from Ardchattan, all probably dating to the 8th or 9th century.⁵⁰ In Argyll, there are no royal inscriptions marking the Iona free-standing crosses as monuments of sacred kingship.⁵¹ However, considering the scale of its domination, the standing and wealth of Iona seems intimately linked with secular support. The interest in kings and

⁴⁶ Adomnán of Iona, op. cit. in note 42 at Ch. III.5, pp. 208–9 for the ordination of Áedán and at Ch. I.1, pp. 109–12 for mention of the other kings.

⁴⁷ Campbell, op. cit. in note 22; Lane and Campbell, op. cit. in note 34, 212.

⁴⁸ R. O Floinn, 'Clonmacnoise: art and patronage in the Early Medieval period,' 87–100 in H. King (ed.), *Clonmacnoise Studies Volume 1 Seminar Papers 1994* (Dublin, 1998).

⁴⁹ For general discussion of the Durrow high cross, see F. Henry, *Irish Art during the Viking Invasions, 800–1020 ad* (London, 1967), 139; H. Richardson and J. Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses* (Cork, 1990), 37–8. For David imagery see I. Henderson, 'The "David Cycle" in Pictish Art', 87–123 in Higgitt, op. cit. in note 41.

⁵⁰ Fisher, op. cit. in note 19, 120, 131, 133 and 138–9 for descriptions of the monuments.

⁵¹ RCAHMS (1982), op. cit. in note 19, 192–211.

clerical ordination showed by Adomnán indicated that by the mid- and later 7th century this idea of a church-authorised king, preferably over-king, was part of consolidating political and religious authority.⁵² The appearance of monuments with David iconography in Argyll is at least potentially related to the ideological push for kingship, as it was in the later 9th- and 10th-century Irish Midlands. This suggests royal patronage of monuments, such as the free-standing crosses in Argyll, is highly probable, despite the lack of inscriptions. The decline in the creation of sculpture after the 9th century, when the political focus of the ruling elite of Dál Riata moved eastwards to Pictland, suggests that royal secular patronage was an important factor in the erection of these monuments in Argyll.

The hierarchy of secular sites within 8th- and 9th-century Argyll may also be altered in relation to the changing power structure of kingship. Expansion of Dunadd in the 8th or 9th centuries directed greater focus to the inaugural outcrop on the summit.⁵³ This expansion of the settlement suggests considerable ability for the inhabitants of Dunadd to acquire the labour necessary for building and in turn to command a significant power base. More minor sites may have had client relationships to Dunadd, such as that suggested for Loch Glashan crannog.⁵⁴ The growth of Dunadd and Iona, their established links, possible patronage and similar interest in the ideology and symbols of kingship, suggests a symbiotic relationship between them in the 7th–9th centuries.

In the later 9th–11th centuries, the general decline in carved monument production is likely linked, in part, to a decline in secular patronage of the ecclesiastical sites, including Iona, from which the head of the Columban *paruchia* was moved in the early 9th century. The domination of sculptural investment by Iona is no longer apparent. This more dispersed landscape of power possibly reflects the weakening of the kingdom of Dál Riata, while showing a much diminished and probably localised degree of secular control still existed in Argyll. Scenes of a secular nature including warriors or huntsmen do continue to appear in sculpture, although David scenes do not. These secularised scenes occur on some of the islands and can be seen on crosses from Eilean Mór, Rothesay Churchyard and St Blane's on Bute, which may have looked to Strathclyde where the tradition of monumental sculpture centred at Govan remained strong in the 10th and 11th centuries.⁵⁵ It is not clear who controlled these discrete landscapes of power in Argyll by Phase III. Some of the islands may have been under Norse control, as the presence of burials and hoards might suggest. It is notable that these Norse leaders did not participate in the sculptural tradition of Strathclyde. The mainland of Argyll may have remained largely under those secular leaders of Dál Riata that did not move east. These are essentially an unknown entity in archaeological and historical terms, but their

⁵² M. Herbert, 'Rí Éirenn, Rí Alban: kingship and identity in the ninth and tenth centuries', 62–72 in S. Taylor (ed.), *Kings, Clerics, and Chronicles in Scotland 500–1297* (Dublin, 2000).

⁵³ Lane and Campbell, op. cit. in note 34, 97.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 256.

⁵⁵ For Govan sculpture, see A. Ritchie (ed.), *Govan and its Early Medieval Sculpture* (Stroud, 1994) and for Govan's place as a centre of power, see S. Driscoll, 'Govan: an Early Medieval royal centre on the Clyde', 77–84 in R. Welander, D. Breeze and T. Clancy (eds.), *The Stone of Destiny* (Edinburgh, 2003).

legacy may be the continued use of some resource-intensive sculpture. Symbolic wealth may also have been invested in other ways. As the desire and need for carved stones declined, wealth may have been invested in stone buildings (although difficult to prove archaeologically as of yet), military or naval efforts, hoarding or trading. Although investment in sculpture diminished, Iona remained a significant centre of symbolic power, including secular authority, in its status as a royal burial-ground.⁵⁶

Analysing the investment of symbolic wealth in carved stone monuments in Argyll reinforces, on the macro-scale, the artistic, ideological, and political dominance of Iona, and in this sense has not necessarily thrown up any surprises. However, this approach has proved more valuable in the consideration of investment and sculpture on a more micro-scale. The considerable concentrations of investment at other sites, including Cladh a'Bhile in Phase I and the island of Bute in Phase II, indicates the balance of power, both ecclesiastical and secular, is not as clear-cut as either the historical sources or artistic influence of Iona might suggest. When combined with other archaeological, art-historical and historical evidence, the investment in sculpture challenges the homogeneous nature of kingship and church in Early-historic Dál Riata. This case study of the way resources were used and wealth was displayed in Argyll emphasises the synthesis of secular and ecclesiastic power visible in the pattern of investment in carved stone monuments. In Dál Riata, in addition to their ultimate function as Christian monuments, investment in carved stone monuments appears to be part of the process of consolidating and proclaiming power, allegiance and ideology.

SOUTHERN PICTLAND — FIFE, PERTH AND KINROSS, DUNDEE CITY AND ANGUS

The modern administrative districts of Fife, Perth and Kinross, Dundee City and Angus were part of southern Pictish territory but, unlike Argyll, there is no sense of historical coherence to the region, and indeed the sculpture shows the potential for smaller political units within the area. Ian Smith's study of this region identified the potential for monumental markers, namely different types of burial, the location of symbol stones and potentially early Christian place-names to define limits of ideological and political territories.⁵⁷ This regional study brings his work forward in time and includes potentially early cross-marked stones in addition to the focus on resource investment. The investment maps (Fig. 5) for the region in Phase I show minimal investment monuments with a relatively dispersed distribution within geographical clusters. Phase II shows a drastic change with the appearance of a few, highly concentrated centres of investment and multiple sites of moderate investment. Phase III sees a significant drop in the amount of new sculpture created; however, those new

⁵⁶ Ritchie, op. cit. in note 36, 98.

⁵⁷ Smith, op. cit. in note 22, 27.

sculptures do have a moderate amount of investment devoted to them. The change in investment shows that the attitude to, and the desire/need for stone sculpture, was a significant draw for symbolic wealth during the 8th and 9th centuries in this area. The different regional clusters, and indeed absence in some cases of investment centres, particularly in Phase I, suggest different strategies in terms of symbolic wealth and sculpture over time.

The 6th and 7th centuries in southern Pictland were characterised by relatively evenly dispersed manifestations of symbolic wealth in monumental sculpture. The relative dearth of symbol stones south of the Mounth means that they tend to generate less comment than those to the north. E. A. Alcock considered the number of examples on the Fife peninsula too small to be considered in her analysis of symbols and distribution.⁵⁸ However, when analysed with other potentially contemporary monuments, such as Smith's monumental markers, these few sculptures show some coherence in their distribution suggestive of ideological if not political territories. In looking at the distribution of potentially early sculptures with crosses but no other ornament alongside symbol stones, there is very little 'mingling' between the two forms. These crosses, which may be of early date, form two regional groups. One region is in eastern Fife and the other is in Atholl, north-eastern Perth and Kinross. The density of early cross-slabs in Atholl, or 'New Ireland,' may be associated with a group of *cill* place-names focusing on the Tay and Tummel rivers, as identified by Simon Taylor.⁵⁹ Placenames and the recent discovery of an inscribed, c. 8th-century slab bearing an outline cross from Dull suggest links with the West and Iona in particular.⁶⁰

The patchwork nature of the distribution of types of monuments (symbol stones and cross-slabs) in the 6th and 7th centuries not only points to a piecemeal and controlled adoption of Christianity, perhaps along political and territorial lines, but also to the different versions of Christianity that could be adopted.⁶¹ In Atholl, there is the potential for an early link to Iona. In eastern Fife, the Christian root may not be Columban, but possibly from some other, perhaps native, saints. The material investment in sculpture and the nature and distribution of the monuments themselves suggest a political geography of smaller territorial units with independent political and ideological agendas.

These agendas, however, are by no means clear. Looking at the distribution of symbol stones in Fife there are two 'lines' running across the peninsula that offer a choice of where to draw potential boundaries. One option would

⁵⁸ Alcock, op. cit. in note 22, 19.

⁵⁹ S. Taylor, 'Place-names and the early church in eastern Scotland', 93–110 in B. Crawford (ed.), *Scotland in Dark Age Britain* (St Andrews, 1996).

⁶⁰ J. Hooper, *A Landscape Given Meaning: An Archaeological Perspective on Landscape History in Highland Scotland* (unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Glasgow, 2002), 287–92; R. S. Will, T. O. Clancy, G. Charles-Edwards and K. Forsyth, 'An eighth-century inscribed cross-slab in Dull, Perthshire', *Scott. Archaeol. J.*, 25(1) (2005), 57–72.

⁶¹ M. Carver, 'Conversion and politics on the eastern seaboard of Britain: some archaeological indicators', 11–40 in B. Crawford (ed.), *Conversion and Christianity in the North Sea World* (St Andrews, 1998); M. Carver, 'Northern Europeans negotiate their future', 3–13 in M. Carver (ed.), *The Cross goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe c. 300–1300* (York, 2003).

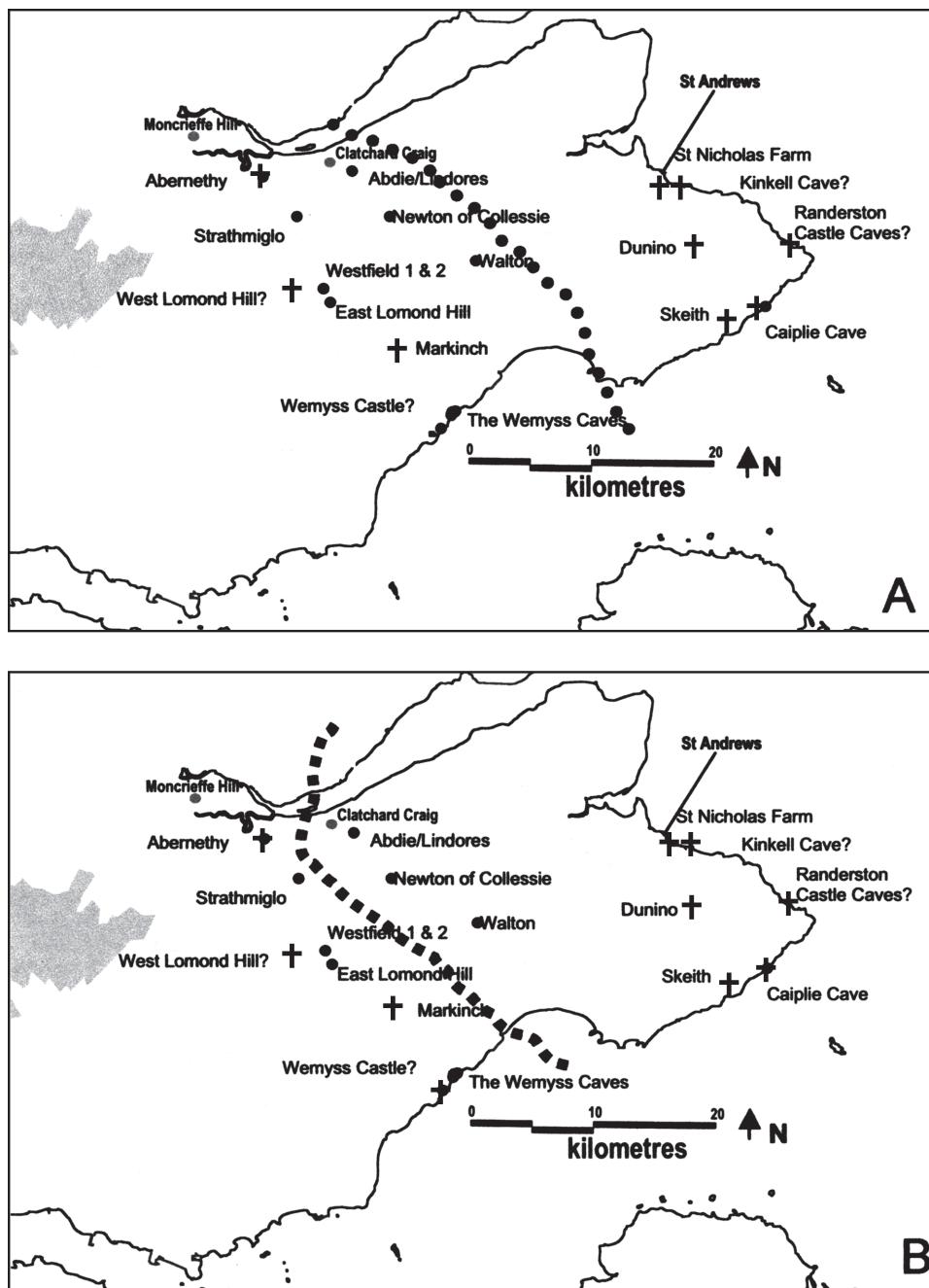


FIG. 7

Distribution of carved symbols (●) and early carved crosses (†) in Fife. A — The distribution suggesting a monumental frontier. B — The distribution suggesting a boundary between two linear groups of symbol stones.

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make the extreme eastern line a boundary reflecting Smith's model of a monumental frontier between Christian and non-Christian ideologies (Fig. 7A). However, the distribution in the centre of Fife shows a remarkable parallel to the High-medieval deanery boundary of St Andrews, reconstructed by Taylor, possibly fossilising a meaningful Early-historic boundary between the territories of Fife and Fothrif, and possibly areas of influence between different saints and their establishments.⁶² Following Taylor's reconstructed boundary of the deanery, a line might be drawn between the two linear distributions of symbol stones, each marking the entrance into a new territory (Fig. 7B). If we draw a boundary here, the monumental frontier is lost or more mixed, as one territory could be argued to use both symbol stones and contemporary types of cross-bearing monuments (E. Fife).

The sculpture then offers at least two possible models for political and ideological structures in 6th- and 7th-century Fife. One follows on from Smith's model that the demarcation between Christian and non-Christian archaeological features reflects political/ideological territories. The other is that Christian and non-Christian ideologies could exist within the same territorial and presumably political or ecclesiastical unit. The latter is perhaps more understandable when the nature of investment is considered alongside distribution. Monumentally speaking, it does not appear that one ideology was trying to 'out-do' the other in investment. There are no significant concentrations of investment at a single site, Christian or otherwise, in Fife. This may suggest that there was not a strong sense of tension or conflict politically behind the display of these different ideological messengers.

This lack of concentration is markedly different than what begins to occur in the 8th century. It is also different to the way material investment in sculpture was used in Phase I in Argyll, where significant concentrations occurred at both Iona and Cladh a'Bhile. Although Christianity seemingly established a foothold in certain regions of southern Pictland, possibly from quite early on as the distribution and date of long-cist cemeteries indicates, the secular or even ecclesiastical elite did not enthusiastically engage with it in terms of sculpture until the 8th and 9th centuries.⁶³ As the investment map shows, southern Pictland had significantly different agendas or attitudes to Christian sculpture in Phase I, reflected by the lack in Fife of a dominant site in terms of investment in monumental sculpture. The critical differences between Phases I and II are the appearance of centres of concentrated investment in monumental displays at St Andrews (Fife), Meigle (Perth and Kinross) and St Vigeans (Angus), and the more comprehensive adoption of Christian ideology as expressed through sculpture. There are no longer political units identifiable by their differences in pagan and Christian

⁶² S. Taylor, *Settlement-names of Fife* (unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of St Andrews, 1995), 20–7; and Taylor, op. cit. in note 59.

⁶³ Smith, op. cit. in note 22, 26–8.

ideological messengers. Although the uneven distribution of monuments with both crosses and Pictish symbols (Fig. 8) may be a continuation of earlier territorial or ideological differences (e.g. the apparent lack of symbols at St Andrews), this might also be accounted for by the different needs and functions of the sites (in terms of monuments forms, etc.) rather than political motivation.

In comparison to the earlier phase, the distribution and concentration of material investment in Phase II shows a distinct interest by secular elite in patronising ecclesiastical establishments and displaying those relationships of power in elaborate monuments. A general characteristic of Pictish sculpture is the prominence of secularised themes such as the hunt, and images of warriors and mounted riders. Thomas Clancy has argued that Pictish rulers were active in the foundation and activities of churches in their territories.⁶⁴ The sculpture

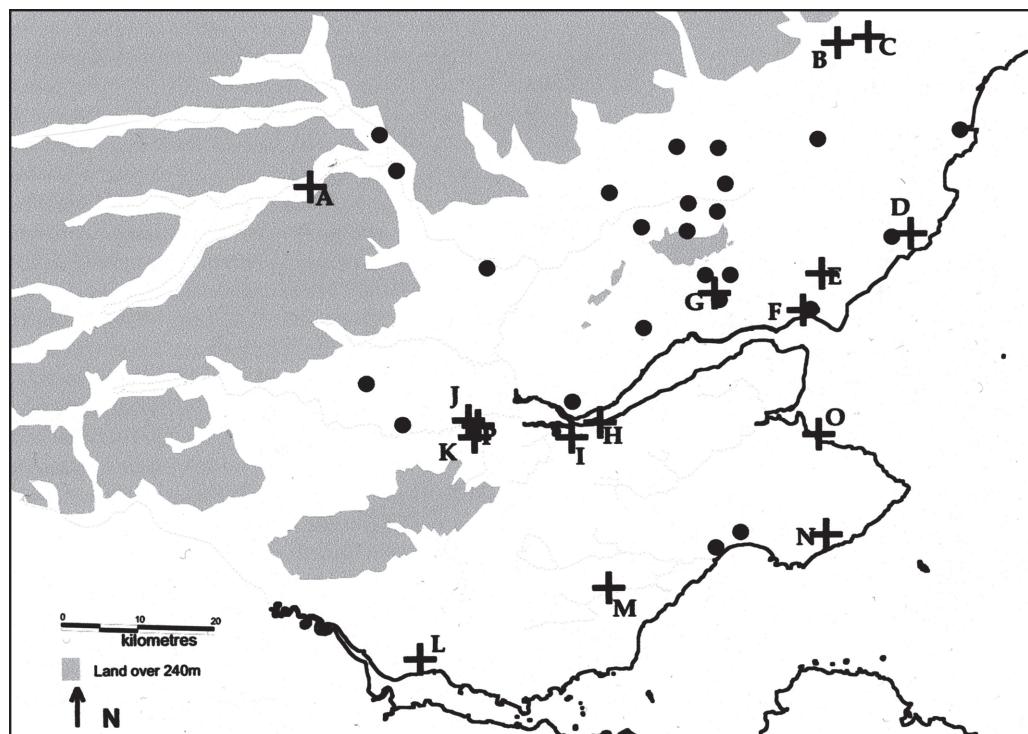


FIG. 8

Distribution of sites with cross-slabs with Pictish symbols (●) and free-standing crosses (†) in southern Pictland. A Weem. B Lethnot. C Edzell. D St Vigeans. E Camus. F Monifieth. G Strathmartine. H Mugdrum. I Abernethy. J Dupplin. K Invermay. L Culross. M Dogton. N Abercrombie. O St Andrews. P Forteviot.

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⁶⁴ T. Clancy, 'Iona, Scotland and the céli Dé', 111–30 in Crawford (ed.), op. cit. in note 59, 121.

shows that this was not necessarily as significant in the 6th and 7th centuries as it was in the 8th and 9th centuries when church and secular spheres appear intimately connected. Historically, this relationship is visible in the early 8th-century account of King Nechtan's letter to Ceolfrid in Northumbria, a post-Synod of Whitby political move asking for spiritual advice and masons skilled in the art of making stone buildings.⁶⁵

Iconography and the degree of material investment in sculpture indicate that the medium played a role in the consolidation of power created through church/secular relationships. While this iconography and investment cannot be pinpointed to a particular date, ideologically and politically speaking some change to investment in sculpture after the mid-9th-century ascension of the Dál Riata dynasty of mac Alpín to the Pictish kingship would seem likely if investment is closely related to secular power. It is, however, relatively impossible to discern what sculpture is 'pre- or post-843'. The sculpture from Dunkeld (Perth and Kinross) may largely post-date 849 when Columba's relics were moved here, but this is assuming the historical date is a definite marker for patronage and display, which is not necessarily valid, and stylistically the sculpture cannot provide such a precise date. For example, the group of cross-slabs from St Andrews, which from their similarity suggest a workshop there, may date art-historically from the 9th or 10th centuries. It perhaps suggests a boom in patronage of the monastery or the workshop related to royal interest in the 10th century, or even in the 9th-century activities of the Celi Dé here.⁶⁶ There is, instead, a lack of a clear iconographic and ideological break datable to the mid-9th century when the dynastic change historically takes place. Rather, in the 9th century, there is a continuation of some power structures; Cinead mac Alpín, for example, died in A.D. 858 at the Pictish monumental site and palace of Forteviot (Perth and Kinross).⁶⁷ The adoption of Pictish power centres by an incoming ruling elite, rather than their destruction, may signify a degree of continuity or a desire to associate with the Pictish past and gain authority. Changes visible in terms of sculpture include the augmentation of the landscape of Forteviot by the addition of monumental stone sculpture. The addition of stone monuments to the palace landscape would seem to be a change from Phase I, when no stone monuments are known from here, but this new medium cannot be easily ascribed to a new dynastic impulse and could reflect a change in Pictish attitudes and desires for stone sculpture (and buildings) at the power centre.⁶⁸ In addition to the magnificent carved stone arch from Forteviot, probably belonging to a stone religious building, and fragments of cross-slabs now located in the local church, one small fragment of a free-standing cross, and two

⁶⁵ Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. J. McClure and R. Collins (Oxford, 1994), V, ch. 21, at pp. 276–86.

⁶⁶ T. Clancy, op. cit. in note 59; D. Broun, 'Pictish Kings 761–839: integration with Dál Riata or separate development?', 71–83 in S. M. Foster (ed.), *The St Andrews Sarcophagus* (Dublin, 1998), 80–1.

⁶⁷ A. O. Anderson, *Early Sources of Scottish History*, a.d. 500–1286, Vol 1 (Edinburgh, 1922), 288–9.

⁶⁸ Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 194.

outlying monuments are associated with the landscape of the Pictish palace. The Dupplin and Invermay crosses were free-standing monuments, sited respectively about 1.5 km to the north and south of the suspected palace location (this assumes they were not moved in antiquity). Although the ‘palace’ itself is not located, it was set within a prehistoric to Early-historic ceremonial landscape revealed by aerial photography.⁶⁹

The Invermay and Forteviot crosses are much damaged, surviving only in small fragments, but with ornament on a par with the better-preserved Dupplin Cross.⁷⁰ The Dupplin Cross is an amalgam of styles in true Insular fashion. In the domination of secular imagery it shares much with other Pictish sculpture: its basic concept as a free-standing cross, and its central boss, is shared with monuments from Argyll and Ireland; and the shape of its head and use of vinescroll echo styles dominant in Northumbria. Katherine Forsyth has read the worn inscription on the shaft, equating it possibly with Custantín son of Fergus, who was the first to hold concurrently the kingships of Pictland and Dál Riata. He became king of Pictland in 789 and king of Dál Riata by 811, and is thus a precursor to Cinaed I, the progenitor of the mac Alpín dynasty.⁷¹ It is difficult to say whether Custantín was the patron of the cross as well as the dedicatee, meaning the cross could date to almost any time in the 9th century, but the reading of the inscription directly links a royal person with this resource-intensive sculpture. The combination of these stylistic features created a highly politicised monument — from its inscription to its secular themed imagery — placed within the political power landscape of the Pictish palace.

Dupplin is one of relatively few free-standing crosses in southern Pictland (Fig. 8) and Pictland in general. At St Vigeans, Monifieth (Angus), and Strathmartine (Perth and Kinross) cross-slabs with symbols occur in the same collection as free-standing crosses, none of which bear Pictish symbols.⁷² The limited appearance of the free-standing cross as a monument-type and the exclusion of Pictish symbols on them may suggest alternative circumstances to their creation than that for the majority of cross-slabs. The distribution of free-standing crosses within this study area is concentrated on the Fife peninsula extending west to Forteviot and then along the coast of the Firth of Tay. Although we might be able to suggest, based on the limited distribution and lack of known Pictish symbols, that the free-standing crosses of this area are monuments of the mac Alpín Gaelic dynasty, they are not completely convincing as monuments to Dál Riata control.⁷³ Neither the use of sculpture to promote secular power nor the form of a free-standing cross was an alien concept in

⁶⁹ L. Alcock and E. A. Alcock, ‘Reconnaissance excavations on Early Historic fortifications and other royal sites in Scotland, 1974–84: A, excavations and other fieldwork at Forteviot, Perthshire, 1981; B, excavations at Urquhart Castle, Inverness-shire, 1983; C, excavations at Dunnottar, Kincardineshire, 1984’, *Proc. Soc. Antiqu. Scot.*, 122 (1992), 215–87, at pp. 218–42.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 222–7, 239; I. Henderson, ‘The Dupplin Cross: a preliminary consideration of its art-historical context’, 161–77 in J. Hawkes and S. Mills (eds.), *Northumbria’s Golden Age* (Stroud, 1999).

⁷¹ K. Forsyth, ‘The Inscriptions on the Dupplin Cross’, 237–44 in C. Bourke (ed.), *From the Isles of the North* (Belfast, 1995).

⁷² I. Fraser and J. N. G. Ritchie, *Pictish Symbol Stones: An Illustrated Gazetteer* (Edinburgh, 1999).

⁷³ For the art-historical arguments, see Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 182–95.

Pictland. Secular themes occur on sculpture throughout Pictland, arguably more so than they do on sculpture in Argyll, Ireland, or Northumbria. Themes of secular authority occur both with and without Pictish symbols. Sculpture at Meigle and St Vigeans, as noted by Anna Ritchie, is strongly secularised, suggesting patronage by elite, probably royal, lay-people.⁷⁴ The ‘Drosten’ symbol-bearing cross-slab from St Vigeans further supports this link, as an inscription on one of its sides potentially names a Pictish king Uurad, son of Bargoit (839 × 842).⁷⁵ The biblical iconography of the St Andrews Sarcophagus clearly has echoes of secular ideology and power. The classicised David killing the lion is echoed by the presumably local king or leader hunting on his horse, accompanied by his groom and band of dogs. The hunter is further paralleled to David in that he does not merely hunt the native deer, but he is pictured killing an exotic lion in a symbolic link to the ideal warrior and king of the Old Testament.⁷⁶

The form of the free-standing cross also occurs frequently on slab monuments. The Gask (or ‘Bore’) cross-slab (Perth and Kinross) bears a much weathered, ringed cross on one side and a variety of scenes and symbols on the other.⁷⁷ The very high relief of the cross imparts an air of three-dimensionality and its armpits are even pierced. It is unlikely, given the high quality of craftsmanship and artistry of carving in eastern Scotland, that the lack of free-standing crosses was a factor of skill. The implication is that the choice of depicting a free-standing cross on a slab, or using a slab monument, generally was made in order to utilise the space around the cross and on the back of the slab.⁷⁸ This space was integral to the ideology and the message being conveyed, whether filled with Pictish symbols, biblical, or secular scenes.

By the end of Phase III, sculpture was no longer enthusiastically used as a vehicle for symbolic wealth. Of the more resource intensive monuments, hogback stones stand out (Inchcolm and Tulliallan in Fife, Tullibole in Perth and Kinross, Meigle, and St Vigeans), reflecting the changing nature of artistic influences in what was southern Pictland. The lack of carved stone monuments at Scone (Perth and Kinross), the new ceremonial centre of Alba, is a clear break from the earlier ceremonial centres like Forteviot. Carved stones were no longer the mechanism for articulating the ideology of secular power and kingship. They became part of a glorious past and were part of the power landscape that could be referenced, like the great hillforts or prehistoric monuments, as one encountered the landscape of what had become Alba.⁷⁹ Whereas the initial Gaelic kings of Pictland adopted and then perhaps adapted Pictish power

⁷⁴ A. Ritchie, ‘Meigle and lay patronage in Tayside in the 9th and 10th centuries AD’, *Tayside and Fife Archaeol. J.*, 1 (1995), 1–10, at p. 8.

⁷⁵ T. Clancy, ‘The Drosten stone: a new reading’, *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, 123 (1993), 345–53.

⁷⁶ I. Henderson, ‘Primus inter pares: the St Andrews Sarcophagus and Pictish sculpture,’ 97–167 in Foster (ed.), op. cit. in note 66, 138.

⁷⁷ Fraser and Ritchie, op. cit. in note 72, 38–9.

⁷⁸ For a comprehensive discussion of Pictish sculptural forms see Henderson and Henderson, op. cit. in note 3, 159–213.

⁷⁹ For elaboration of the role of Scone in Early-medieval Scotland, see S. Driscoll, ‘The archaeological context of assembly in early medieval Scotland — Scone and its comparanda’, 73–94 in A. Pantos and S. Semple (eds.), *Assembly Places and Practices in Medieval Europe* (Dublin, 2004).

structures, by the 10th century there appears a more conscious break with the past, embodied in the changing use of sculpture and echoed by the rebranding of Pictland as Alba at the end of the 9th century in the surviving documentary sources.⁸⁰

In southern Pictland, there are again perhaps no significant surprises in which centres are the major foci of investment in sculpture as the collections of St Andrews, Meigle and St Vigeans are well documented. However, it is again the smaller-scale centres and patterns that emerge from an analysis of investment in sculpture that can challenge and complement our understanding of power networks in this region. The relative parity of investment in both symbol stones (Class I) and early crosses, and the potential for these monuments to exist within the same territories, suggests a lack of tension between what are usually considered competing ideological messengers. The co-existence of both forms of sculpture and the ‘non-threatening’ nature of investment in Christian sculpture or centres of investment in Christian sculpture offers a background for those relief monuments with both Christian iconography and Pictish symbols. Sculpture as symbolic wealth in southern Pictland emphasises the complexity and fluctuations of political and ideological structures. Christianity asserted itself within power structures from the 8th century when increased investment and images on sculpture indicate that secular and ecclesiastical elite found common political ground. Sculpture also potentially played its part in promoting power and authority of both Pictish and the new dynasty of Gaelic rulers in Pictland in the later 9th and early 10th centuries. By the 10th century, the quality and scope of relief carving seems to be in decline and this is reflected in the lesser degree of investment devoted to new stone sculpture. Use of the medium did not persist and by the 10th and 11th centuries sculpture became part of the mythic past as a new identity was forged for Alba at Scone, at continental-style monasteries, and eventually at the burghs.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

While there is a sense of some coherence to parts of Dumfries and Galloway under the kingdoms of Rheged and later Northumbria, this is not well defined by either the archaeology or the documentary sources. The area was British-speaking and subject to Northumbrian hegemony for a time in the 7th–9th centuries. In the later 9th–11th centuries, the British kingdom of Strathclyde extended into its eastern part and there were strong contacts with the Irish Sea region.⁸¹ When looking at material investment in sculpture, the landscapes and power structures around the few major excavated sites of Whithorn, the Mote of Mark and Hoddam become populated.⁸² Phase I is

⁸⁰ D. Broun, ‘The origin of Scottish identity in its European context’, 21–31 in Crawford, op. cit in note 59.

⁸¹ D. Brooke, *Wild Men and Holy Places* (Edinburgh, 1994), 8–56 and 70–1.

⁸² C. Lowe, ‘New light on the Anglian “Minster” at Hoddam’, *Trans. Dumfriesshire Galloway Natur. Hist. Antiq. Soc.*, 66 (1991), 11–35; P. Hill, *Whithorn and St. Ninian: The Excavation of a Monastic Town 1984–91* (Stroud, 1997); D. Longley, ‘The Mote of Mark: the archaeological context of the decorated metalwork’, 75–89 in Redknapp, Edwards, Youngs, Lane and Knight (eds.), op. cit in note 30.

characterised by dispersed investment, while Phase II shows the characteristic increase in investment and the appearance of dominant investment sites seen in other regions. Phase III shows a relative increase in the numbers of monuments erected, particularly related to the Whithorn peninsula, even though the relative investment in individual sculptures is not as high as those of Phase II. As with other regions, the investment maps highlight regional clusters. The difference in distribution and concentration of investment between Phase I, which is less intense and less geographically limited, and Phase II, which is characterised by a relatively small number of sites with considerable investment, is particularly clear (Fig. 6).

The distribution of investment in Phase I reveals a relatively comparable pattern to Phase I in Argyll, which may be due in part to similar Irish Sea influences on some early religious establishments. While the sculpture indicates relatively dispersed Christian communities, probably quite small, such as at Ardwall Island, there are some concentrations of investment. The cumulative investment in sculpture indicates a more prominent centre at Kirkmadrine in the Rhinns of Galloway peninsula. Phase I is remarkable for the number of sculptures with inscriptions, namely from Kirkmadrine and Low Curghie, both in the Rhinns, and the 'Petrus' Stone and 'Latinus' Stone, both associated with Whithorn. These sculptures have been the subject of considerable discussion due to the chronology of their inscriptions, which have been dated as early as the 5th century.⁸³ Whithorn, in addition to its use of imported goods and craft activities revealed in excavations, also sponsored a considerable amount of sculpture. This could include the satellite site at St Ninian's Cave and be marking off symbolic routeways or pilgrimage routes between the Isle of Whithorn, the Cave and the church itself.

In addition to the two centres, there are several other sites showing minimal investment in sculpture. There is a cluster of sites on the Machars peninsula probably related to Whithorn, but there is nothing striking in the styles of the crosses to suggest a direct link, unlike later Whithorn School sculpture. A more dense distribution of monuments occurs in the far west of Galloway, an area that may have seen considerable contact with Ireland in the 5th and 6th centuries. Thomas argued for an Irish influence at foundations characterised by enclosed burial-ground and small churches, such as that found on Ardwall Island.⁸⁴ What is unique so far in Scottish archaeology is the nature of the main centre of sculptural investment at Whithorn, in that through excavation it has proven to be a site that is also a centre for craft and trade activities on a large (even 'international') scale and arguably of a mixed secular and ecclesiastic nature.⁸⁵

⁸³ C. Radford and G. Donaldson, *Whithorn and the Ecclesiastical Monuments of Wigtownshire* (Edinburgh, 1984); C. Thomas, 'The Early Christian inscriptions of southern Scotland', *Glasgow Archaeol. J.*, 17 (1991–2), 1–10; K. Forsyth, 'HIC MEMORIA PERPETUA: the inscribed stones of sub-Roman southern Scotland,' 113–34 in Foster and Cross (eds.), op. cit. in note 4.

⁸⁴ C. Thomas, 'Ardwall Isle: The excavation of an Early Christian site of Irish Type', *Trans. Dumfriesshire Galloway Natur. Hist. Antiq. Soc.*, 43 (1966), 84–116.

⁸⁵ Hill, op. cit. in note 82; W. Davies, *Whithorn and the World* (Whithorn, 1998).

The complex nature of Whithorn is an intriguing problem. Suffice to say, it deserves more attention than can be given to it in the present study, so discussion will restrict itself to the sculpture.

Investment in sculpture changes from a relatively dispersed pattern in Phase I to a dramatic increase in centres of investment in Phase II at Whithorn, and even more so at the monastery of Hoddom. The general distribution pattern of sculpture erected in this phase has also changed from a clustering in the west to a strong coastal distribution stretching eastwards from Whithorn. This seems to reflect a probable refocus of power eastwards and potentially delimits Northumbrian political and ecclesiastical power. The sculpture shows influence from Northumbria, particularly the Ruthwell and Hoddom monuments.⁸⁶ Although Whithorn is the Northumbrian episcopal seat in the region, it is instead Hoddom that stands out in relation to resources invested in stone sculpture in the 8th and 9th centuries. The iconography of the free-standing crosses from Hoddom and Ruthwell does not display the overtly secular imagery of contemporary monuments from Pictland (the Dupplin Cross, for example) and does not have the messages of kingship conveyed by David imagery as seen in Argyll or Pictland. The power being portrayed is that of the Church, and secular links with either local or Northumbrian leaders are not explicit. It seems likely that patronage by the secular elite of the monasteries and churches, if not the actual sculpture, must still have been a factor, however the ideological message is not of kingship but of faith and liturgy. Thus, it is symbolic wealth combined with more distinctly liturgical ideology that furthers the agenda and consolidates the power of Northumbria in the region. The Easter Controversy gave the Northumbrian church an identity of defenders of the 'proper' conduct of faith.⁸⁷ In the aftermath of Whitby and the success of the Northumbrian debaters, this identity may have been used to augment the status of the bishops, abbots and even kings of Northumbria in this annexed region. The use of the church to increase and solidify power has been suggested as a feature of Anglo-Saxon kingship.⁸⁸ The general pattern of investment in sculpture suggests the limit of Northumbrian power lies not much further west than the Machars peninsula.

Although excavations at both sites have not been all-inclusive, investment in sculpture suggests that the objectives of Whithorn and Hoddom were different. Hoddom is the focus of sculptural investment and the excavated buildings are associated with agricultural, industrial and ritual activities. Few coins were found within the excavated area dating to the 8th or 9th centuries.⁸⁹ In comparison, Whithorn does not have the same scale of investment in sculpture in Phase II, but has evidence for significant building projects and more coinage, although this is probably not directly related to commercial exchange. That these two sites played crucial but distinct roles in the presence of Northumbrian power is

⁸⁶ R. Cramp, 'The Anglican [sic] crosses of Dumfriesshire', *Trans. Dumfriesshire Galloway Natur. Hist. Antiq. Soc.*, 38 (1959–60), 9–20.

⁸⁷ Bede, op. cit. in note 65, Book III, Chs. 25–6 at pp. 152–61.

⁸⁸ N. Higham, *An English Empire: Bede and the Early Anglo-Saxon Kings* (Manchester, 1995), 173.

⁸⁹ Lowe, op. cit. in note 82.

clear, but the lack of knowledge of contemporary secular sites is an obstacle to theorising how they fit within larger structures of power.

Unlike the other two case studies, Phase III is not characterised by a drop in monumental display of symbolic wealth. By the 10th century, the ecclesiastical control that during Phase II appeared to extend from the east out to a western extreme of the Machars is no longer visible. This suggests a break-up of secular and religious power. Smaller units emerge, with one territory defined by Whithorn School monuments in the Machars and the other possibly on the southern edge of the expanded kingdom of Strathclyde around Thornhill, stretching possibly down to Hoddom. That a local elite power — ecclesiastic, secular or mixed — existed in the later 9th and 10th centuries and continued to support Whithorn to some extent seems necessary for the maintenance and recovery of the bishopric's administrative power after the departure of the Northumbrians. Indeed, it is this period when Whithorn devotes significant resources to continued building programmes and in developing its estate or parish system marked out by sculpture.⁹⁰ In comparison, new sculpture at Hoddom is greatly diminished. The form of the Whithorn School crosses appears to be related to the cross of arcs, an early form seen at Whithorn.⁹¹ If the cross of arcs was iconographically representative of Whithorn, its dissemination throughout the landscape directly links the places where it occurs to Whithorn. The form may be considered as significant for ecclesiastical 'kingdom' building (i.e. the diocese) as secular imagery was for political kingdom building.

These two identifiable landscapes of power in Phase III may again reflect distinct zones of influence. By the 10th century, the kingdom of Strathclyde stretched southwards to Hoddom, incorporating the area around Thornhill and an estate subordinate to, or associated with, Strathclyde might be postulated because of the concentration of sculpture. Whithorn and its landscape appears relatively contained to the Machars peninsula and the activities at the site itself, such as the Hiberno-Norse antler-working and presumably pilgrimage, may suggest it looked seaward and maintained a relative degree of independence as a territorial unit with its power centre, both secular and ecclesiastic, the site at Whithorn.⁹²

Sculptural investment clearly followed different agendas in Dumfries and Galloway than either of the two previous case studies. Overall, the iconography and lack of secular scenes on the monuments suggests more direct ecclesiastical control over the messages displayed, particularly during Phase II. Although secular politics are more difficult to interpret from the sculpture, the distribution and the nature of patterns of investment indicate that ecclesiastical and secular spheres were not isolated from each other. Approaching sculpture in terms of its investment brings out several research questions for this region. Whithorn and

⁹⁰ Craig, op. cit. in note 4.

⁹¹ Craig, 'The sculptured stone', 433–41 in Hill, op. cit. in note 82, 440.

⁹² Hill, op. cit. in note 82, 55–60.

Hoddom stand out as would be expected, but the distinctly different footprint of investment in sculpture at these two sites deserves further investigation, not only in terms of the Northumbrian presence and functions of the site, but what happens to underlying power networks in Phase III. The investment maps also point out an interesting pattern of rise and fall in investment in the far west (the Rhinns) of Galloway that may suggest a relatively independent political unit in this region throughout the Early Historic Period, but affected by Phase II power structures to the east. The changes in distribution and investment between Phases II and III show the disintegration of a larger unit, with the subsequent emergence of at least one well-defined unit existing around Whithorn. The nature of Whithorn, a site with both secular and ecclesiastic characteristics, may be a microcosm for much of the region generally — that ecclesiastic and secular power was so integrated that the power structures of each were indistinguishable from each other.

CONCLUSION

The stories of power described above are different for many reasons, the most obvious of which is that they deal with three distinct geographical regions. While these three regions would have been in contact with each other, there was no comprehensive Early-historic blueprint for using and displaying symbolic wealth through sculpture. The archaeology of symbolic wealth shows that even though similar objects and ideas were in use across the Insular world, the way those objects were used was a feature of local to regional ideological strategies, which could change significantly. Even when similar landscapes of power can be identified through the patterning and use of symbolic wealth, particularly in carved stone creation, the motivation behind the creation of that landscape might be different. Although somewhat coloured by the selection and omission of other regions, a look at the three study areas and their stories of investment together shows how different these strategies of investment were (Figs. 9–11). Such discrepancies in the volume of investment in sculpture potentially offer a way into thinking about the different roles of the creation and use of sculpture and the underlying reasons for different strategies. The lack of investment in sculpture in southern Pictland in Phase I, for example, is even more marked by the explosion of investment in terms of scale and number of sites, even over Argyll, during Phase II. While in some part due to the use of resource-intensive carving techniques and large monuments, this alone does not account for the Phase II ‘boom’ in monumental sculpture. That areas devoting substantial economic resources to carved stone monuments were thriving and ‘wealthy’ seems clear, even if the mechanisms to acquire and distribute that wealth are not yet fully understood. It must be recognised, however, that no grand narratives for strategies can be resolved from such large-scale maps, if at all (Figs. 9–11), considering that the regional maps themselves (Figs. 4–6) point to the likelihood of even traditionally well-defined regions like Dál Riata being more heterogeneous in their political and ecclesiastical landscape.

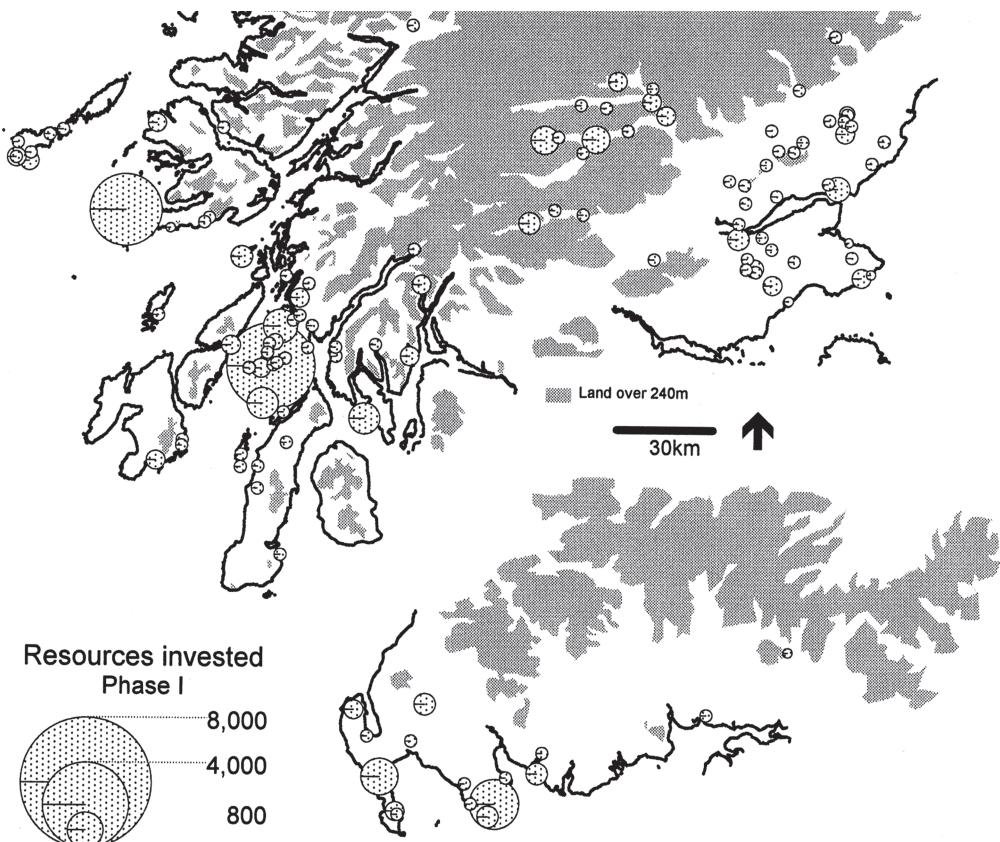


FIG. 9

Resources invested in sculpture during Phase I. All symbols weighted to same scale.
Basemap data © Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. An EDINA Digimap/JISC supplied service.

The landscapes of power as portrayed here by symbolic wealth include, but are not restricted to, smaller kingdoms/lordships or ecclesiastical units, growing political or religious units (over-kingship or bishoprics) and landscapes that use Christian networks in the consolidation and possibly destabilisation of power. By whatever technical term we wish to call them, smaller kingdoms or ecclesiastic polities appear to have been a considerable feature of Early-historic Scotland. The excavation of individual high-status sites and the manifestations of symbolic wealth associated with those sites has led to the identification of small and multiple power centres, such as the fortifications of Dunadd, the Mote of Mark (Dumfries and Galloway), Dundurn (Perth and Kinross) and Clatchard Craig (Fife). Based on the increasing hierarchy apparent in both burials and settlement, similar small political units and an associated 'aristocracy' have been

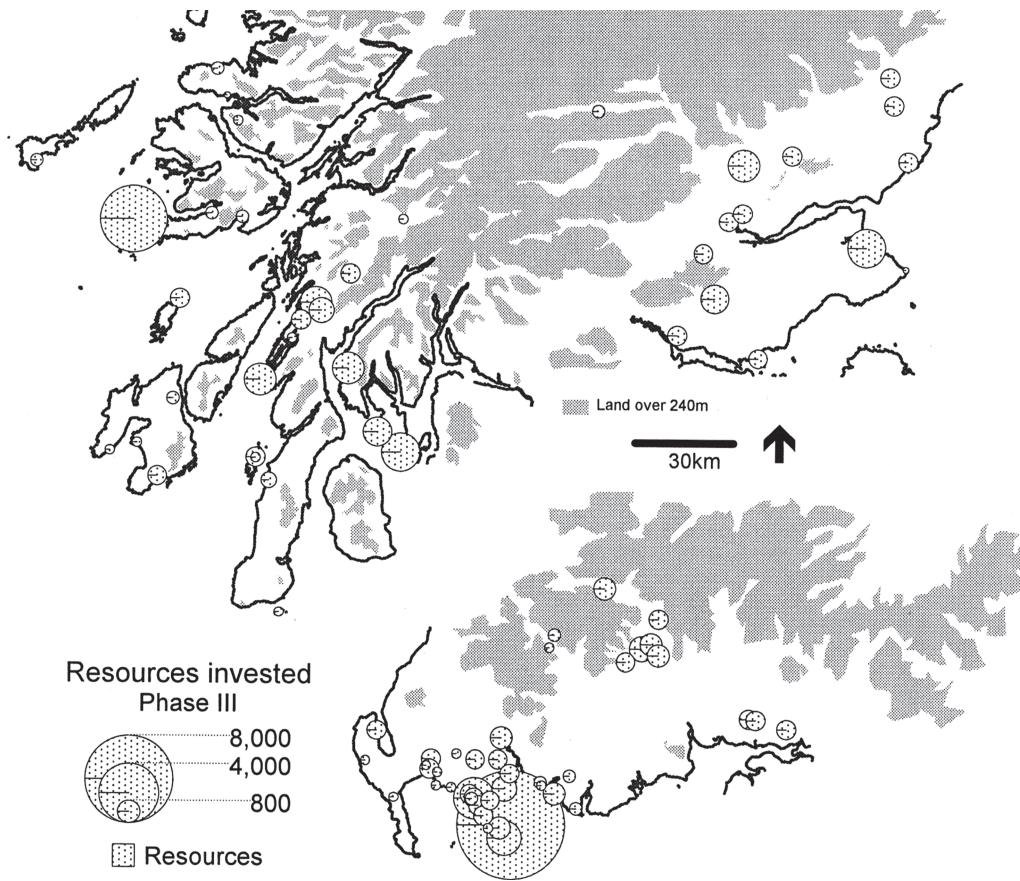


FIG. 10

Resources invested in sculpture during Phase II. All symbols weighted to same scale. Basemap data, © Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. An EDINA Digimap/JISC supplied service.

interpreted as early as the 5th century in East Anglia.⁹³ The archaeology of Early-medieval burial is not as advanced as in Anglo-Saxon England, but the Pictish square cairns, the degree of investment and display in sculpture and the excavated secular centres may support a comparable growth in hierarchy at least as early as the 6th and 7th centuries in some areas. The distribution of sculptural investment populates the landscapes of these individual Early-historic power centres and churches.

⁹³ For comparative Anglo-Saxon material see M. Carver, 'Ideology and allegiance in East Anglia', 173–82 in R. Farrell and C. de Vegvar (eds.), *Sutton Hoo: Fifty Years After*, American Early Medieval Studies 2 (Hamilton, 1992), 178; for Clatchard Craig, see J. Close-Brooks, 'Excavations at Clatchard Craig, Fife', *Proc. Soc. Antig. Scot.*, 116 (1986), 117–84; for Dundurn, see L. Alcock, E. Alcock and S. Driscoll, 'Reconnaissance excavations on Early Historic fortifications and other royal sites in Scotland, 1974–84: 3, Excavations at Dundurn, Strathearn, Perthshire, 1976–77', *Proc. Soc. Antig. Scot.*, 119 (1989), 189–226; for Dunadd, see Lane and Campbell, op. cit. in note 34; for the Mote of Mark, see Longley, op. cit. in note 82.

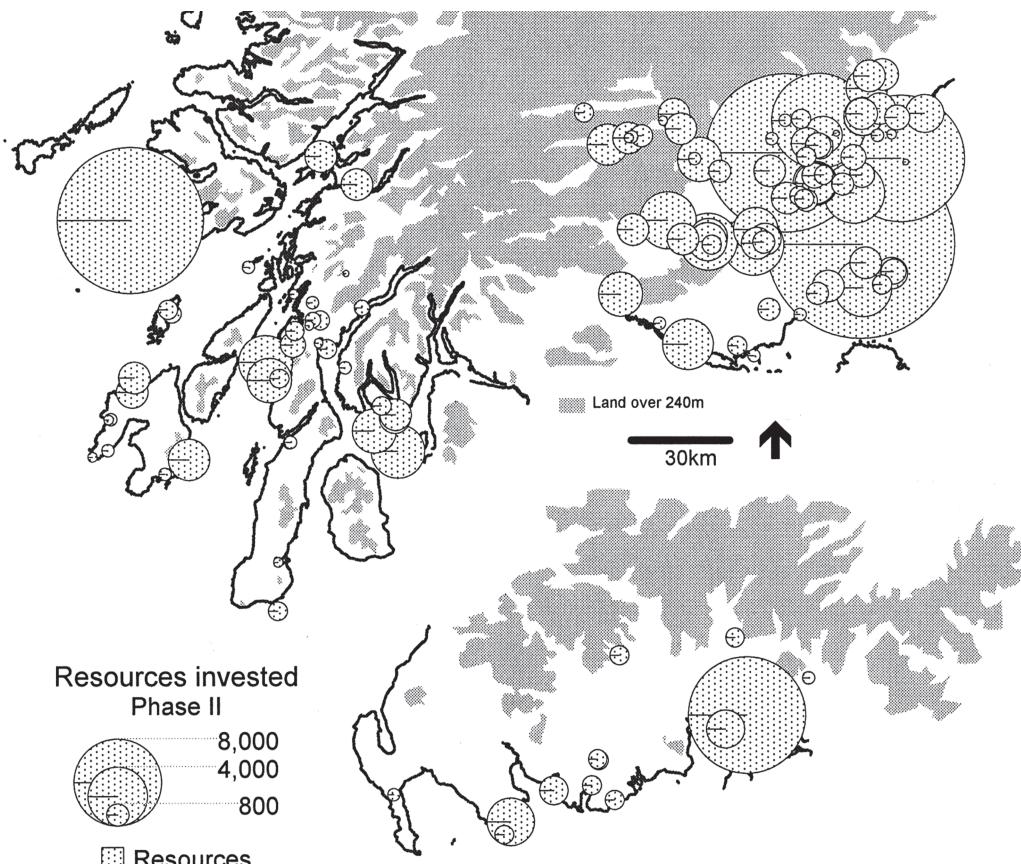


FIG. II

Resources invested in sculpture during Phase III. All symbols weighted to same scale. *Basemap data, © Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. An EDINA Digimap/JISC supplied service.*

'New' ideological constructs played their part in the growth of political units. In addition to using natural and prehistoric landscapes as symbols of power, such as at the Kilmartin Valley (Argyll) and Forteviot, images of secular elite and biblical kings on carved stones placed within those landscapes promoted the political control and role of kings. Secular images were integral to sculpture in eastern Scotland ('Pictland') throughout the 8th and 9th centuries and have been interpreted as evidence of patronage by lay-people and, in the case of Dupplin, Meigle and St Vigeans, by royalty.⁹⁴ The process of sponsoring and producing sculpture in these instances created and proclaimed political and ideological authority. Although the direct presence of secular images, or even

⁹⁴ Ritchie, op. cit. in note 74.

the names of kings, can be seen as the articulation of power strategies, sculpture did not always need secular themes to promote authority. In south-western Scotland, sculpture bore biblical imagery that reinforced and promoted Northumbrian ecclesiastical control. Overall, in 8th- and 9th-century south-western Scotland, the growing political 'lordship' or polity identifiable in the material culture is one that is not secular in nature but instead ecclesiastical.

Changing landscapes of power can be seen as changes in the way power was organised. An illustration of this is the conscious changing of the ceremonial landscape of power in Perth and Kinross after the ascension of the Gaelic (Scottish) dynasty to the Pictish kingship. By the 10th century, the power landscape around Forteviot shifted in focus to Scone only 8 km away. The only known carved stones erected during this period in this region are the cross-slab from New Scone/St John's, Perth and the Goodlieburn free-standing cross, which from its decoration appears later than the 11th century.⁹⁵ The erection of new carved stone monuments in southern Pictland in the 10th and 11th centuries does not appear to be a strategy used by the political secular elite to reinforce this power landscape around Scone and its Moot Hill. These monuments were now part of the past. Driscoll has suggested that as people moved through the landscape towards a power centre, such as Scone, for meetings or assemblies, they encountered monumental landscapes that legitimised and proclaimed control of the land.⁹⁶ As the new ceremonial seat of Alba, Scone broke down some of the older Pictish power structures, but referenced these power structures as a mythical and glorious past to which the new dynasty and kingdom was heir.

It has been argued here that sculpture, as symbolic wealth, is one means of approaching stories of power in the past. By approaching the dataset of sculpture firstly as created monuments related to economic and social investment, it was argued that underlying networks might emerge. In terms of the three case studies discussed above, this approach serves on one level to reinforce the significance of those sites already dominant in the literature for their sizeable collections and art-historical importance. However, the benefit of an investment approach to sculpture is seen more clearly for those more minor sites involved in the creation of sculpture. It is only with the inclusion of investment at these more minor sites and the recognition of those commanding but perhaps not spectacularly dominant sites that networks of power can be theorised and set into the landscape. The methodology itself makes these networks and sites stand out graphically, to be interrogated as real or circumstantial and, with the inclusion of other archaeological, art-historical and historical data, theories can be either supported or challenged. As an exercise in approaching the existing dataset of sculpture in a new way, it shows the potential of focusing on different aspects of the life-cycles of Early-historic carved monuments and that they, as a part of material culture, still have much to tell us.

⁹⁵ J. Stuart, *Sculptured Stones of Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1867), xlvi.

⁹⁶ Driscoll, op. cit. in note 79.

Sculpture was used as symbolic wealth across Early-historic Scotland. But the relative investment in, and the patterns in its distribution, showed that attitudes towards it were not the same. The variety of strategies and structures created different stories of change. The factors involved were numerous; heroes, settings, subplots and catastrophes can all be detected in the Early Historic Period in the themes of kings and strong individuals, ceremonial and political centres, the interaction with the past, the introduction of Christianity and war. Approaching power by assessing the symbolic capital invested in, and social relationships created during, the production of sculpture can contribute to the complex potential narratives of the archaeology of Early-historic Scotland.

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