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The Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture of Mercia as evidence for continental influence and cultural exchange

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Gwendoline C C Bergius

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Abstract

Scholarship has long considered the style of stone sculpture produced in Mercia during the late eighth and early ninth centuries to reflect the direct influence of artistic activities on the Carolingian continent. Written sources point to the dialogue that existed between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and the Carolingian courts in the years after Offa's rise to the Mercian throne. This dialogue has been understood to signal Offa's desire to raise his profile and that of his kingdom in the eyes of Charlemagne and the papacy. Mercian sculpture, unparalleled in its range of form and ornament, has thus been thought to owe its unique character to borrowed contemporary continental styles and motifs.

By means of multi-disciplinary research combining art historical, archaeological and historical approaches, this thesis establishes the nature of the relationship between Mercian sculpture and continental artistic production. Examination of the development of Carolingian sculptural styles against the backdrop of the enduring legacy of late Antiquity reveals the variety of artistic models available to Mercian sculptors. Through close analysis of the stylistic parallels between Mercian sculpture and late Antique, eastern Christian, Lombard and Carolingian monumental art, this research reveals the motivations and mechanisms behind the adoption and adaptation of continental motifs. Exploration of the means by which Mercian patrons and artists accessed continental motifs demonstrates the links between the forms and ornament of Mercian sculpture and the types of sites at which sculpture survives. These associations are argued to be reflective of the hierarchy of exchange networks that linked sites in the kingdom with centres of importance on the Continent and further afield. The development of Carolingian and papal monumental art highlights the shared interest in and importance of late Antique imperialism. Despite a parallel agenda, Mercian sculptors are shown to have accessed late Antique artistic sources largely independent of Carolingian intermediaries.

The Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture of Mercia as Evidence for Continental Influence and Cultural Exchange

2 Volumes

Volume 1

Gwendoline C C Bergius (née Dales)

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Department of Archaeology
Durham University

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[1] Full titles and references are provided in the captions for all illustrations in the Illustrations section.

List of Abbreviations

Archaeol. J.	*The Archaeological Journal*
Antiq. J.	*The Antiquaries Journal*
Brit. Archaeol. Ass. Conference Trans.	The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions
Brit. Archaeol. Rep., Brit. Ser.	British Archaeological Report, British Series
Brit. Archaeol. Rep., Int. Ser.	British Archaeological Report, International Series
Brit. Archaeol. Rep., Supp. Ser.	British Archaeological Report, Supplementary Series
Burlington Mag.	*The Burlington Magazine*
CASSS	*Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*
Council Brit. Archaeol. Res. Rep.	Council for British Archaeology Research Report
Derbyshire Archaeol. J.	*The Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*
eSawyer	The Electronic Sawyer. Online Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Charters.
J. Derbyshire Archaeol. Nat. Hist. Soc.	*Journal of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*
J. Brit. Archaeol. Ass.	*Journal of the British Archaeological Association*
Medieval Archaeol.	*Medieval Archaeology*
Pap. Brit. Sch. Rome	*Papers of the British School at Rome*
Proc. Soc. Antiq. London	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*
Shropshire Hist. Archaeol. Soc.	*The Shropshire Historical and Archaeological Society*
Trans. Architect. Archaeol. Soc. Durham and Northumberland	*Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*
Trans. Bristol Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.	*Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*

Trans. Leicestershire Archaeol. Hist. Soc   *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*

Trans. Roy. Hist. Soc.   *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*

Trans. Worcestershire Archaeol. Soc.   *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society*

Yorkshire Archaeol. J.   *The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

'The most eloquent testimony of English assimilation of continental ideas is to be seen in the sculpture of Breedon, and of Castor, Fletton and Peterborough to the east'.[1]

In 1976, in a precursor to a pivotal study on Mercian sculpture,[2] Rosemary Cramp set the agenda to which studies of the subject have broadly adhered ever since. Although not the first scholar to emphasise the links between Mercian sculpture and the art of the Continent,[3] Cramp's reiteration of its importance and potential as a subject for study in its own right has influenced the course of all subsequent scholarship. Thus, key studies of Mercian sculpture since the 1970s have broadly subscribed to the perception that Mercian sculpture was directly influenced by continental ideas of style.[4] It is this perception that provides the impetus for the research presented here. In direct response to Cramp's 1976 statement above, and in acknowledgement of the enduring impact it has had on the study of Mercian sculpture since, this thesis aims to establish the reality of the stylistic connections between Mercia and the Continent in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. It will explore the evidence for how continental ideas and motifs were transmitted to Mercia during this period and the manner in which they were assimilated by the craftsmen that created the remarkable body of Mercian sculpture and the patrons that commissioned its production.

Research aims

Previous scholarship has accepted that Mercian sculpture was at least partially aligned with sculptural developments on the Continent, but that it also benefited from a more complex exchange of ideas and styles involving the movement of people and small-scale, portable artworks such as manuscripts and ivories.[5] This thesis seeks to determine the degree of dependence that Mercian sculpture had on contemporary continental sculpture and the types of models that Mercian sculptors and patrons had access to and were influenced by. It also ascertains the mechanisms by which artistic models and

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[1] Cramp, 1976: 270.
[2] Cramp, 1977.
[3] Clapham, 1928, 1930; Kendrick, T., 1938.
[4] Jewell, 1982; Plunkett, 1984; Jewell, 1986 and 2001; Hawkes, 2002a; Mitchell, 2010 and forthcoming.
[5] Jewell, 1982; Cramp, 1986a; Hawkes, 2002a; Mitchell, 2010.

ideas entered the Mercian sculptural repertoire. As a consequence, this thesis explores the pivotal role of networks of exchange with the Continent, and the significance that continental ideas had in the development of Mercian stone sculpture as an unparalleled body of early medieval art during this period.

Mercian sculpture has been distinguished from other styles of Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture in the pre-Conquest period by its particular relationship with the art and activities associated with the Carolingian regions of the European continent. Studies suggest that whilst many of the models upon which the Mercians drew, notably those of late Antiquity and contemporary papal Rome, were not unfamiliar to Anglo-Saxon artists, the ways in which Mercian sculptors adopted and adapted motifs were unique.[1] The context for the adoption and adaptation of continental motifs and concepts is established here by ascertaining the socio-political climate that determined the emergence of this unique body of material.

Research questions and objectives

The first questions posed by this thesis are what constitutes 'continental influence' in Mercian art and how is it manifest within the Mercian sculptural corpus? Detailed appraisal of secondary scholarship is used to determine what is meant by 'continental influence', before the full body of Mercian sculpture is interrogated. Associated with how such continental influence is manifest are questions of distribution and spatial variation: where within the greater kingdom of Mercia can continental influence be identified, and is it possible to discern regional or even sub-regional and localised differences or variations in the use of continental artistic motifs and styles? At a site-specific level, this thesis explores whether a greater degree of continental influence can be discerned in the sculpture associated with important places within the Mercian ecclesiastical and administrative heartland. This tests the possible connections between royal patronage and the consumption and use of continentally-inspired designs on Mercian sculpture.

The next major research question is to determine from where potential continental influences derived? Did artistic influence emanate directly from Charlemagne's courts within his empire on the Continent, or were ideas, motifs and models reaching Mercia from intermediary sources nearer to hand, perhaps for example, via the artistic repertoires of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria? Were these influences stemming from a separate body of art originating in centres of religious and secular

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[1] Cramp, 1977; Jewell, 1984; Mitchell, 2010.

focus in the Christian East, or in and around papal Rome, and inspiring, independently, the art of the Carolingian Empire and Mercia? Potential sources of influence prompt a third major question: how were artistic models and ideas reaching Mercia and its centres of sculptural production? This is underpinned by a series of more complex queries, which are pursued in this research. For example, were the continental models and motifs employed in Mercian sculpture introduced as a result of the circulation of physical models in the form of portable objects, or a product of the movement of people such as craftsmen, pilgrims, ambassadors and travellers?

Finally, issues and questions surrounding why external artistic ideas and motifs from the Continent and beyond emerged as a formative component in the style of Mercian sculpture between the late eighth and early ninth centuries need to be addressed. What was the aesthetic and intellectual appeal of Carolingian, Roman and Eastern models, and why were they of interest to particular groups and individuals within Mercian society? What were the socio-political and religious motivations of the Mercian sculptors and their patrons that led to the selective adoption of specific artistic motifs, some of which find parallel within the greater Carolingian empire? These interlocking research questions, and the multi-disciplinary approach and methods required to address them, generated the following objectives for this thesis:

- To review past and current literature in order to determine the accepted interpretations regarding what constitutes a Mercian 'style' of sculpture. This includes a critical review of what is understood to be continental influence, and an appraisal of the accepted arguments for how and why continental influences emerged in the sculpture of Mercia in the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

- To conduct a survey of the extant sculptural material of the late eighth and early ninth centuries from the wider kingdom of Mercia, and to create a catalogue from which key groups of monuments can be identified and discussed.

- To undertake an analysis of the types of Mercian monuments and their ornament and, by drawing on the work of previous scholars and first hand observation *in situ*, to determine the purpose of Mercian sculpture by asking why the monuments were designed to look the way they do, and how this related to the types of sites at which they are found.

- To conduct a comprehensive study of the nature of the development of artistic production on the Carolingian continent and in Mercia.

- To conduct a focused examination of the development and style of Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture within the artistic milieu of the early medieval West.

- To conduct a critical appraisal of the sources and scholarship relating to the emergence and rise to supremacy of the Mercian kingdom, and the place of stone sculpture within the dialogue that is known to have existed between Mercia and the Continent in the late eighth and early ninth centuries.[2]

The particular demands of this thesis and the research questions posed, require an approach that integrates more than purely art historical and archaeological evidence. The study of Anglo-Saxon period stone sculpture has long sat at the interface between these two disciplines.[3] There has yet to emerge a large-scale truly multi-disciplinary or interdisciplinary study of Anglo-Saxon period stone sculpture that acknowledges the breadth of evidence available from not only archaeological, landscape, architectural and art historical sources, but also documentary sources such as extant charters, letters, hagiographies and commentaries. The absence of such a work provides the stimulus for this thesis, and underpins the thrust of the research presented here.[4]

The methodology adopted, which involves the integration of archaeology, art historical and historical sources, and documents and artefact studies, evolved in reaction to the questions that emerged from the initial examination of secondary literature and the primary sources and datasets. The mapping of charter and other documentary evidence presented in Chapter Two, Part I, and explored further in Chapter Five, highlights the important role that the monastic landscape played in the shaping of Christian Mercia. This included the implementation of the cult of saints as a social mechanism, of which Mercian sculpture became a key, monumental, expressive component. The investigation of documentary evidence in the form of histories, chronicles and letters provides the context for the discussion of the emergence of the Lombard and Carolingian sculptural style in Chapters Three and Four. The breadth of

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[2] Levison, 1946; Gelling, 1989, 1992; Nelson, 2001, 2002; Story, 2002, 2005; Keynes, 2005.

[3] Hawkes, 2009a and see volumes in the ongoing *CASSS* series, 1984–2010.

[4] In line with departmental regulations regarding referencing, and precedent set by recent archaeological and interdisciplinary publications, this thesis employs the Harvard referencing system, using footnotes to provide additional information of interest to the reader.

comparative material evidence surveyed in this thesis, including metalwork, ivories, mosaic, fresco, stucco and sculpture is thus discussed in these later chapters within a non-artistic frame of reference. This approach has allowed this study to situate the development of Mercian sculpture within the complex context of the socio-political climate of the late eighth and early ninth centuries, and within the networks of artistic exchange and production that linked Mercia to the Carolingian Empire and beyond.

The structure of the thesis

In Chapter One a critical review is presented of the kingdom of Mercia and its connections to the Carolingian continent in past and present scholarship across the fields of archaeology, history and art history. This chapter appraises the current position of stone sculpture in Mercian studies, provides an overview of what has come to be meant by the term 'Mercian sculpture', and identifies the elements in Mercian sculpture that scholars have considered to reflect 'continental influence'. The methodology for the thesis, which developed from reading and synthesising the wide-ranging discourses of past scholarship, is presented in Chapter Two. Part I addresses the difficulties that scholars face when attempting to recognise a Mercian style in sculpture, and the problems encountered during the process of identifying and selecting material for this research from regions of the country not yet catalogued by the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*. The chapter describes the method for defining and selecting Mercian sculpture, including a discussion of the comprehensive database of primary sculptural material collected and presented in Appendix I. The difficulties experienced when categorising material in the database are explained, and the results of mapping the material are discussed. Chapter Two, Part II outlines the methodology used for collecting and assessing comparative continental material. It was impossible to conduct an exhaustive survey of continental sculptural material. However, close consideration of the secondary published discussions and the available catalogues of continental sculpture, allowed the search to focus on specific regions of the Carolingian Empire. After establishing the basis for focusing on the sculpture of Lombard Italy as the primary body of comparative continental material, the process of selecting Lombard sites for in-depth study is outlined.

The development of continental sculpture within the artistic heritage of Carolingian Europe is discussed in Chapter Three. The focus here is the selected comparative sculpture of Lombard Italy. Through an exploration of the late Antique origins of Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture, the chapter provides an insight into

the motivations behind the development of the style, form and function of this material. The extent of continental, and especially Lombard, artistic influences on the form and ornament of Mercian stone sculpture is the subject of Chapter Four. Part I examines the dominant role of late Antique models in the iconography of figural carving in Mercia, tracing the early roots of the apostle imagery and biblical narrative scenes that were adapted and used in monumental Mercian sculpture. Analysis of non-figural ornament, notably vine-scroll and other ornamental schemes, reveals the close and enduring reliance of Mercian sculpture on late Antique architectural sculpture and mosaic design. The evidence for eastern inspiration, from Byzantium, Coptic Egypt and the Islamic Near East is also considered, together with the evidence for stylistic parallels with western early medieval art forms. Part II assesses the evidence for Insular influences and parallels in Mercian sculpture. Here, the relationship between Mercian sculpture and the Northumbrian tradition is explored, drawing specific attention to the well established Insular tradition of vine-scroll ornament on standing crosses, which persisted in some regions of Mercia, notably the south-west of the kingdom and the border territories of the north. The limited evidence for parallels between the two sculptural traditions is noted, highlighting instead the Mercian preference for motifs and ornament drawn from contemporary, 'Southumbrian' metalwork and manuscripts.

The socio-political context for the adoption and adaptation of continental ideas and artistic styles in Mercian sculpture is the focus of Chapter Five. Through an exploration of the development of the cult of saints in Mercia and its inherent links with royal power-strategies, this chapter analyses the emergence of a uniquely Mercian form of monumentality. Evidence is discussed for the development of Mercian sepulchral monuments, comprising sarcophagi, panelled shrines and cenotaphs. Against a background discussion of the historical role of monuments as cult foci, a stylistic appraisal of Mercian sepulchral sculpture reveals their position as symbolic markers in the sacred Christian landscape of the kingdom. The thesis concludes in Chapter Six with a discussion of the overarching results of this study. This chapter emphasises the individual place held by Mercian sculpture in the development of early medieval monumental art. The individuality of Mercian sculpture is argued to have derived from its unique relationship with the art of late Antiquity, of both eastern and western origin. This conscious connection, which cannot rightly be called a mere imitation, surpassed any reliance by Mercian sculptors on contemporary continental forms of stone sculpture. Indeed, the most striking comparison to be made – with Lombard sculpture – suggests an underlying shared attitude towards the use of monumental sculpture as a

means of expressing authority, rather than any direct transference or borrowing of motifs and styles from the Lombard repertoire. The variety and regional character of Mercian sculpture is argued to be not only one of its defining features, but also testament to the range of exchange mechanisms that created varied levels of access to artistic models. These in turn facilitated regional and socially stratified responses revealed in the manner of motif appropriation.

The thesis, in sum, provides a re-evaluation of the evidence for the relationship between Mercian sculpture, contemporary sculptural repertoires on the Continent and the wealth of artistic models available to both, and from which both selectively drew. It provides the first appraisal of how Lombard sculpture relates to the emergence of Carolingian attitudes towards monumentality and the continued artistic legacy of late Antiquity. The place of stone sculpture in the analogous socio-political activities of the elite in both Lombard Italy and Anglo-Saxon Mercia between the mid-eighth and early ninth centuries is demonstrated. Networks of exchange that interlinked Rome, the Carolingian territories of Europe and Anglo-Saxon England reveal the means by which objects and ideas flowed, and the power and vision of Rome was translated for the enrichment of royal and aristocratic powers across the early medieval West. The appraisal of Mercian sepulchral sculpture presented here is the first of its kind, combining archaeological, art historical and historical evidence and analysis. It demonstrates the role of monumentality in Mercia and reveals an extraordinary focus and interest within the kingdom on the development of cultic veneration in papal Rome. There is shown to be great regional variety in how such interests were adopted and absorbed by royal, aristocratic and religious society in the kingdom of Mercia during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

Chapter One

Mercia and the Continent in Past and Present Scholarship

Part I
Mercia: problems, absences and questions

For any scholar of the sculptural development of the kingdom of Mercia, the key issues that arise concern the ongoing difficulties of defining and dating Mercian sculpture and placing it within the development of the broader tradition of stone sculpture production in Anglo-Saxon England. Examination of the scholarship on the relationship between Mercian and continental sculpture not only reveals important lines of enquiry that have yet to be fully explored, but also introduces the concept of a Mercian 'style' in sculpture. Analysis of the historical and archaeological evidence relating to the emergence and subsequent supremacy of the Mercian kingdom between the seventh and ninth centuries highlights the important role that stone sculpture plays in our understanding of the archaeology of Mercia. Furthermore, stone sculpture provides evidence for the recognised interaction with Charlemagne's empire in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. This interaction can be contextualised by reviewing the historical significance of Mercia's alignment with Rome and the dominant presence that the Eternal City and the papacy maintained in the activities of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and on the Continent. By determining the current scholarly standpoint on what may be defined as Mercian sculpture and its development in relation to contemporary continental ideas and artistic models, the accepted hypothesis that Mercian sculpture was a passive recipient of continental ideas through direct linear transference can be critiqued. This critique is accomplished by examining the complex nature of the interactions between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, Charlemagne's empire and Rome.

Recognition of a Mercian 'style'

One of the earliest studies to include an attempt at recognising and describing Mercian stone sculpture was undertaken by Thomas Kendrick in his first volume on Anglo-Saxon art, in which a chapter was devoted to what he referred to as 'Early Mercian and

Anglian styles'.[1] As part of a broader analysis of Mercian artwork and its development in relation to illuminated manuscripts, Kendrick argued that Mercian stone sculpture was a direct continuation of the Northumbrian tradition.[2] With an emphasis placed on the conclusions of certain site-specific studies, notably that by Alfred Clapham on the sculpture at Breedon-on-the-Hill in Leicestershire, Kendrick was able to identify broad regional variations in style and made the distinction between the sculpture of Derbyshire, the Midlands and that of the 'eastern Mercian school'.[3] As Part II of this chapter demonstrates, any attempt to reconstruct the boundaries of Mercia at any given time is speculative, and it is perhaps for this reason that so few studies have emerged that deal with the sculptural material of the greater kingdom. The emphasis in modern scholarship has remained on studies of specific sites or small groups of monuments, as demonstrated by Richard Jewell's study of the architectural sculpture at Breedon (cat. nos. 13–23), Peter Harbison's in-depth analysis of the Wirksworth slab, Derbyshire (cat. no. 68) and John Mitchell's recent discussion of the stylistically related figural sculpture at the key Mercian sites of Peterborough (cat. nos. 51 and 52), Lichfield (cat. no. 44) and Breedon.[4] Ahead of publication of planned *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* volumes on the Midlands area of England, many of the counties that made up greater Mercia have yet to undergo the detailed survey necessary for gaining a full understanding of the surviving material in the kingdom as a whole (Map 1.A).[5] Thus, where regional studies of sculpture relating to Mercia exist they are by nature often restricted by the convenient bounds of modern counties, which often create arbitrary groups of monuments. This is typified by early studies relating to the pre-Conquest sculpture of the modern counties of Northamptonshire and Derbyshire, and more recently for the counties of Herefordshire and Cambridgeshire.[6]

Since Kendrick's study in 1938 there have been a number of surveys of Mercian sculpture drawing on material from across the greater kingdom. The seminal study was undertaken by Rosemary Cramp in 1977, and was the first to expand and develop on the regional distinctions and 'schools' of production in Mercian sculpture recognised by

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[1] Clapham, 1928; Kendrick, T., 1938: 164–8.

[2] *op cit*: 169, 205.

[3] Kendrick, T., 1938: 172.

[4] Jewell, 1982 and 1986; Harbison, 1987b; Hawkes, 1995b; Mitchell, 2010 and forthcoming.

[5] In 1999 volume five of the *Corpus* series, covering the county of Lincolnshire, was published and contains sculpture from a number of sites within the Mercian orbit, including Edenham and South Kyme (Everson and Stocker, 1999). The recent publication of volume nine, covering Cheshire and Lancashire includes sculpture from the north-western territories of Mercia, including the remarkable cross-sculpture at Sandbach (Bailey, 2010).

[6] For Northamptonshire, see Allen, 1887–8; Derbyshire, see Routh, 1937; Herefordshire, see Parsons, 1995 and Cambridgeshire, see Henderson, I., 1997.

Kendrick.[7] The body of sculptural material thought to date before A.D. 900 was divided into four clear groups on the basis of stylistic similarity, with an emphasis on the role of architectural sculpture in the development of a Mercian style.[8] The result was a convincing argument for the introduction of new forms, particularly sarcophagi, round cross shafts and figures in architectural settings, from late eighth-century contacts with Eastern art and the Continent.[9] This provided a crucial alternative to Kendrick's opinion that Mercian sculpture was a direct continuation of the Northumbrian tradition. Nonetheless, Cramp's conclusions were a product of applied style analysis in much the same way as Kendrick's had been almost forty years earlier. This approach has dominated subsequent studies of Mercian sculptural material, as can be seen in Stephen Plunkett's thesis on schools of Mercian and West Saxon sculpture and Richard Jewell's important thesis and later article on the collection of carved panels and friezes at Breedon.[10] The great contribution of the art historical approach has been to raise the profile of links between stone sculpture and artwork in other media besides illuminated manuscripts – notably metalwork, textiles and ivories. Subsequent close analysis of ornament type has been successfully utilised to explore the iconography of Mercian stone sculpture, which has provided an invaluable insight into aspects of Anglo-Saxon spirituality and the role of sculpture in communicating it to its audience.[11] Parallels with other media, and particularly those from outside Anglo-Saxon England, further supported the argument that the style of sculpture that developed in Mercia was not merely an adaptation of earlier and existing Anglo-Saxon sculptural traditions. One notable example is the cenotaph at Peterborough, whose form echoes late Antique and Merovingian sarcophagi, but whose ornament uniquely combines late Antique classicising figural styles with Anglian zoomorphic interlacing found in carved ivories and manuscripts, to recreate the prestige of a portable reliquary in a monumental context.[12]

The chronology for Mercian stone sculpture

The continued dominance of style analysis in existing studies is closely linked with the important role it has played in the dating of Mercian stone sculpture, which remains a

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[7] Cramp's 'Schools of Mercian sculpture' was concerned with material believed to date before A.D. 900. Mercian sculpture dated after 900 was identified but discussed elsewhere (Cramp, 1972; 1975).
[8] Cramp, 1977: 192–4.
[9] *op. cit.*, 224.
[10] Plunkett, 1984; Jewell, 1982 and 1986.
[11] See, for example, Bailey, 1988; Hawkes, 2001 and 2007.
[12] Clapham, 1930: 76; Kendrick, 1938: 169–8; Cramp, 1977: 210; Bailey, 1990: 8–11 and 1996b: 9, 58–9; Plunkett, 1998: 208; Mitchell, 2010 and forthcoming.

contentious issue. Cramp's assertion that 'there is no absolute chronological framework for [dating] this sculpture' is a reflection on how few examples of early medieval stone sculpture are recovered from a datable archaeological context.[13] Similarly rare is the opportunity to date directly a monument by linguistics, as there are few instances where inscriptions on stone monuments carry the name of individuals whose lives might be dated.[14] Without direct evidence for production dates, scholars are reliant on the support of written records, broad context dating (using standing fabric of churches), or analogies from other media to provide indirect dates. As Cramp noted, a chronology based on sculptural styles can, in some cases, be supported by the *terminus post quem* offered by the foundation date of churches.[15] Cramp expanded this method of dating to decisively sequence the development of Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture using chronological parameters set by historical events from documentary sources. The result was a series of phases, each with a short date range designed to reflect the lifespans of craftsmen. Within this framework the various schools and variations in style were presented and sequenced. The limitations of this approach rest on the assumption, adopted from Kendrick, that the earliest Mercian sculpture does not appear until the end of King Offa's reign, c. 796.[16] There is a certain convenience in assigning the emergence of Mercian sculpture to the period of most documented contact between Mercia and the Continent, as it provides a suitable context for the import of foreign artistic styles. However, as is explored further in Part II below (pp. 23–27), the time of 'Mercian prosperity' that provides the backdrop for increased dialogue with the Carolingian continent had begun before Offa came to the throne. This could support the notion that Mercian sculpture was an established medium of expression before the documented period of contact with the Continent and that its style did not necessarily result from the passive adoption of continental ideas and motifs.

The first real criticism of the reliance on style analysis for dating purposes was provided by Richard Bailey, who noted that most chronologies were dependent on art history and in particular the creation of style typologies.[17] As with Cramp, Bailey used historical events from documentary evidence to set the parameters used to construct his

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[13] Cramp, 1978: 1. A recent example comes from an excavation in the nave of Lichfield cathedral in Staffordshire during 2003, when a carved panel bearing an angel was recovered from a context indicating it had been buried before the tenth century (Rodwell, 2006).

[14] In the few instances where monuments carry inscriptions, their contribution to a reliable chronology is debated. Notable examples are the Northumbrian standing crosses at Bewcastle in Cumbria and Ruthwell in Dumfriesshire (Page, R., 1960: 36–57 and Cassidy, 1992).

[15] Cramp, 1978: 3.

[16] Cramp, 1977: 194; Kendrick, T., 1938: 64.

[17] Bailey, 1980a: 53.

chronology. But, in addition, Bailey analysed the distribution of form and ornament to illustrate that the location of types of monuments could reveal more about the chronology of their production.[18] This reaction to style analysis has been developed most recently by Phillip Sidebottom who, writing about Viking Age sculpture in Derbyshire, suggested that even a rough chronological framework based on what he termed 'stylistic evolution' should include fundamental reference points before it can be accepted.[19] After conceding that obtaining these fundamental reference points is not always possible, Sidebottom boldly proposed that based on the use of Carolingian minuscule text in English manuscripts, continental influences in Mercian stone sculpture were a product of the tenth century.[20] The subsequent discovery of the Lichfield Angel – a monument at least partly created in response to continental fashions – in an archaeological context pre-dating the tenth century, must prompt a re-evaluation of such a proposal.[21]

The gradual movement away from a purely art historical approach towards a more holistic context for the monuments is best seen in recent studies relating to individual or small groups of sites in Mercia. In particular, the studies of the monuments at Repton in Derbyshire (cat. no. 54) and the recently discovered fragments at South Leverton in Nottinghamshire (cat. no. 63) have demonstrated the merit of applying a truly interdisciplinary approach to the examination of the monuments, the sites and their surrounding landscape context.[22] Such studies endeavour to treat the monuments as archaeological artefacts that can be better understood through the examination of all evidence relating to the site history, including documentary and cartographic sources. The significance of the monuments' form and ornament is thus considered against this backdrop and integrated into the overall understanding of the relationship between sculpture, site and landscape. Undoubtedly the search for schools of production and the examination of the distribution of certain stylistic elements has shaped current understanding of how and where Mercian stone sculpture developed.

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[18] Bailey, 1978: 177–8. Bailey also employed template analysis, whereby the examination of certain designs revealed the likely use of leather or wood templates at central schools of production, to support his arguments about the chronology of Viking Age sculpture in Northumbria (Bailey, 1980a).
[19] Sidebottom, 2000: 215.
[20] Sidebottom, 2000: 215–16.
[21] Rodwell et al., 2008.
[22] For Repton: Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985 and for South Leverton: Everson and Stocker, 2007.

Mercia and the Continent: the relationship visible in the material evidence

Stylistic parallels between the stone sculpture of Anglo-Saxon Mercia and the Continent have long been recognised and emphasised by scholars as evidence for the influence of Carolingian art on Mercian sculptural development (Map 1.B).[23] From the earliest discussions of a Mercian 'style' of sculpture, the conclusion has been that many of the innovative motifs that distinguish the material from that of contemporary Northumbria and Wessex were derived from continental models. Baldwin Brown was among the first to highlight such links, pointing to the parallels between the panel fragments at South Kyme (cat. no. 62) and Italian chancel screens in his 1937 volume on Anglo-Saxon sculpture for his series on the arts in early England.[24] In his appraisal of Anglo-Saxon art, Kendrick dedicated a whole chapter to 'Carolingian influences', but the primary focus was on the impact of such influences on illuminated manuscripts and Northumbrian sculpture, and there was little discussion of influences on Mercian sculpture besides a vague mention of the 'Carolingian mood' that came to an end in Mercia with the Viking invasions of the ninth century.[25] Similarly, Clapham debated at length the influences of continental connections on Anglo-Saxon sculpture of the seventh and eighth centuries, but limited comparison of the Mercian material of the late eighth and early ninth centuries to continental manuscripts and metalwork.[26] He thus claimed that ecclesiastical art in England from the ninth century was a 'direct offshoot of the Carolingian stem'.[27] By 1955, scholarship was more clearly emphasising the role that Carolingian plastic art had played in the development of Mercian sculpture. At this time Lawrence Stone wrote that 'it is to Mercia that we must turn to see the most brilliant and original handling of the new Carolingian themes', and he inferred that the Wirksworth slab in Derbyshire was an inferior copy of a Carolingian work.[28] And in 1965, Peter Kidson and others stated that the sculpture at Breedon was 'distinctly Carolingian in type', yet failed to offer any examples with which to compare it.[29]

It was not until the 1970s with the publication of two articles by Rosemary Cramp that sculpture in Mercia was compared with specific sculpture sites on the

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[23] For the impact of Carolingian contacts on Irish and Pictish sculpture see Harbison, 1987: 105–10; James, 1998: 240–9 and Laing, 2010.
[24] Baldwin Brown, 1937: 182.
[25] Kendrick, 1938: 143–58, 210.
[26] Clapham, 1930: 70–4.
[27] Clapham, 1930: 77.
[28] Stone, 1955: 21.
[29] Kidson *et al*., 1965: 26.

Continent and beyond.[30] Thus, the rounded coils, short tendrils and leaf whorls of the vine-scroll ornament at Breedon were compared with Lombard carvings at Brescia, Este and Milan in northern Italy;[31] the animal-headed terminal on the Cropthorne cross-head, Worcestershire (cat. no. 29) was compared to a frieze at Müstair, Switzerland, and the patterning of the animals' bodies on both the Cropthorne cross-head and the Acton Beauchamp cross-shaft, Herefordshire (cat. no. 1) were compared to carvings at Santa Maria de Quintanilla de las Viñas in northern Spain.[32] Following these two publications, the sculptural links between Mercia and the Continent have been more fully explored. In his 1982 thesis on the Anglo-Saxon carvings at Breedon, Richard Jewell scrutinised the stylistic links between motifs used in Mercian sculptural ornament and those of contemporary Carolingian Europe, and earlier eastern and late Antique traditions.[33] However, Jewell's overall opinion was that the sculpture at Breedon was created in the same 'revivalist' spirit of Carolingian art, which drew on late Antique portable models, and was not, as Kidson had described it, 'distinctly Carolingian in type'.[34] Nonetheless, Jewell drew attention to the close stylistic relationship between certain aspects of the ornament at Breedon and continental sculptural material. From a careful analysis of form and type of foliate design, Jewell demonstrated that the single scroll seen in the Breedon friezes was better connected with Italian sculptural foliage of the eighth and ninth centuries than with the vine-scroll of Northumbrian sculpture.[35] The type of trefoil seen in the Breedon vine-scroll, and also on the cross-shaft at Wroxeter in Shropshire (cat. no. 70), was shown to appear in Northern Italian carving, notably on a fragment in the *Tempietto* at Cividale del Friuli and similarly the leaf-whorl motif, as noted by Cramp, could be found in Milan and Terni, and in the late eighth-century carvings in the church of S. Maria in Cosmedin in Rome.[36] The closest stylistic parallels for the Breedon leaf-whorl were shown to be on a marble cross from S. Giovanni in Monte now in the Museo Civico in Bologna and on the chancel arch at Leprignano.[37] Likewise,

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[30] Cramp, 1976 and 1977. See also Cramp, 1986a: 125–40 for a more general view of the relationship between Anglo-Saxon and Italian sculpture between the early-seventh and tenth centuries.
[31] Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966: pl. XIX, fig. 54; Cramp, 1976: 270, fig. 5f; Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: fig. 161.
[32] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 101; Cramp, 1977: 225, 230; Haseloff, 1980: 24. Cramp also drew attention to the parallels between the Mercian friezes and those further afield, such as at Apa Apollo, Bawit in Egypt (Torp, 1971: 35–41; Cramp, 1976: 270; 1977: 194).
[33] Jewell's thesis formed the basis of his 1986 article, which focused on the stylistic and art historical roots of the motifs used in the Breedon friezes (1986: 95–115).
[34] Kidson, 1965: 26; Jewell, 1982: 244–5. Cramp and Jewell later noted the stylistic links between continental sculpture and the material contemporary in date to Breedon in Wessex at Britford, Wiltshire (Cramp, 1986a: 138; Jewell, 2001: 250).
[35] Jewell, 1982: 74.
[36] Cramp, 1976: 270; Jewell, 1982: 57.
[37] Serra, 1974: fig. 211; Jewell, 1982: 57; 82.

it was demonstrated that the clover leaf motif also derived from eighth-century northern Italian scroll ornament, as it appears at Cividale del Friuli and Brescia.[38] Interestingly, Jewell concluded that these narrow friezes at Breedon were likely to be the only sculpture at the site to be directly influenced by Carolingian models.[39] The inhabited vine-scroll at Breedon appeared to have few parallels in Italian sculpture except for the example of the door jambs at S. Maria Antiqua in Rome, and some possible parallels in Spain, such as Santa Maria de Quintanille de las Viñas in Burgos.[40] Both the peacocks and the hounds which appear in the vine-scroll at Breedon were thought to have drawn on metalwork, but could be compared to those at S. Pedro de la Nave in Zamora, Spain, although stylistically unrelated.[41] In the same way, the doves seen in the vine-scroll at Breedon had analogues in Spain, at Santa Maria de Quintanille de las Viñas, but the drilled-hole feather technique, with which they are textured and which is peculiar to Breedon, is an antique motif found in Italian sculpture, notably on the eighth-century doorjambs of S. Maria Antiqua in Rome.[42] Jewell, in a later study of the Breedon friezes, saw the 'liveliness' and 'square-compartmented' arrangement of the animals in the inhabited vine-scroll to be comparable to a chancel screen in the Palazzo Senatorio, also in Rome.[43]

For Plunkett, the innovation of Mercian architectural sculpture was as a result of the importation of continental sculptors, an argument based on earlier assertions of the primacy of Northumbrian architectural sculpture from the seventh century onwards by Johannes Brøndsted and Alfred Clapham, and followed by Per Jonas Nordhagen and Rosemary Cramp.[44] However, scholars have demonstrated that the non-architectural sculpture of Mercia also benefited from links with the Continent, resulting in innovative arrangements. Crucially, the application to Mercian cross-sculpture and decorative panels of motifs that on the Continent were reserved for architectural sculpture saw a clear move away from Carolingian traditions.[45] As mentioned above, elements such as the animal-headed terminal on the Cropthorne cross-head and the patterning on the Acton Beauchamp cross-shaft animals are only paralleled in continental sculpture on

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[38] Jewell, 1982: 61. Jewell's observation that the clover leaf motif appears on the sculpture at Brescia, is however, unfounded. The clover leaf motif is better illustrated on a ciborium fragment at SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Ferentino (Ramieri, 1983: pl. 9).

[39] Jewell, 1982: 245. Jewell noted that this type of vine-scroll, seen in Mercia and on the Continent, was ultimately derived from eastern traditions (1982: 93; 2001: 249).

[40] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 10; Jewell, 1982: 115.

[41] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pls. 6 and 7; Jewell, 1982: 182, 188.

[42] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 10; Jewell, 1982: 205, 206.

[43] Pani Ermini, 1974b: pl. XI; Jewell, 2001: 249.

[44] Brøndsted, 1924; Clapham, 1930: 64; Nordhagen, 1969: 113–19; Cramp, 1977: 192; Plunkett, 1984: 15.

[45] Bailey, 1996b: 56.

friezes.[46] Parallels can be drawn, in a few instances, between the shared use of motifs for non-architectural purposes in both Mercia and on the Continent. Richard Jewell and Ann Dornier compared the heraldic lion panel at Breedon (cat. no. 18) with similar panels in northern Italy at Pomposa, in north-west Francia at Fiquefleur, and in Bulgaria at Stara Zagora.[47] However, many of the characteristically 'Mercian' design elements, such as apostle iconography, do not seem to draw on contemporary sculptural models, and as Chapters Four and Five discuss, these motifs were appropriated from other media.[48] Nonetheless, scholars have endeavoured to cement the link between Mercian and Lombard (north Italian) sculpture, and in the most recent discussions of the place of Mercian sculpture within Carolingian artistic production, the dominating link to sculptural material remains that with northern Italy.[49] Even where there is no sculptural parallel until the Romanesque period in Lombardy, as with the *pelta* ornament seen on the Breedon friezes (and at Fletton), Jewell extrapolated from a late Antique marble panel at S. Agnese in Rome to suggest that there must have been a pre-Romanesque tradition of using this motif in Italy to have inspired the Breedon carvings.[50] But, as a warning against the dangers of mistaking stylistic similarity for direct influence, Jewell later conceded that the closest parallels for the Mercian *pelta* design were to be found in contemporary manuscripts and that these were the most likely models for the motif.[51]

More recent studies of specific Mercian monuments or groups of monuments have further supported the supposition that the inspiration behind many of the motifs came from an awareness of Carolingian image-making, but more importantly, access to smaller scale plastic artwork such as carved ivories.[52] Notable are the discussions relating to the iconography of the Mercian sculpture at Wirksworth and Sandbach and their links to portable Carolingian manuscripts, metalwork and ivories. [53] As outlined in

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[46] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 101; Cramp, 1977: 225, 230; Haseloff, 1980: 24. Jewell noted that the animal-headed terminal on the Cropthorne cross-head most closely resembled metalwork, such as the Rupertus cross at Bischofshofen, Austria (Jewell, 1982: 124–5; Wilson, 1984: 158).

[47] Jewell, 1982: 252; Filow, 1919: pl. 2; Dornier, 1996: 41, fig. 2. The Frankish lion panel pre-dates that at Breedon, and both the panels at Pomposa and Stara Zagora are later in date (early eleventh-, and tenth-century, respectively).

[48] Mitchell, 2010: 265 and forthcoming.

[49] As discussed in Chapters Four and Five, the drilled eyes seen on many of the Mercian carved figures have been compared to northern Italian sculptural material, such as the altar of Ratchis at Cividale and a small ivory head of a saint from the monastery of S. Vincenzo al Volturno (Mitchell, 1992: 66–76; Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: 366, fig. 233).

[50] Broccoli, 1981: pl. XXV; Jewell, 1982: 175.

[51] Jewell, 1982: 175–6.

[52] Mitchell, 2007, 2010 and forthcoming.

[53] Hawkes, 1995a, 1995b and 2002a. See also Jane Hawkes' examination of the Northumbrian monument at Hovingham, Yorkshire, and its links to portable Carolingian artworks (Hawkes, 1993). Earlier recognition of the links between Mercian sculpture and Carolingian manuscripts had been made by scholars such as Clapham (1930: 231, 232). For an overview, see Jewell, 2001.

the following section, some exploration of the modes by which such artworks, their styles and iconographic concerns were exchanged between Mercia and the Continent has been made by scholars of Mercian sculpture. There is, however, room to explore the nature of the exchange networks that brought Mercian sculptors into contact with continental artistic agendas and, in line with the objectives of this thesis, an opportunity to assess the level of impact these exchange networks had in different regions of the kingdom.

Modes of exchange

The stylistic links that scholars have drawn between Mercian and continental sculpture have been explained within the context of perceived and known modes of exchange between the two regions. These modes of exchange in part rely on contemporary documentary evidence for the dialogue that existed between Mercia and the Continent in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, but are largely inferred from the artistic material itself and lack substantiation. Thus, in their discussion of the composition of the horse and rider on one face of the Repton Stone, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle commented that the late Antique ivories and cameos, which provided the likely models for its design, were 'easily transported and reached England throughout the Anglo-Saxon period' but did not discuss the mechanisms behind this.[54] In a similar fashion, Stone had earlier remarked in relation to Mercian sculpture that, 'as usual… the new artistic impulse reached the sculptor through the medium of metalwork and ivory carvings', but did not expand on how this might have occurred.[55] As well as proposing that many of the foliate elements in the Breedon vine-scroll had exotic origins beyond late Antique and Lombard Italy, in the Near East and Egypt, Jewell suggested two possible routes by which these motifs had entered the Mercian repertoire. He proposed that either the models were provided by pattern books from Syrian or Alexandrian workshops or that there were colonies of craftsmen from the Christian East operating in western Europe, especially Italy, producing models in metalwork and ivories that were then circulated.[56] Both these theories follow on from Kitzinger's conclusions about the eastern origins for the vine-scroll ornament of Northumbrian sculpture that, like Clapham and Brøndsted, pointed to the introduction of eastern craftsmen.[57] The close relationship with portable media that Jewell consistently referred to in relation to the

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[54] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 256–7.
[55] Stone, 1955: 22.
[56] Jewell, 1982: 68–9.
[57] Brøndsted, 1924; Clapham, 1930: 64; Kitzinger, 1936: 63. For discussion of the impact of Alexandrian workshops on the production of early Christian and Byzantine ivories, see Morey, 1941: 41–60.

sculpture at Breedon demonstrated that objects such as textiles, manuscripts, ivories and metalwork were an important source of inspiration.[58] Unfortunately, despite his careful analysis, Jewell was unable to offer any evidence in support of his theories for the exchange of these objects and ideas besides stylistic comparison. Plunkett's argument that continental parallels in Mercian sculpture were a result of the importation of continental sculptors was similarly unsupported but remained dominant.[59]

For Richard Bailey, the highly selective and limited adoption of Carolingian and eastern motifs in Mercian sculpture was evidence that the sculptors were not continental, but that they had access to models that had made their way into Mercia through diplomatic connections, pilgrimage to the East or intermediate sites such as Rome.[60] And interestingly, Cramp had earlier put forward a theory for the transmission of certain eastern foliate motifs into Mercia through portable artworks, based on Joseph Cincik's supposition that among Charlemagne's gifts of Avar loot to Offa were textiles bearing foliate designs.[61] Nonetheless, in a more recent discussion of the development of new carving techniques employed in Mercian sculpture, Cramp made a case for the 'probable importation of craftsmen to teach new skills'.[62] The overall impression provided by previous scholarship on the modes of exchange by which Mercian sculptors familiarised themselves with late Antique and contemporary styles is both hazy and inconsistent. Whilst it is apparent that Mercian artists and patrons had access to non-Insular models, the mechanisms by which these models were transmitted remain unclear. Consequently, the question is still whether transmission was facilitated by the movement of people, such as pilgrims and craftsmen to and from centres like Rome and Charlemagne's court, or through the circulation of portable objects that made their way to Mercia through the processes of gift exchange and trade, or indeed as a result of a combination of both. In comparison to the emphasis placed on links evident from style analysis, the important social mechanisms that underpin the concept of exchange and

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[58] See for example Jewell's discussion of the close stylistic parallels between the animals and figures of the Breedon inhabited vine-scroll and Egyptian textiles, contemporary continental ivories and manuscripts (1982: 109–24). Indeed, Jewell argued that architectural sculptural models, such as the nearest and near-contemporary developments in Spain were of no interest to Anglo-Saxon sculptors (1982: 152).

[59] Plunkett, 1984: 15.

[60] 1996b: 54, 116–17. Mitchell also noted the part played by pilgrims, both lay and ecclesiastical, and mercantile activity, which would have led many Anglo-Saxons to Rome (forthcoming).

[61] Cincik, 1958: 52–5; Stenton, 1971: 221; Cramp, 1976: 271; Cramp, 1977: 206; Whitelock, 1979: 849.

[62] Rodwell et al., 2008: 75. The movement of craftsmen in the early part of the eighth century is testified in written sources by the account relating to the Pictish king Nechtan, who is said to have acquired Anglo-Saxon craftsman to help construct a church 'after the Roman manner' (Bede, HE., v. 21; Dodwell, 1982: 63).

transmission have largely been ignored in discussions of the development of Mercian sculpture.

Motivations

Although scholars have, thus far, failed to fully engage with the mechanisms behind the transmission of artistic motifs into the Mercian sculptural repertoire, discussion has considered the reasons behind the adoption of certain themes and styles, and the socio-political climate in Mercia within which it occurred. The dominant argument has been that Mercian sculpture during the late eighth and early ninth centuries was part of a larger programme of investment and display connected to an underlying political agenda. Kendrick's description of Offa (d. 796) as a 'continentally minded king' pointed to Offa's relationship with Charlemagne and the relationships he fostered between Mercian institutions and the Carolingian courts as a driving force behind the transmission of artistic styles between the two regions.[63] Jane Hawkes has been able to demonstrate that certain iconographical concerns in Mercian sculpture may be understood within the context of this dialogue and specific, documented events. In her examination of the Sandbach crosses in Cheshire, Hawkes argued that the Transfiguration and *Traditio Legis cum Clavis* themes were among figural scenes on the monuments that reflected the continuing aspirations of the Mercian Church in the years after Lichfield lost its archiepiscopal status.[64] The period surrounding Lichfield's elevation saw numerous diplomatic visitors arrive in Mercia from Carolingian courts, often accompanied by papal envoys, and this activity has been seen as the method by which access was established to contemporary continental material and knowledge of Carolingian attitudes towards image production was transmitted.[65] Furthermore, Hawkes argued that the Transfiguration and *Traditio Legis cum Clavis* scenes at Sandbach were a deliberate expression of prestigious links with Carolingian royal centres on the Continent, such as Müstair in Switzerland, designed to glorify the power and authority of the Mercian Church.[66]

Cramp understood the rapport between Mercian sculpture and continental art as springing from Offa's desire to emulate Charlemagne's successful revival and patronage

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[63] Kendrick, T., 1938: 165.
[64] Hawkes, 1995a: 213–20, 2001: 245 and 2002a: 143–5; Story, 2002: 175–6.
[65] Hawkes, 2001: 245. For an overview of the diplomatic activity during this period and the documentary sources, see Whitelock, 1979: 22, 858–62;
[66] Hawkes, 2002a: 144–5.

of learning and artistic production in his courts.[67] Additionally, the relationship Offa cultivated with the papacy in Rome, as outlined below (pp. 45–48), can be seen to mirror Charlemagne's alliance with Rome following his union of the Lombard kingdoms of northern Italy with the rest of the Frankish territories.[68] Here too, Offa's motivations were clearly discerned by Cramp. The dialogue that existed between Offa and the papacy resulted in Mercia receiving the only legatine mission sent to England and culminated in the elevation of Lichfield; a defiant act against the archiepiscopacy of Canterbury to raise the profile of Mercia within Carolingian Europe.[69] Cramp argued that part of the propaganda for this campaign was the creation of a liturgical focus at Lichfield through the embellishment of an existing shrine, possibly St. Chad's, with a monumental carved stone encasement, surviving today in the extant fragments discussed in detail in Chapters Four and Five.[70] Plunkett argued that the evidence for this programme of propaganda can be seen elsewhere, at Castor and Breedon where the remains of similar carved stone monuments survive.[71]

The dominance of apostle imagery in Mercian sculpture at sites such as Castor (cat. no. 26) and Breedon has been understood to express similar motivations. James Lang and Jane Hawkes recognised that the use of apostles invoked the contemporary papal policy of spreading the faith and strengthening the position of the Church of Rome in western Europe, and that the inclusion of this iconography was a way for the Mercian Church to demonstrate that its position was in keeping with current interests.[72] Additionally, the use of apostle iconography may well have been motivated by privileges granted by Pope Hadrian in the late eighth century in relation to Mercian monasteries dedicated to St. Peter.[73] Thus, John Mitchell has recently stated that whilst the details of Offa's initiative to promote links with Charlemagne and Rome, which were continued by his successor Coenwulf (796–821), have not been fully explored, the activity was intended to ensure 'the prosperity and security of the kingdom and the salvation of the souls of its benefactors'.[74] This activity might have been motivated by a need to assert control over those Mercian territories that were not secure, as Mitchell

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[67] Cramp, 1976: 270 and 1986a: 138; Lang, 1999: 281; Mitchell, 2007: 282–3. See Gameson, 1995: 247 for the important role of patronage in the promotion and development of Anglo-Saxon art.
[68] Cramp, 1986a: 138.
[69] Levison, 1946: 16; Stenton, 1971: 225–30; Whitelock, 1979: 836–40; Cramp, 1986a: 138; Cramp in Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 74.
[70] Cramp in Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 74.
[71] Plunkett, 1998: 225; Cramp in Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 74.
[72] Krautheimer, 1980: 128–37, 256–7; Noble, 1984: 323–4; Lang, 1999: 281–2; Hawkes, 2002b: 345; Mitchell, forthcoming.
[73] Levison, 1946: 30; Cramp, 1986a: 138.
[74] Mitchell, 2007: 283.

has suggested, or by a desire to maintain the position that Offa had enjoyed as the only western ruler to be addressed by Charlemagne as his equal.[75] These potential motivations are considered in more detail in Chapter Five, where the adoption and adaptation of classicising styles in the sepulchral sculpture of Mercia are shown to reflect a conscious alignment with both the papal agendas of Rome and the imperial aspirations of Charlemagne's court.

Critique of past approaches and current assumptions

The impression provided by previous scholarship is that the style of Mercian sculpture in the late eighth and early ninth centuries is not *solely* derived from contemporary continental sculpture, but where stylistic links can be found, they predominantly point to a familiarity with the architectural sculpture of the Lombards in northern Italy, largely from the period immediately preceding and following Charlemagne's takeover in 774.[76] From Cramp and Jewell's analysis of the vine-scroll ornament at Breedon, it is clear that certain foliate motifs used in the architectural sculpture of Lombard Italy are very closely comparable and might have provided the inspiration for their use in Mercia within the architectural setting of friezes at sites such as Breedon. And whilst it has been shown that such motifs in both Mercia and Lombard Italy largely drew on earlier eastern models, their parallel use in an architectural setting in the late eighth and early ninth centuries would appear to support the existence of an artistic dialogue between the two regions. However, beyond Breedon and the few key sites elsewhere in Mercia that preserve comparable architectural pieces, there has been little discussion of the extent of Lombard sculptural inspiration in the wider kingdom. Whilst it is assumed that this is because the Lombards did not have a strong tradition of non-architectural stone sculpture, scholars have yet to explore the similarities and divergences in the motivation behind the production of monumental sculpture in the two regions. The parallel use of particular motifs and forms does not necessarily reflect a common attitude to the role of stone sculpture in monumental expression. What previous scholarship has not addressed is how the small proportion of motifs that are shared between northern Italy and Mercia relates to the wider Lombard repertoire. This would provide a much clearer picture of the nature of Mercian motif-appropriation, and could offer a means of establishing how dependent Mercian sculptors were on contemporary Lombard stone sculpture.

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[75] Levison, 1946: 112; Mitchell, 2007: 287.
[76] Cramp, 1976: 270; Jewell, 1982: 74, 252; Jewell, 2001: 249.

Scholarship has thus far neglected to contextualise the adoption of those few Lombard motifs within Mercian stone sculpture production, which shows little of the standardization in ornament or the restriction of form seen in the material of northern Italy. In line with the research aim of reassessing the artistic sources of inspiration for Mercian sculptors, Chapters Three and Four will address the important unanswered questions of if and why Mercian sculptors were looking to Lombard Italy for inspiration.

The influence of other sources, such as contemporary and late Antique portable objects, and late Antique monumental art such as sculpture and mosaics has been shown to have contributed to the variety seen in Mercian sculpture.[77] But, as with the discussion of the connection to Lombard sculpture, scholars have not fully explored the impact across the breadth of Mercian sculpture, and focus has remained on well-documented sites such as Breedon, Lichfield and the Peterborough group. There has been no assessment of how extensive the impact of continental connections was on the sculpture of the Mercian hinterland, although it is often assumed that all Mercian sculpture benefited from contact with Carolingian art. Where other sites have been mentioned, notably Acton Beauchamp, Cropthorne and the cross-sculpture of the Peak District, there has been little examination of the modes by which such apparent outliers, with limited proximity to known monastic colonies or the Mercian heartland, accessed foreign models. This presents a clear avenue for further exploration into the nature of exchange and the motivations behind it, and is thus a key objective of this thesis, as outlined in the Introduction (pp. 1–4).

Scholars have signalled the role of Rome in the development of Mercian stone sculpture; in terms of motivation influenced by papal relations and current iconographic trends, and as a focus in the emulation of Charlemagne's artistic revival, as well as providing access to late Antique art forms.[78] The use of certain iconographical motifs and late Antique forms would suggest a desire in Mercia to reflect links with Rome, and there is evidence to suppose that the Mercians accessed models directly from late Antique centres such as Rome and Ravenna rather than through the intermediary courts of Charlemagne.[79] What has not been fully examined are the effects that travel to and correspondence with Rome had on the Mercians' exposure to other contemporary art. So, for example, did land-travel by pilgrims facilitate access to the stone sculpture and

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[77] Jewell, 1982, 1986 and 2001; Plunkett, 1984; Cramp, 1977; Mitchell, forthcoming.

[78] Hawkes, 1995a, 2002a.

[79] For example, Hawkes demonstrated that the iconographic programme of the Wirksworth slab is quite distinct from contemporary developments on the Continent (1995b: 250).

monumental stucco at stop-over sites in Lombard Italy? Little has been explored of the relationship between the location of sites with sculptural motifs paralleling those in Mercia and known communication routes for pilgrims, diplomatic envoys and traders. Did focus on Rome necessarily reduce travel and/or trade to other areas of sculptural production in the Christian West, such as Visigothic Spain, and so reduce the transmission of certain styles? As yet, it has not been ascertained as to whether the stylistic divergences between Mercian sculpture and material from the fringes of the Carolingian Empire such as Visigothic Spain and modern Austria might be explained by political and religious focus elsewhere. As outlined below (pp. 45–8), written sources emphasise the dominant presence of Rome, its imperial past and the contemporary authority of its papacy within the artistic outlooks of both Mercia and the Carolingian empire. Past approaches have predominantly been concerned with defining the art historical provenance of the motifs seen in Mercian sculpture, with a view to confirming the relationship between Mercian and Lombard sculpture.[80] As mentioned above, only recently, and for a limited number of sites, has the iconographical significance of the motifs and the potential motivations behind their use been explored. Thus, iconographic discussions of the Wirksworth slab in Derbyshire and the Lichfield Angel have revealed their underlying emphasis on the humility, obedience and purity of the Virgin.[81] In both instances, these virtues have been shown to be particularly appropriate to the funerary monuments on which they are symbolised. The limitations of previous scholarship in this area derive from a lack of contextual evidence for the transmission of motifs and limited exploration of how portable objects fed into the sculptural milieu of Mercia. Nonetheless, the evidence would suggest that the majority of motifs were not adopted from contemporary stone sculpture in Lombard Italy or elsewhere, but from a range of small scale artworks, including ivories, metalwork and manuscripts, as well as large artworks such as mosaics and carved stucco.

Part II

A Mercian context for a sculptural tradition?

Written evidence and historical sources

Undoubtedly, the greatest hindrance to any reconstruction of Mercian history is the lack of written material to have survived from within the kingdom and, as Nicholas Brooks

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[80] Jewell, 1982, 1986; Plunkett, 1984; Dornier, 1996; Mitchell, 2010.
[81] Hawkes, 1995a and b, 2001, 2002a, 2007; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008.

noted, it is on information from the kingdom's neighbours that we must rely.[82] In Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, an early eighth-century narrative describing activities relating to the kingdom of Northumbria, we find preserved the most illustrative insight into Mercian history. Bede stated that the people known as the Mercians, together with the East and Middle Angles and the Northumbrians, had originally arrived into Britain from an area on the Continent between the kingdoms of the Jutes and the Saxons, called *Angulus*.[83] Bede also provided information on where the Mercians of his day were located. In an account relating to a short-lived takeover by the Northumbrian king Oswiu (d. 670) Bede described how the kingdom of Mercia was divided by the river Trent into two parts: the northern part consisting of 7,000 *hides* of land and the southern part 5,000 *hides*.[84] In the period when he wrote his narrative, Bede stated that the kingdom of Mercia, under the leadership of king Æthelbald, exerted a power over all the kingdoms south of the river Humber to the extent that they were subject to him.[85]

Bede's agenda, however, was to construct a narrative centred on the religious virtue of specific Northumbrian individuals, and it is perhaps unsurprising that his description of the Mercians was influenced by their relatively late conversion to Christianity and their perceived pagan behaviour beforehand. And so, the impression given by Bede of Penda, the last pagan king of Mercia (d. 654), is one of a warlord who undertook several violent attacks against the Christian kings of the surrounding kingdoms, not only Northumbria but also East Anglia and the West Saxons.[86] Nonetheless, this implies that Penda had the resources and power to engage in long distance attacks, presumably without neighbourly support.[87] Bede also indicated that it was during Penda's reign, when he placed his son Peada in control of the Middle Angles, that Mercian control began to expand outside the immediate vicinity of the river Trent to include neighbouring territories.[88]

Bede's account of Mercian activity in the seventh and early eighth centuries is corroborated by entries in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a ninth-century compilation of

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[82] Brooks, 1989: 160. For discussion of how to reconcile historical sources and archaeological evidence, see Campbell, 2011.
[83] *HE* i. 15. All references to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* will be cited as *HE* and given by book and chapter. References are taken from Colgrave and Mynors, 1969.
[84] *HE* iii. 24. *Hides* were the basic unit of assessment in Anglo-Saxon England and are thought to have been equivalent to the land farmed by and supporting one peasant family (Faith, 2001: 238).
[85] *HE* v. 23. For the role of the River Humber as a 'permeable' boundary between Mercia and Northumbria, see Rollason, 2003: 20–1 and Higham, 2006: 391–417.
[86] *HE* ii. 20; iii. 7, 9, 17, 18.
[87] According to Bede, Penda supported Cadwallon king of Gwynedd in his campaign against Northumbria, which resulted in the death of the Christian king Edwin (*HE* ii. 20).
[88] *HE* iii. 21.

annals, thought to have drawn on other sources as well as Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. The *Chronicle* is similar to Bede's narrative in the impression it presents of Mercian behaviour, as the majority of the entries in the annals relate to Mercia battles (Map 1.C). The advantage of the *Chronicle* as a source is that it provides specific dates for events that in Bede often have to be inferred from an assumed start date for a particular king's reign. So, for example, from the *Chronicle* we learn that in 628 Penda fought the West Saxons Cynegils and Cwichelm at Cirencester in Gloucestershire, and that in 776 the Mercians fought the people of Kent at Otford.[89] As Map 1.C shows, the *Chronicle* also names sites at which two Mercian kings were buried: Ceolred (d. 716) at Lichfield in Staffordshire and Æthelbald (d. 757) at Repton in Derbyshire.[90] From these entries it is possible to begin locating key secular and ecclesiastical sites within the Mercian kingdom.

Charters relating to the transference of land ownership constitute the largest body of available written material by which other major and minor sites associated with Mercia might be identified. Through an analysis of charter site distribution over the period c. 625 to c. 876, and the titles of the individuals involved in issuing them, it is possible to gain some idea of the development of Mercian land control. Between 625 and 675 a reflection of territorial expansion resulting from the war-like behaviour of the early Mercian kings as described by Bede and in the *Chronicle*, might be expected. The distribution of spurious and authentic charter sites in Map 1.D points to the strategies undertaken for securing and increasing Mercian land control. Firstly, the acquisition of land for the newly founded monastery at Peterborough in Middle Anglia that had come under Mercian control as mentioned above.[91] Whilst few pre-Viking charters survive from Peterborough, the extent of the preserved documentation that ended up at the monastery attests to the importance of the origin legends that surround it, and which were likely created in the eleventh century.[92] Land appears to not only have been granted from within Middle Anglia, but also from land to the west of Bede's Mercian heartland in the Trent valley, now in modern Shropshire, which would imply that King Wulfhere, Peada's successor, had authority over that territory at the time of issuing the

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[89] Whitelock, 1979: 150, 165.
[90] *op. cit.*, 158, 163.
[91] There are over forty charters relating to the foundation of Peterborough that have now been identified as post-Conquest forgeries. These are not included in Map 1.4. For the list of forgeries, see Hart, 1966.
[92] For a comprehensive analysis of the charters relating to Peterborough and the evidence for the federation of sites associated with it, see Kelly, 2009, especially pp. 67–99.

charters.[93] Two possibly spurious seventh-century charters granting land by the Thames to Chertsey in Surrey (not shown on the map) were issued by Frithuwold, who is titled as sub-king of Wulfhere.[94] This suggests that even at this early date the extent of the Mercian king's authority had reached far to the south of what we might recognise as the kingdom of Mercia.

In a similar fashion, the monastic foundation at Breedon in Leicestershire, which is central in the region ascribed by Bede to the Mercians, was endowed with land far to the east and north in Lincolnshire. Only one other charter from this early period relates to a site in the area of Bede's kingdom of Mercia. This is at Hanbury, Staffordshire, where land in c. 657–674 was granted to Abbot Colman by Wulfhere.[95] The bishop of Lichfield, whose episcopal see had recently been created to serve the Mercians, was granted land by Wulfhere in c. 669–672 to found a monastery at Barrow-upon-Humber in northern Lincolnshire.[96] Two foundation charters, issued c. 674–704, relating to Withington in Buckinghamshire and Wealdstone Brook in Middlesex were granted by Ethelred king of the Mercians with Oshere, who is titled under-king implying that despite ruling his own kingdom of the Hwicce he was subservient to Ethelred and Mercia.[97]

Maps 1.E and 1.F illustrate how over the subsequent hundred-year period between 676 and 775 the major Mercian monastic institutions were strengthened, with the survival of only three charters relating to the foundation of new minor institutions.[98] During this period the charters attest to the growth in land control of the large monasteries at Worcester, Evesham, Gloucester and Malmesbury, as well as at Much Wenlock and Fladbury. Only three charters from this period were issued without the consent of a Mercian king, and from the remainder, in all but two examples any other king named on the charter is described as an under-king or sub-king. Of particular interest in this period is the appearance of the title 'king not only of Mercia but all the South Angles' associated with two charters issued by king Æthelbald (d. 757), one relating to the foundation of a minster at Kidderminster, Worcestershire in 736, and the other for the foundation of a monastery at Wootton Wawen, Warwickshire c. 718–

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[93] Certainly at this time to the south, the area of modern day Herefordshire, which broadly equates to the territory of the Magonsaete people, was ruled by Merewalh who is thought to be another of Penda's sons (Whitelock, 1979:165; Powicke and Fryde, 1961: 15; Stenton, 1971: 47).

[94] Whitelock, 1979: 440; eSawyer, no. 69. For the history of early medieval Surrey and the charters relating to Chertsey, see Hart, 1966: 117–22; Blair, 1989: 97–107 and 1991: 7, 95 and 103.

[95] Finberg, 1972: 86.

[96] Hart, 1966: 98.

[97] Finberg, 1972: 32.

[98] It is important to note that the monastic institutions of western Mercia were left relatively unscathed by the Viking incursions of the ninth century, which has left an imbalance in the extant body of charters.

737.[99] These provide the documentary evidence to corroborate Bede's observation that the Mercian kings in the eighth century ruled over southern England.

During this and the following hundred-year period a new development can be seen in Mercian land control in the increased number of charters granting land to lay people (Maps 1.F, 1.G and 1.H). This coincides with the gradual decrease in the number of charters relating to new foundations, so that between c. 826 and c. 875 there are no surviving charters issued for this purpose (Map 1.H). This could be interpreted as a mechanism for reinforcing secular authority as the number of subservient territories outside the Mercian administrative centre of the Trent Valley increased. Maps 1.G and 1.H show that by the mid-eighth century Mercian charters were being issued in relation to the archbishopric at Canterbury and the trading port in London. As early as 734, king Æthelbald granted the remission of tolls for the church at Rochester on one ship at London.[100] Whilst the surviving body of charters provides only a fragmentary picture of Mercian land control, the distribution of charters issued in the name of Mercian kings implies that their authority extended beyond the limits of the geographical area ascribed by Bede to the kingdom of Mercia.

The Meaning of Mercia

Mercia (OE *Mierce*) takes its name from the Old English word *mearc* meaning boundary or border.[101] That both Bede and the *Chronicle* only use this name and do not make reference to any other earlier territorial names would suggest that Mercia was the original and only title for both the kingdom itself and the people who styled themselves as 'Mercian'. Whilst it is clear that the name refers to a boundary or border, there is no evidence in the available documentary sources to identify which border was meant. There are two possibilities: the first is that the border or boundary was a physical one, and perhaps a natural feature that might be recognised in the landscape; and the second is that it refers to a social boundary between two or more groups of people.

On the basis of Bede's description it can be assumed that the group of Angles that settled and formed Mercia moved into the region from or in conjunction with those that settled East Anglia and the kingdom of the Middle Angles to the east of Mercia.[102]

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[99] Finberg, 1972: 91; Hart, 1975: 75. For the rise of minster foundations in western Mercia in the seventh and eighth centuries, and the role of minsters in the development of the parochial system, see Blair, 1985: 104–42; Franklin, 1985: 69–88; Blair, 1988: 35–58 and Blair, 1992: 226–66.
[100] Whitelock, 1979: 451.
[101] Clark, 1931: 199.
[102] Davies, 1977: 22.

If we were to look for evidence of a suitable natural barrier to which the name Mercia referred, it would not therefore be unrealistic to focus on the western limit of the area of Anglian settlement. For Stenton, the western boundary was the belt of high land between Cannock Chase, an area of lowland heathland in Staffordshire, and the Forest of Arden which covered much of Warwickshire north of the river Avon (discussed further below).[103] However, as Gelling has highlighted, in comparison with the Weald of Kent and Sussex this potential boundary was likely to offer little obstacle to the penetration and settlement of the region west of it by the Angles.[104]

If however, it is considered that Mercia referred not to a physical barrier but a social boundary between the Angles that became known as the Mercians and neighbouring groups of peoples, it is most likely to the west that they might be located. Despite Bede's account of hostilities between the Mercians and the Northumbrians, Hunter Blair's suggestion that Mercia was named after a boundary between the two kingdoms has been discounted due to a lack of positive evidence.[105] Gelling proposed that the Mercians were named for bordering the Angles to the east in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.[106] Despite basing this argument on archaeological evidence, Gelling's assertion, also maintained by Bassett, that the Mercians were sufficiently different from the 'mass of pagan Angles' to the east does not stand up to scrutiny.[107] Whilst there are comparatively few known furnished cemeteries in the Trent valley, this is just as likely to be as a result of accident and survival and does not provide conclusive evidence for the use of a burial rite identifiably distinct from neighbouring Anglian territories. It is therefore proposed that the Mercians were named on account of their proximity to the extant British territories to the west, but not as Stenton suggested because they were considered the enemy, but because they were simply recognised by the migrant Angles as coming from different cultural traditions.[108] As an extension of this idea, Higham has suggested that by not naming themselves Western Angles, the Mercians were demonstrating sensitivity to neighbouring British kings and plausibly any surviving Christian presence encountered.[109] What this might also imply is that during the sixth and seventh centuries, being Mercian was less likely to do with identifying oneself with a distinct region, and more about marking an allegiance to a

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[103] Stenton, 1971: 40.
[104] Gelling, 1989: 185.
[105] Hunter Blair, 1948: 112–26; Brooks, 1989: 162.
[106] Gelling, 1992: 79.
[107] Bassett, 2000: 114.
[108] Stenton, 1971: 40.
[109] Higham, 1992: 11.

particular ruling kin group. As the discussion in Chapter Five demonstrates (pp. 152–7), disputes between distant branches of the Mercian royal line, each vying for control and legitimacy of rule, persisted into the ninth century and found expression in monumental sepulchral sculpture.

What is clear is that the kingdom of Mercia, at least by Bede's day, occupied a specific area in the vicinity of the river Trent; with the political centralisation manifest in the charters most likely occurring through a focus on central figures as opposed to central places. Certainly by the time the rulers styled themselves as 'king of Mercia' in the charters, it can be assumed that the title was a reference to a political entity rather than the original kingdom of Mercia, whose physical borders their authority evidently had extended beyond. And so, in the example of Peada ruling the Middle Angles, it would not be unfounded to suppose that, as a son of Penda, he would have recognised himself as a Mercian despite living and operating outside the boundaries of the kingdom of Mercia. This might account for the many territories surrounding Mercia that retained their original name despite, from the evidence of the charters, submitting to the authority of a Mercian king. Certainly, this can be seen in the case of the Hwicce, who from the available documentary sources can be seen to have retained their name well into the tenth century.[110] Keynes has argued that it was through a unique exercising of control, whereby local rulers maintained their status, that the Mercian kings expanded their authority over surrounding territories.[111]

The *Tribal Hidage*

When considering the territories over which the Mercian heartland might have exercised control to create the hegemony described by Bede, scholars can draw on the *Tribal Hidage* – a document of uncertain date and provenance that lists over thirty kingdoms and territories south of the river Humber, each with an assessment in *hides*. The *Tribal Hidage* has been previously regarded as an eighth-century tribute list, and as the kingdom of Mercia is first on the list and, as Featherstone described it 'at the centre of the world' mapped out by it, most scholars consider it to be of Mercian creation.[112] Various attempts have been made to locate and map the territories listed in the *Tribal Hidage* despite the lack of known boundaries and the number of territories that remain

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[110] Featherstone, 2001: 31.
[111] Keynes, 2005: 10.
[112] Featherstone, 2001: 27. Brooks argued that the *Tribal Hidage* was more likely to have been a Northumbrian document as he could not envisage a medieval king imposing tribute on his own kingdom, i.e. Mercia (1989: 159).

unidentified.[113] These maps broadly agree with each other, largely because they all assume that the area called 'the first lands of Mercia' in the *Tribal Hidage* equates to the land either side of the river Trent that Bede described as the kingdom of Mercia.[114] Hart's map (Map 1.I), despite criticism from Brooks for boldly including conjectural boundaries, provides a reasonable estimate of how Mercia might have been situated within its neighbouring territories.[115]

To the north are the territories of the Pecsæte, Elmet, Hatfield and Lindsey. To the west are the Wreconsæte, Magonsæte and the Hwicce. To the south and east are a host of small groups, which Hart represented as a conglomeration forming the Middle Angles. That the *Tribal Hidage* does not provide explicit boundaries for the distinct communities it lists implies that the early political development of the region was centred on social units whose association with each other was perhaps of more importance and relevance than the designation of physical territory. It is also plausible that the designation of territory by static borders was impractical in the centuries when there would have been continual competition between rulers for land control, as evidenced in Bede's account of Penda's hostile behaviour to his neighbours. When viewed in light of the charter evidence, the *Tribal Hidage* can be interpreted as a manifestation of the Mercian kings' expansionist policies in the decades leading up to its production. Indeed, Hart considered that the document 'vividly illustrates the power exercised by the Mercian overlords'.[116] Nonetheless, the *Tribal Hidage* corroborates the suggestion made above, that even by the eighth century when the charters show that the Mercian kings had authority over many of the territories south of the river Humber, these territories were, in name at least, separate components of the physical kingdom of Mercia.

If the *Tribal Hidage* was made at the request of an eighth-century Mercian king, there are two likely candidates. The first is Æthelbald who, as discussed, was the first Mercian king to style himself in charters as 'king of the south English', and the second candidate is Offa (757–796). Both these kings have been the focus of the debate surrounding the rise and maintenance of the Mercian hegemony described by Bede and implied by the *Tribal Hidage* and the charter evidence. That the position of scholarship

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[113] Davies and Vierck, 1974: 223–93; Hill, 1981: map 136; Hooke, 1986: 1–45.
[114] There is some discrepancy between Bede's 12,000 hide assessment of the North and South Mercians and the *Tribal Hidage*'s 30,000 hide assessment. Whilst this might be indicative of two different modes of assessment it is also possible, as Brooks has highlighted, that Bede's North and South Mercians occupied a smaller territory than that considered by the *Tribal Hidage* as the original Mercia (1989: 161).
[115] Brooks, 1989: 160.
[116] Hart, 1977: 44.

has changed in its understanding of the Mercian hegemony can be demonstrated through a comparison of the work of two historians: Sir Frank Stenton, who completed his important volume on Anglo-Saxon England in 1943, and Simon Keynes who in 2005 wrote an article re-assessing the notion of a Mercian supremacy. For Stenton, the success of the Mercians was their ultimate achievement in uniting the various territories south of the river Humber into what he envisaged as a single state.[117] This argument hinged on a number of charters in which Offa was styled 'king of England', and 'king of all parts of England', which suggested that by the eighth century the Mercian kings had authority over all the English peoples.[118] It was from this view-point that Stenton examined the evidence for Mercian expansion and control.

However, as Keynes noted, Stenton's argument was based on the validity of the charters, which were later proven by Sawyer to be tenth-century fabrications created to enhance the character of Offa.[119] For Keynes, even Æthelbald's use of the title 'king of the south English' in charters was not evidence that the territories outside Mercia were subject to him.[120] Keynes shrewdly observed that the lack of documentary evidence for Mercia meant that there was no way of ascertaining whether such titles reflected political reality or whether they had been invented by the king or another party.[121] In discounting Stenton's charter evidence, Keynes also suggested that by only ever styling himself as 'king of Mercia', Offa was motivated to expand Mercian control but not intent on creating a unified kingdom of England. In particular, Keynes argued that the political vision of both Æthelbald and Offa primarily involved gaining and retaining control of the emporium at London, which was achieved by 734. What the work of both Stenton and Keynes demonstrated was the emphasis that is continually placed on the extant documentary sources by scholars deciphering the history of Mercia, even when these sources can only offer a biased perspective. Keynes' suggestion that scholars should begin to recognise that the Mercian hegemony was something peculiar in itself points to a possible line of future enquiry.[122] What both studies allude to, but do not fully incorporate, is the evidence available from the archaeological record, an invaluable source given the fragmentary written record for the kingdom of Mercia.

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[117] Stenton, 1971: 40.
[118] The charters in question can be found in Sawyer, 1968: nos. 89, 110 and 111. For discussion of what, by the eighth century, constituted the 'England' of Bede's *Historia*, see John, 1966: 21, 44, 52–4, 58; Wormald, 1983: 105, 114, 119 and Fanning, 1991: 1–26.
[119] Keynes, 2005: 6; Sawyer, 1968: 99–100.
[120] Keynes, 2005: 8.
[121] *ibid.*: 3.
[122] *ibid.*: 20.

Locating the Mercian heartland: evidence from the material and landscape records

As presented in the Introduction, a primary objective of this thesis is to investigate how continental influence can be recognised in the sculpture of wider Mercia, and whether the degrees of influence correlate to the type and location of sites at which it is found. In order to reach this objective, it is necessary to establish the nature of the kingdom of Mercia and ascertain whether an identifiable 'heartland' existed. Part One of this chapter showed there to be a general consensus amongst scholars that the stone sculpture of Mercia can not only be grouped into stylistically cohesive 'schools of production', but that there also exists a broad distinction between the schools of the central regions of the kingdom, including the sites of Breedon, Peterborough, Fletton, Castor and Lichfield, and those further removed. Through an investigation of the material evidence supporting the existence of a Mercian heartland it is possible to reveal whether the regional diversity of Mercian sculpture in the late eighth and early ninth centuries is reflective of earlier, regional identities surviving from before the Mercian hegemony. The identification of a potential Mercian heartland can be inferred from Bede's assertion that the Mercians were located to the north and south of the river Trent and from maps based on the information in the *Tribal Hidage* (for example, Map 1.I). Even in the most recent publications on Mercian studies, the conjectural boundaries mapped by Cyril Hart in the 1970s are adhered to without interrogation during discussions of the geography of Mercia.[123] Consequently, the Mercian heartland is presumed to have occupied the Trent basin, the region of the modern counties of southern Staffordshire and Derbyshire, northern Warwickshire and eastern Leicestershire. This is supported by the identification of key Mercian sites at which charters, of varying reliability, were issued between the late seventh and ninth centuries. The earliest of these charters purport to date from c. 675–692 and mention Æthelred's chamber in 'his own *vicus* called *Tomtun'*, generally thought to be Tamworth in Staffordshire.[124] In addition, a number of late eighth- and early ninth-century charters, some of a dubious character, state that they were issued by Offa in a royal palace at Tamworth.[125] Similarly, the written sources identify Lichfield in Staffordshire as an important ecclesiastical centre by at least 669, when Wulfhere created the position of

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[123] Brown and Farr, 2001: fig. 1.
[124] Sawyer, 1968: no. 1803.
[125] Sawyer, 1968: nos. 120, 121, 155, 163; Hooke, 1983: 12.

bishop of the Mercians for Chad and established his seat at Lichfield.[126] It is the boundaries related to the Lichfield see that might provide an alternative to Hart's map of the Mercian kingdom – which relied on the *Tribal Hidage* and the location of the territories surrounding Mercia. The bishoprics established in the late seventh century were created at the instigation of Archbishop Theodore (consecrated 669) and were arranged with what Mayr-Harting called a 'scrupulous regard' for existing political and territorial divisions.[127] Certainly, the bishoprics established at Hereford and Worcester appear to have served the territories of existing kingdoms, and the boundaries of these two dioceses were preserved in the county boundaries until the mid-1970s.[128]

It is in the archaeological record that evidence relating to early activity at Tamworth and Lichfield, and supportive to the written sources might be found. However, at both sites only fragmentary archaeological material has been recovered that represents activity in the fifth to ninth centuries. The origins of Lichfield are the Roman fort of *Letocetum*, a posting station on the Roman communication route Watling Street two and a half miles to the south-west of the present city. Little Roman material has been found at Lichfield besides a small bronze bowl, engraved with a *Chi-Ro* and containing Roman coins, which was discovered in the early 1920s.[129] No coins or datable pottery has been found with which potential fifth- and sixth-century deposits might be identified. The only indicator of the early ecclesiastical character of Lichfield is preserved in the dedication to St. Chad of a church at Stowe, a mile to the east of the present cathedral. It is thought this might have been the site of Bishop Chad's first cathedral although no archaeological evidence in support of this has yet been found. [130]

There is no archaeological evidence for the early settlement of Tamworth, and evidence for the Mercian royal and administrative centre of the eighth century is fragmentary and inconclusive. Excavations in 1968 and 1969 found indications of possible timber features beneath remains of ninth-century bank and ditch defences.[131] These had been previously interpreted as the remains of an enclosure for the royal palace from which Offa issued his charters, but no evidence has been found of the

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[126] *HE* iv. 3; Hart, 1966: 98.
[127] Mayr-Harting, 1977: 131.
[128] The bishopric at Hereford served the Magonsæte, and that at Worcester served the Hwicce. Mayr-Harting noted a similar arrangement in East Anglia which was divided into the bishoprics of Norfolk and Suffolk, reflecting the earlier territories of Elmham and Dunwich (1977: 131).
[129] Gould, 1993: 4.
[130] Bassett, 1992: 29. Gelling has shown that place-names incorporating the Old English element *stōw* often refer to early Christian institutions, and that at Stowe near Lichfield this could be interpreted as evidence for the continuity of British Christianity (Gelling, 1982: 187–8, 191). For the association of personal names with Mercian sites, see Jones, 1998: 29–62.
[131] Rahtz: 1977: 111–14; Wilson and Moorhouse, 1971: 133; Bassett, 2008: 191–213.

palace itself and the ditches are believed to defensive. More conclusive indications of activity during the eighth century were uncovered by excavations in the 1970s, when the remains of a watermill were found in Bolebridge Street.[132] No pottery was found but four radio-carbon determinations from the timber recovered all indicated an eighth-century date for the mill.[133]

The extant archaeological evidence broadly corroborates that available from the written sources and suggests that Lichfield and Tamworth were central places in the Mercian heartland at least by the eighth century. The recent discovery near Lichfield of the Staffordshire Hoard, a remarkable body of over 1700 pieces of high quality Anglo-Saxon gold, silver and copper metalwork, offers a tantalising image of a local recipient worthy of such a substantial collection of military trophies.[134] An excerpt from the Old English heroic poem *Beowulf* illuminates the context for the creation and deposition of such a hoard,

'…for one warrior stripped the other, looted Ongentheow's iron mail-coat, his hard sword-hilt, his helmet too, and carried graith to King Hygelac; he accepted the prize, promised fairly that reward would come, and kept his word … they let the ground keep that ancestral treasure, gold under gravel, gone to earth, as useless to men now as it ever was…'[135]

What the archaeology of these important sites does not demonstrate is the creation of a Mercian artistic identity in the kingdom's heartland during the fifth to eighth centuries. In order to establish if such an identity existed, it is necessary to examine the burial record of the heartland in the modern counties of Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Warwickshire, which provides the primary source of archaeological material for the pre-Christian period.

An archaeological narrative for the emerging kingdom of Mercia: burials, territories, heartlands and peripheries

Martin Carver has argued that Anglo-Saxon attitudes to monumentality encompassed a range of material expressions, of which sculpture and earlier community investments

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[132] Webster and Cherry, 1972: 161; Webster and Cherry, 1979: 245.
[133] Webster and Cherry, 1972: 161; Rahtz and Meeson, 1992.
[134] Leahy and Bland, 2009.
[135] Heaney, 1999: ll.2985–90, 3166–8; Leahy, 2011. For an introduction to the history of the poem, see Ogilvy and Baker, 1983.

such as barrow burials were a part.[136] Investigation of monumental expressions that pre-date or are contemporary with the emergence of the Mercian stone sculpture tradition, together with the associated grave assemblages, might point to a form of regional identity that subsequently manifested itself in the variety of Christian sculpture now identified with the Mercian kingdom. Map 1.J shows the distribution of furnished burials in the counties of Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire.[137] From this map three areas of activity can be identified: the first in northern Staffordshire and western Derbyshire; the second in southern Derbyshire and Staffordshire in the region of the upper Trent basin; and the third in south and eastern Warwickshire. Within these groups it is possible to recognise different burial types and grave assemblages that give some indication of the change in burial practice between the arrival of the pagan Anglian settlers in the fifth and sixth centuries and the period of conversion to Christianity in the seventh century. A full description of the burial evidence from Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire, including associated grave assemblages, is presented in Appendix II. There is evidence to support the existence of settled fifth- to sixth-century communities in the region identified as the Mercian heartland, and to suggest that by the eighth century these communities were using burial practice to reflect changes in their social and political circumstances. The information available from a large proportion of the burial sites survives solely in antiquarian reports, and many of the early reports lack conclusive evidence with which to date the burials. The sites shown in Map 1.J represent only a proportion of the potential number of early medieval burial sites that might once have existed in the central regions of Mercia. Nonetheless, the three distinct clusters of extant sites indicate the areas of most prolific burial concentration.

The evidence supports early occupation of the Trent basin of south-eastern Staffordshire and southern Derbyshire in the fifth and sixth centuries – with the large-scale mixed-rite cemeteries at Swakestone and Stapenhill implying settled community activity. Whilst the position of these cemeteries in the Trent basin reinforces the idea that the communities of this area were distinct from those that created the large group of fifth- to sixth-century cemeteries in southern Warwickshire, the evidence from the burial assemblages is insufficient to distinguish a separate proto-Mercian identity.

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[136] Carver, 2001.

[137] A number of sites have been discounted from this discussion on account of there being no or only highly dubious evidence to identify and classify them. These are Castern (Meaney, 1964: 221), Borough Fields Farm (O'Brien, 1999: 90) both in Staffordshire; and Street Ashton (Meaney, 1964: 266) and Long Itchington (Meaney, 1964: 217) both in Warwickshire. Sites with post-conversion Christian burials, notably Repton (Derbyshire), Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leicestershire) and Tamworth (Staffordshire) have also been omitted here but will be discussed later in the chapter.

What is more likely is that these early cemeteries reflect the activity of small localised communities in competition with each other for land demarcation, presumably in association with settlements. It is in the distribution of the indeterminate and late-sixth century isolated burials that the origins of a possible Mercian elite identity might be sought. As Map 1.J illustrates, no burials of either type have been found in the Trent basin area; a number are found in southern Warwickshire, with outliers at Oldbury and Stoke Golding, but the majority are located in north-eastern Staffordshire and on the county boundary with Derbyshire. These two types of isolated burial demonstrate a transition from non-ostentatious to high status funerary expression, both with the intention of signalling community or family claims on the local landscape. In Warwickshire, these burials probably represent the consolidation of land control that began in that region with the establishment of the community cemeteries in the fifth and sixth centuries. In Staffordshire and Derbyshire, the appearance of these isolated burials more likely reflects the expansion of Mercian territory northwards from the Trent basin. The creation of numerous prominent barrow burials in the late sixth and early seventh centuries on the northern frontier of newly acquired Mercian territory would have constituted an aggressive and conspicuous form of land control by the families of those being buried. Such demonstrations would have been an important display of territorial possession, creating visible and permanent features that may be understood as non-literary precursors to the charters issued in the Christian period.

However, it is the group of seventh- to eighth-century high status barrow burials in western Derbyshire that provides evidence for a distinct Mercian expression of identity. These burials occupy a separate region to the east of the earlier barrow burials and represent a consolidation of Mercian land control on the territory's northern frontier during a period of political and religious instability. As discussed earlier in this chapter (pp. 23–7), the written sources indicate that by the seventh century the Mercian rulers were undertaking aggressive campaigns outside their own territory in an attempt to extend their authority. This would have brought them into contact with those kingdoms, particularly Kent and Northumbria, which were undergoing, or had already undergone the conversion to Christianity. It has been argued that high status barrow burials were consciously adopted at this time as a means of exhibiting wealth and status in reaction to the introduction of Christianity, which had generated the division between pagan and

Christian burial rites.[138] The majority of these seventh- to eighth-century high-status burials in Derbyshire are female and fit the pattern seen elsewhere in the country. As Struth and Eagles noted, all the richest female graves in the south-east of England date to the early seventh century.[139] These high-status burials were a response to the growing importance of territorial control manifest in the charters issued in the seventh and eighth centuries. Undoubtedly, monumental burials were an intrinsic part of the social changes that affected the distribution of power and property and, as van de Noort highlighted, such burials also created links between the successors of the deceased and their land.[140] This also has implications for understanding the preoccupation with burying high-status females – who might have held a symbolic position in Mercian society connected with the production of heirs and the establishment of a Mercian ruling dynasty. This concept is revisited in Chapter Five (pp. 152–7), where the links between female members of the Mercian royal line and royally endowed monastic centres of importance reveal the contribution of female saints' cults to the development of Mercian funerary sculpture. As has been mentioned above, Penda in particular seems to have shown a desire to secure Mercian authority over neighbouring territories by placing his son(s) in positions of control. The burial record shows that a Mercian identity was being forged in the seventh and eighth centuries, but that it occurred as a reaction to the introduction of Christianity, which was establishing new mechanisms for the expression of status and wealth. In Chapter Five, the exploration of ecclesiastical power and cult reinforces the idea that this preoccupation with succession and legitimacy of rule was expressed in the monumental funerary sculpture of Mercian cult sites. The saints associated with these foci were often of royal affiliation and had been strategically placed in royally founded or endowed monasteries throughout the kingdom.

From barrows to monasteries: the Christian landscape of Mercia

Bede implied that the Mercian kingdom was one of the last to be converted to Christianity. Christianity appears to have been practised in Mercia during the pagan rule of Penda and he did not forbid it.[141] Before he was placed in control of the Middle Angles, Penda's son Peada had converted to Christianity as a condition of his marriage

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[138] Struth and Eagles, 1999: 46. Certainly, by the late eighth century burial underneath or near a barrow was considered an explicitly pagan ritual on the Continent and was outlawed by Charlemagne in his *Capitulatio de partibus* (van de Noort, 1993: 70).
[139] Struth and Eagles, 1999: 46; Loveluck, 1995: 84–98.
[140] van der Noort, 1993: 72.
[141] *HE* iii. 21.

to the daughter of the Northumbrian king Oswiu (d. 670). Peada was baptised in Northumbria and on his return to Mercia brought with him four priests including the Irishman Diuma who was consecrated bishop of the Middle Angles.[142] There appears to have been a continuing Irish presence in the formative years of Mercian Christianity: the bishop who succeeded Diuma was also an Irishman and Chad who, as mentioned above, took his seat at Lichfield in 669, was a Northumbrian and a product of the Irish Christian tradition.[143] Examination of the charter evidence demonstrates that the foundation and endowment of monasteries by the Christian Mercian kings that followed Penda became the principal method of consolidating territory under their control. It also facilitated the promotion of Mercian kingship and dynastic authority through a medium acceptable to the Christian traditions, which had brought about the eventual termination of richly furnished burials. This is evident in the numerous examples of monastic foundations whose political control was ensured by their close association with members of the Mercian ruling families, and in particular their women. In the late seventh century king Æthelred and his wife Osthryth founded and endowed the monastery at Bardney in Lincolnshire (Map 1.K). Following her murder in 697 Osthryth was buried at the monastery, and Æthelred eventually retired and died as its abbot in c. 716.[144] Bardney was located in the kingdom of Lindsey, which had been fought over by the Mercians and the Northumbrians on several occasions. Æthelred's association with the monastery and Osthryth's burial there ensured that Bardney stood as a shrine to Mercian overlordship. That Bardney remained a place of political focus into the late eighth century is illustrated by Offa's enrichment of the shrine housing the bones of the Northumbrian king Oswald (d. 642), which had been translated there by Osthryth, Oswald's niece.[145] This enrichment was most likely a good-will gesture that coincided with the marriage of Offa's daughter Ælfflæd to the Northumbrian king Æthelred in 792.

The Mercian kings were encouraging devotion to their family members from at least the early eighth century. Werburg, the daughter of the Mercian king Wulfhere was associated with several monastic institutions: she became a nun at Ely; died at her monastery at Threckingham in Lincolnshire, and was buried at Hanbury in Staffordshire where she was venerated as a saint.[146] Wulfhere's sisters Cyneburh and Cyneswith

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[142] *HE* iii. 21.
[143] Gelling, 1992: 96.
[144] *HE* v. 24; Thacker, 1985: 2.
[145] *HE* iii. 11.
[146] Stafford, 2001: 36.

jointly founded the monastery at Castor near his centre at Peterborough.[147] Similarly Mildburg, who is thought to be the granddaughter of Penda, became abbess at the monastery at Much Wenlock in Shropshire which had been endowed by her brothers and their cousin the Mercian king Ceolred (709–716) and had a cult following that survived into the tenth century.[148]

The Mercian Supremacy

Evidently, the infrastructure of the Church provided the Mercian kings with an opportunity to embed members of the ruling family into the history of the landscape over which they were demonstrating administrative control. The largest single testamony to the administrative capabilities of the Mercian kings during the peak of their authority over the southern kingdoms is Offa's Dyke, a formidable earthwork on the western frontier of Mercia (Map 1.L). Over sixty excavations have been conducted along the earthwork but no datable artefacts have yet been recovered. Nonetheless, it is assumed that the dyke was constructed during the eighth century when Offa is known to have carried out various expeditions into Wales to gain territorial control.[149] Irrespective of its function, Offa's Dyke represents the implementation of significant control of resources and a monumental display of territorial control on a scale and efficiency not seen elsewhere in Europe during this period.[150]

Mercian administrative control extended to the church councils or synods, and records show that twenty one between c. 742–825 were presided over by Mercian kings.[151] These provided the platform for negotiations between the leading secular and ecclesiastical authorities between which the majority of land ownership was divided. As Cubitt has noted, the consistency with which the Mercian kings attended councils in the diocese of London and the city itself is indicative of its economic importance for the establishment of secular authority over the kingdoms south of the river Humber.[152] Not only did London provide the trading outlet to the Continent but it was also where the

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[147] *op. cit.*
[148] Thacker, 1985: 4. There are also instances of cults developing around male members of the Mercian royal family, particularly Guthlac a princely hermit (d. 716) who had been a monk at Repton. He was buried at Crowland where a cult was established (Thacker, 1985: 5; see also Felix's *Life of St. Guthlac*).
[149] Hill, 1974; 102–7; Gelling, 1992: 102–18. See also the recent scholarship on the relationship between Offa's Dyke and its later counterpart Wat's Dyke, to the East (Malim and Hayes, 2008: 147–79.
[150] Charlemagne intended to construct a canal between the Rhine and the Danube to improve access to Byzantium, and his reinforcement of Roman lines against the Saxons illustrates his concern to demonstrate territorial control (Gillmor, 2005: 34–5, 39).
[151] Hart, 1977: 58; Keynes, 1994: 17–30.
[152] Cubitt, 1995: 205–8.

Mercians had their primary mint following the development of their own coinage from at least the time of Æthelbald's reign (716–757).[153] At least one synod was held at Tamworth, in 799, which as has been discussed above had become the seat of Mercian royal power.[154]

From documentary and archaeological evidence it is also possible to identify the centres of ecclesiastical importance in the Mercian heartland (Map 1.K). Of these, Repton in southern Derbyshire seems to have occupied a particular role as a location for royal burials (see Chapter Five, pp. 185–7).[155] The monastery was founded c. 675 and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that king Æthelbald was the first in a series of Mercian kings to be buried at Repton, following his murder in 757.[156] The earliest archaeological evidence found at the site is from a cemetery thought to date from the seventh to eighth centuries.[157] This cemetery pre-dates a detached subterranean structure now believed to have been a baptistery, which in the ninth century was converted into a mausoleum beneath a church that was extended to the east to incorporate it.[158] During the period in which the mausoleum was developed and new entrances to it were cut, burials continued to take place in and around the structure. Anglo-Saxon fabric survives not only in the crypt but also the chancel above it and parts of the northern porticus of the church.[159] In 1979 a large sculptured stone from the upper part of a standing cross was discovered immediately outside the crypt and illustrates that the crypt was not the only form of monumental expression on the site (see Chapters Four and Five, pp. 108, 185–7).[160]

The Church was an integral part of the authority that the Mercian kings held over southern England, and in order to maximise this Offa had the bishopric at Lichfield elevated to the status of an archbishopric in 787.[161] This was undoubtedly a political manoeuvre designed by Offa to ensure the uncontested succession by his son Ecgfrith. Prior to Lichfield's elevation the archbishop – the head of the Church and the spiritual

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[153] Williams, 2001: 212; Naismith, 2010: 76–106.

[154] Hart, 1975: 77. A possible Christian inhumation cemetery was discovered at Tamworth in the late seventeenth-century, but unfortunately the account does not provide any details of the excavation (Meaney, 1964: 222–3).

[155] Two other royal Mercian burial sites are known to us from the documentary sources one of which is also in the Mercian heartland at Lichfield (Whitelock, 1979: 158). The other is at Bardney in Lincolnshire as mentioned above.

[156] Whitelock, 1979: 163.

[157] Biddle, 1986: 16.

[158] Taylor, 1971: 370–4.

[159] The surviving Anglo-Saxon fabric at Repton and its chronological sequencing has been the subject of scholarship since the early nineteenth century. For discussion see Taylor, 1977 and 1979.

[160] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 240, 287–90.

[161] Whitelock, 1979: 20; Cubitt, 1995: 218; Blair, 1999: 286–7. The archbishopric at Lichfield was short lived and was abolished in 803.

leader of southern England – was based at Canterbury in Kent and is known to have maintained his allegiance to the king of Kent.[162] Shortly after the synod at Chelsea in which Lichfield became a new archbishopric, Offa had his son Ecgfrith consecrated as part of the model for kingship he adopted in an attempt to align himself with the activities of Charlemagne on the Continent. The concept of Mercian kingship that Offa projected was ultimately based on Roman imperial models, and as can be seen from the coinage struck during Offa's reign, it incorporated imagery appropriate to the promotion of not only Offa but the dynastic line he was trying to create. Coins were struck in the name of Offa's wife Cynethryth during the 790s consolidating her position as the mother of Mercia's legitimate heir.[163]

Unfortunately, Offa's efforts to ensure that his son was the uncontested heir to the Mercian throne, which included the removal of potential rival claimants, proved unsuccessful. As Alcuin, a Northumbrian scholar at the court of Charlemagne commented, Offa's preoccupation with succession did not strengthen his kingdom but ultimately brought about its ruin.[164] Ecgfrith, who came to the Mercian throne in 796, died without producing an heir and left the kingdom open to political instability. It was a weakened Mercia that the Vikings encountered in the mid-ninth century; Wessex had regained its independence in the 820s and as a result had secured the submission of Kent, Essex, Surrey and Sussex. By the mid 870s the Vikings had driven Burgred, king of Mercia from his kingdom and placed their own nominee Ceowulf II in control. This marked the end of Mercian over-lordship in Anglo-Saxon England.

Part III

Mercia and the Continent in the shadow of Rome

Rome, the papacy and the *Schola Saxonum*

The following sections outline the documentary evidence for the relationship between Mercia and the Continent, and the particular focus that the Mercians and the Carolingians placed on Rome as a spiritual and political authority. The survey provides a context for the stylistic links that previous scholarship has noted between Mercian and Italian sculpture, but also illustrates the political and religious backdrop against which

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[162] Stenton, 1971: 215–16.
[163] Stafford, 2001: 37; Keynes, 2005: 13–14.
[164] Whitelock, 1979: 22, 787.

the motivations for continental emulation might have developed. Rome's prominence as a focal point for the Mercians and the wider Christian West in the late eighth and early ninth centuries is attested in the documentary and art historical evidence. In his *Life of St. Willibald* (c. 796), Alcuin described the city of Rome as 'the head of the world'.[165] From his position at Aachen, Alcuin witnessed the impact on Carolingian political and artistic activity of the close relationship with Rome that had been cemented by Charlemagne's Lombard conquest in 774.[166] He would also have been aware of the continuing relationship the papacy fostered with Anglo-Saxon England, and with Mercia.[167] Rome's position as 'the head of the world' in the late eighth century was primarily a reflection of the important role it had assumed as a focus for the cult of the apostles from the late fourth century onwards, as explored in Chapter Three (pp. 67). And whilst the late eighth and early ninth centuries saw Mercia drawn into dialogue with the papacy for the purposes of political gain, including manoeuvres such as the elevation of Lichfield, it was the long established tradition of pilgrimage to the shrines of the apostles that provided the consistent and enduring link with Rome.[168] Late eighth- and early ninth-century descriptions in the *Liber Pontificalis* of the corporate body of Saxon pilgrims in Rome, known as the *Schola Saxonum*, demonstrate the substantial nature of the link that existed between Anglo-England and Rome in the form of resident pilgrims.[169] The consistent appearance made by Rome in discussions of Mercian

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[165] 'Roma orbis caput, beatorum apostolorum Petri e Pauli specialis quodammondo gloriosissimis laetetur triumphis' (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* VII, col. 32, p. 139; Moore, 1937: 107, note; Parks, 1954: 77; Birch, 1998: 40). For English translations, see Talbot, 1995: 189–212. Similar sentiments towards Rome appear in one of four poems written by Alcuin for Pope Leo III, c. 798, 'Salve, Roma potens, mundi decusinclyta mater, atque tui tecum valeant in saecula nati' (*Patrologia Latina*, vol. 101, col. 778–9). I am grateful to Rev. D. Dales for drawing my attention to these poems.

[166] For discussion of the written sources that document the developing relationship between Charlemagne and the popes in the years around 774, see Gasparri, 2006: 41–65.

[167] A sense of this relationship can be glimpsed in the surviving correspondences between Mercia and the Carolingian courts. For example, in a letter of 796 from Charlemagne to Offa, in which Charlemagne tells Offa of gifts sent to him in exchange for prayers for the late pope Hadrian whom Charlemagne describes as 'our father and your friend' (Levison, 1946: 112–13; Whitelock, 1979: 849).

[168] Pilgrimage to Rome had been popular in Anglo-Saxon from the seventh century onwards. In his account of how the West Saxon king Ine (688–726) resigned his throne in order to undertake a pilgrimage to Rome, Bede recorded how 'many Englishmen, nobles and commons, layfolk and clergy, men and women, were eager to do the same thing', (*HE* v. 7). Between the eighth and ninth centuries, the documentary evidence shows that fifty named Anglo-Saxons undertook pilgrimages from England to Rome (Moore, 1937: 126–7). The primary motive of such expeditions developed out of the belief that certain objects or holy places could enable the pilgrim to become closer to God, principally by means of intercession through the saint whose tomb or relic was being honoured (Brown, P., 1981: 4; Birch, 1998: 2, 23–4, 39). However, as Matthews has highlighted, piety or a sense of religious obligation was not the only motivation for undertaking a pilgrimage, as the forced relocation to Rome of the Mercian king Burgred in c. 874 demonstrates (2007: 12–13).

[169] The size of the colony was significant enough to repel a Saracen attack at Porto in 846, and permanent enough for a city gate, the *Posterula Saxonum*, to be named after it (Moore, 1937: 91–7; Parks, 1954: 33).

political activity and artistic production highlights the prominent place that the city held in the minds of the Mercian elite, both secular and ecclesiastical.[170]

As with pilgrimage, the artistic connection with Rome that Mercia enjoyed was built on the relationship with the city that the Northumbrians had developed from the seventh and early eighth centuries onwards.[171] However, the Mercians cannot be said to have simply adopted the Roman-imitative style of Northumbrian art, nor did they have the same political motivations for wanting to express their connection to Rome. The dominance of apostle imagery in Mercia's iconographical programme under Offa and Cœnwulf, and its use on monumental shrine sculpture, was symptomatic of the particular political atmosphere that existed under the two rulers, and illustrates a deliberate alliance at that time with both contemporary papal concerns and with the heritage and prestige associated with the tombs of the apostles.[172] Previous scholarship similarly emphasises the important role that Rome played as a source for contemporary and late Antique stylistic models, including plastic carving, which were used in Mercian sculpture to express and capture the prestige of *Romanitas*. But the desire to align with Rome, its art, heritage and the papacy was also born out of a need by the Mercian elite – especially Offa, as we understand it – to imitate the authority that Charlemagne was commanding in Rome and his revival of late Antique imperial splendour.

Pope Leo III and Charlemagne's coronation

The close relationship between Charlemagne and the papacy was cemented during the pontificate of Hadrian I (772–795) when Charlemagne was undertaking his annexation of the Lombard kingdom. But the alliance had started before then with the anointing of Pippin, Charlemagne's father, by Pope Stephen II following Pippin's unification of Francia.[173] Charlemagne's coronation in Rome on Christmas day in the year 800 marked the culmination in a series of events that saw the papacy strengthened by its

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The first English reference to the *Schola* is in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in an entry for the year 817, where it is recorded that the 'English quarter' in Rome burned down (Whitelock, 1979: 185).

[170] An alleged pilgrimage to Rome by Offa between 794 and 796 for the purposes of expiating his wife's murder of Ethelbert of East Anglia is recorded in a twelfth-century account (Moore, 1937: 79–81).

[171] See for example Ó Carragáin's discussion of Roman influences on the Bewcastle Cross (Ó Carragáin, 1999: 191–203). Alcuin maintained links with both Mercia and Northumbria after his appointment to Charlemagne's court and no doubt his various pilgrimages to Rome provided a further link for both kingdoms to the city into the early ninth century (Moore, 1937: 73–5).

[172] For a discussion of the Mercian interest in imitating the imperial connotations of Rome, see Hunter, 1974: 29–50, especially p. 44. For a Northumbrian perspective, see Henig, 2004: 11–28.

[173] Levison, 1946: 115–17. This initial alliance between the Carolingians and the papacy is thought to have been brought about by Anglo-Saxon influence (Levison, 1946: 115–17). The close relationship between Charlemagne and Hadrian is testified by Alcuin's marble epitaph which Charlemagne ordered on Hadrian's death in 795 and sent to Rome (Wallach, 1951: 128–44; Llewellyn, 1971: 245).

alliance with the Franks and resolved in its campaign to revive the Christian past of Rome and engage with the artistic programme of the Carolingian Renaissance.[174] Hadrian had begun the rebuilding and endowment of churches in Rome as a result of the increased stability and wealth that were secured by Charlemagne's campaign, in an attempt to revive patriotism towards the city (see Chapter Four, p. 84).[175] But it was during the pontificate of Leo III (795–816) that the programme of reviving the ancient glory of Constantinian Rome was reinforced with the adoption of Charlemagne as the new Constantine and the protector of the papacy. This was captured in a now lost mosaic in Pope Leo's new state hall in the Lateran palace, c. 798–799, which depicted the Pope and Charlemagne on their knees receiving gifts from a seated St. Peter.[176] Story argued that it was Charlemagne's hand that guided both Hadrian and Leo in their restoration of Rome's Christian heritage, and certainly the alterations and decorations that churches underwent reverted to early Christian models, in line with Carolingian tastes in Francia.[177]

Charlemagne's generosity towards the campaign of rejuvenating the churches of Rome, and St. Peter's in particular, is recorded in Einhard's account of his life.[178] Charlemagne's coronation as Emperor not only formally recognised his alliance with the papacy but provided him with a new extension to his authority. In assuming control over and stabilising the Lombard territories, Charlemagne had a much larger platform to exert and express his power.[179] The archaeological evidence suggests that centres such as Venice and Rome saw greater prosperity as Charlemagne gained control of access points to trade and commerce southwards towards the Byzantine Empire.[180] By the time he and Leo III had died (814 and 816, respectively) Charlemagne had installed his sons as sub-kings throughout his territories, and important ecclesiastical sites in Italy, such as the monastery of S. Vincenzo al Volturno, were being run by Frankish replacements.[181]

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[174] Charlemagne's coronation, which he appears to have received reluctantly, is recorded in both Einhard and Notker the Stammerer's accounts of his life (Einhard, iii. 28; Notker, i. 26; Llewellyn, 1971: 250; Noble, 1984: 291–5; Christie, 2005: 167–8).

[175] Llewellyn, 1971: 230–44. During Hadrian's pontificate frescoes were added in the atrium of S. Maria Antiqua and many churches were adapted to provide access to relics that were brought within the safety of the city walls, including S. Maria in Cosmedin, whose 'hall crypt' is unique in Rome, and S. Prassede and SS. Quattro Coronati, which both gained annular crypts (Krautheimer, 1980: 112–13).

[176] Krautheimer, 1980: 115–16, fig. 90. A description of Leo III's Lateran palace is recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis*, and the mosaic was described by a sixteenth-century antiquarian shortly before it was destroyed (Davis-Weyer, 1986: 88–90).

[177] Story, 2005: 178–9.

[178] Einhard, iii. 27; Krautheimer, 1980: 112; Schieffer, 2000: 279–80; Story, 2005: 179; Christie, 2006: 53.

[179] Story, 2005: 168.

[180] Hodges, 2006: 163–5.

[181] Llewellyn, 1971: 252; Hodges, 2006: 167; Christie, 2006: 54.

The perception of the authority that Charlemagne commanded as 'the Lord's anointed' was far reaching. The tradition of anointing that had been established by the Franks, and most recently exercised by Charlemagne in 781 to secure his sons' position as heirs, had been quickly adopted in Anglo-Saxon England.[182] As mentioned in the previous section, Offa consecrated his son Ecgfrith as king in 787, and Ceowulf is believed to have been consecrated king by the archbishop of Canterbury before taking the throne in 821.[183] Offa's desire to emulate Charlemagne's status was also expressed in his coinage, which was not only reformed to bring it in line with Charlemagne's coinage, but which also included coins issued in the name of his wife Cynethryth, mirroring the coinage of Empress Irene of Byzantium (797–802), and a number of later Roman emperors who also issued coins in the names of their wives.[184] In Mercian sculpture, the influence of Charlemagne's imperial status might be seen to have inspired the composition of the mounted rider on the Repton Stone, as explored in Chapters Four and Five (pp. 108, 185–7). Although Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle argued that 'there is not a trace of the Carolingian' in the rider scene, they convincingly demonstrated that the image is derived from a late Antique image, the *adventus* of an emperor, and is likely to have been erected by Offa in memory of Æthelbald.[185] The Repton Stone was thus part of Offa's response to Charlemagne's elevation to the role of Emperor and the revival of late Antique artistic traditions that were permeating out from Rome and Charlemagne's court at Aachen.

Documented links

The process of permeation by which the effect of contemporary activity in Rome and the Carolingian Empire reached Mercia and impacted on artistic and socio-political expression was achieved through a network of sites, routes and correspondences. By mapping the documented links between Mercia and the Continent it is possible to see how the Mercians' focus on Rome created a network of travel and communication that brought the kingdom into contact with centres of ecclesiastical, royal and artistic significance across Carolingian Europe. Where these sites across Francia, the Alps, and northern Italy coincide with concentrations of sculptural material, it is possible to see

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[182] For the background to inauguration rituals in the early medieval West and Byzantium, see Nelson, 1976: 97–113, 1977: 50–71 and 1980: 29–48.

[183] Levison, 1946: 118–19; Whitelock, 1965: 785; Nelson, 2001: 134; Story, 2002: 178–80.

[184] Wallace-Hadrill, 1975: 159–60; Williams, 2001: 216; Story, 2002: 188–95. For discussion of the evidence for Charlemagne imitating Offa in his coinage reforms, see Nelson, 2001: 132 and Gannon, 2003: 13–14.

[185] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 271, 284, 290.

where and how the Mercians came into contact with styles and motifs that became part of a shared repertoire. This then allows for an assessment of the degree to which Mercian sculpture was reflecting the influence of Carolingian late Antique revivalism within contemporary continental sculpture as opposed to forging its own style.

The steady stream of pilgrims that left England for Rome in the early medieval period has left its mark on the documentary sources and made it possible to trace the routes by which they and other travellers reached Rome.[186] Matthews identified four principal routes between England and Italy (Map 1.M): the first was a direct route through Quentovic, across eastern France and over the Alps via the Great St. Bernard pass into northern Italy by Aosta and Pavia; the second route passed through northern France and Paris, along the Loire valley and either direct to Rome by sea from Liguria or across the Alps by a western pass; the third route, which was used infrequently by Anglo-Saxons and only when there was a particular need to reach certain places such as Aachen, followed the Rhine and then crossed the Alps; and the last route ran along the channel coast to the mouth of the Seine, and from there to Tours and the Rhone valley to the Alps.[187] Of these routes, the first is thought to have been the main route in use by the year 800 as it was the quickest and the most secure.[188]

From the documentary evidence a number of sites that pilgrims passed through and visited en route to Rome can be identified. Alcuin described stopping at Pavia on his first pilgrimage to Rome before 767, and in Parma on his second visit in 780–1 where he met Charlemagne.[189] From his studies of the *Liber Vitae* of the royal monastery of S. Salvatore in Brescia, Keynes has demonstrated that Brescia and its dependent monastery at Pavia were stopping places for Anglo-Saxon royalty at least by the mid-ninth century. The names of the younger sons of Æthelwulf, king of the West Saxons (839–856), were added in c. 853 and Burgred, king of Mercia (852–874), and his queen Æthelswith appear in the list, recording the period of Burgred's exile to Rome

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[186] McCormick noted that the overwhelming majority of early medieval travellers, both envoys and pilgrims were ecclesiastics (McCormick, 2001: 160). Merchants appear to have followed the same routes as pilgrims through the Carolingian territories as can be seen in Charlemagne's letter of 796 to Offa in which he complains about merchants posing as pilgrims to avoid tolls (Whitelock, 1979: 848; Keynes, 1997: 99). Charlemagne had also declared that all pilgrims would be assured 'safe conduct' through his territories (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, IV, no. 100; Parks, 1954: 38). This custom was in place at least until the tenth century when a regulation from the court at Pavia stated that pilgrims heading to Rome 'passed without payment' (Lopez and Raymond, 1955: 57; Keynes, 1997: 99). For the discovery of Anglo-Saxon coins in Italy see, Blunt, 1986; and for an overview of pilgrimage to the East, see McCormick, 2001: 151–3, Table 6.2.

[187] Matthews, 2007: 39.

[188] *op. cit.*, 40, 43–4. See Birch, 1998: 43–52 for an overview of the documented itineraries that describe routes to Rome from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries.

[189] Moore, 1937: 73–4; Allott, 1974: 91; Matthews, 2007: 48.

in 874.[190] These mid ninth-century records document well-established and maintained contacts between the ruling dynasties in Mercia and Wessex and royal monastic foundations in northern Italy.[191] The evidence for the establishment of these contacts, and particularly links between Mercia and continental monastic centres can be detected in activity during the preceding century.[192] Offa's daughter Eadburh briefly became abbess at Pavia in 802 following the death of her husband Beorhtric king of Wessex (786–802).[193] An Eadburh also appears in the early ninth-century *Liber Vitae* of Reichenau, as the abbess of a community of fifty Lombard nuns and it is thought that this is the same person.[194] More indirect links to monastic centres are also hinted in the documentary evidence. In 789, negotiations regarding the marriage alliance between Charlemagne's son Charles and Offa's daughter were conducted by Gervold, an abbot of St-Wandrille, and previously the bishop of Evreux, both in Normandy.[195] Gervold is described as having had 'very strong bonds of friendship' with Offa, and no doubt Gervold's additional responsibilities overseeing trade at Quentovic were of equal interest to Offa.[196] Indeed, Wallace-Hadrill suggested that it was because of Gervold's position that he and Offa became friends.[197]

There was a close and important link between Charlemagne's secular and ecclesiastical centres. Diem has demonstrated that many of Charlemagne's court intellectuals, whether foreign or not, were expected to go to monasteries as abbots or teachers to create centres of learning.[198] This link between secular and ecclesiastical institutions would have widened the network of contact that Mercia had with the Carolingians. However, contact between Mercia and Charlemagne's court is barely recorded in the contemporary annals on either side of the channel, and instead the

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[190] Keynes, 1997: 110–16; Walker, 2000: 58–9; Matthews, 2007: 50. A charter from 856 confirms that Brescia was also in possession of a *xenodochia*, a refuge for travellers from Anglo-Saxon England, which Keynes understood to reflect a particular interest in the welfare of pilgrims bound for Rome (Keynes, 1997: 104–5).

[191] Keynes, 1997: 116.

[192] Earlier links to continental monasteries in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries were established, particularly under Columban influence, at Luxeuil, Bobbio, Faremoutiers, Jouarre, Rebais, St. Gall (Duckett, 1951: 83–5; Wilson, 1986: 219–44; Scull, 2011: 82–7). And the missionary work of Anglo-Saxons such as Willibrord and Boniface had created links with foundations at Echternach, Fritzlar, Fulda and Heidenheim (Levison, 1946: 78–81; Duckett, 1951: 84). Levison highlighted that a great number of English monks and nuns were working on the Continent in the late eighth century (Levison, 1946: 167–8).

[193] Stafford, 1981: 3–27; Keynes, 1997: 115, note 71; Yorke, 2005: 45.

[194] Keynes, 1997: 115, note 71; Yorke, 2005: 45. According to Asser's *Life of Alfred*, Charlemagne made Eadburh abbess of a large convent and later removed her after she 'fornicated with a man of her own people' (Asser, *De Rebus gestis Aelfredi*, xv).

[195] Whitelock, 1979: 20, 192; Nelson, 2001: 132; Story, 2002: 184–8.

[196] King, 1987: 334.

[197] Wallace-Hadrill, 1975: 160.

[198] Diem, 1998: 30.

evidence is supplied by letters.[199] One letter from Charlemagne to Æthelheard, Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Ceolwulf of Lindsey was accompanied by a number of Mercian exiles whom Charlemagne described as having been at his court for 'quite some time'.[200] The letters that passed between Charlemagne and Offa also provide evidence for direct contact between the Mercian and Carolingian court. Charlemagne's letter of 796 to Offa outlining gifts of exotic loot that he was sending, and the correspondence regarding the death of Pope Hadrian, have been mentioned above.[201] The most documented link between Mercia and Charlemagne's court is represented by the correspondence of Alcuin, who wrote to members of the Mercian court, including Offa, often trying to influence the governance of the kingdom.[202] The earliest evidence for Alcuin's link to Mercia is provided by a legatine report to Pope Hadrian in which Alcuin is named as accompanying a papal legate to the Mercian court following a Northumbrian council in 786.[203] These legatine reports also allude to indirect links to Charlemagne's court as they were composed by Bishop George of Ostia who not only acted as envoy for Pope Stephen II, Pope Paul I and Charlemagne, but had received a bishopric at Amiens and consecrated churches at the monastery of Saint-Riquier.[204] The impression from the documentary links is that through the movement of people, gifts and correspondence, Mercia was linked into an intricate network of communication that reached across Francia and northern Italy to Rome, and which was able to develop during the long reigns of both Offa and Charlemagne to encompass key secular and ecclesiastical centres.

Summary

Despite the recurring issues associated with defining and dating Mercian stone sculpture, scholarship is agreed that by the late eighth century in the central territories of Anglo-Saxon England south of the River Humber, a style of sculpture distinct from existing traditions, and outward looking in its inspiration was being produced. This body of material is a valuable addition to the available evidence, which is still dominated by documentary sources, for understanding how and where Mercia emerged as a dominant kingdom. Whilst the burial record appears to preserve a desire to reflect regional identity, there is no confirmation that a 'Mercian identity' existed in the

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[199] Nelson, 2001: 130–1; Nelson, 2002: 16–21.
[200] Whitelock, 1979: 847; Nelson, 2001: 137–8.
[201] Whitelock, 1979: 848–9; Story, 2005: 200–2.
[202] Whitelock, 1979: 849–51; Story, 2002: 176–8.
[203] Story, 2002: 177.
[204] Levison, 1946: 127–9; Wallace-Hadrill, 1975: 159.

kingdom's material culture until the introduction of Christianity and the programme of monastic foundations that underpinned the kingdom's mechanisms for maintaining and legitimising land control. The stylistic and political links that previous scholars have identified as the context for continental motif appropriation by the Mercians is supported by the documented links, and Rome emerges as a central force within Carolingian Europe and the Insular World, and a focus for the Mercian religious and secular elite.

This chapter has therefore reinforced the notion that in order to understand the variety seen in Mercian sculpture, its place within the kingdom, and its links with continental ideas and artistic styles, it is necessary to examine not only the types of continental and Insular models upon which the Mercians drew, but also to question how they accessed and interpreted these models within their own artistic and political agenda. In the following chapter, the methods by which this research identified, selected and collated Mercian sculpture are presented, together with the processes of researching and collecting the comparative continental sculptural material. As this chapter has introduced, portable artistic material is likely to have constituted an important element in the transmission of motifs and styles into Mercia, and thus Chapter Two also outlines the method by which portable artworks were selected for analysis and discussion as a mechanism for artistic exchange.

Chapter Two

The Stone Sculpture of Mercia: Developing a Methodology

In order to analyse and interpret the form and content of Mercian sculpture and to approach the question of what constitutes continental 'influence' in Mercian sculpture, this chapter begins by outlining the methods by which the Mercian sculptural material for discussion was identified and collected. The methodology situates the research within the existing field of Mercian studies, specifically in relation to the role of sculpture in cultural exchanges with the Continent, by emphasising the problems associated with collecting sculpture for this study. Emphasis is placed on the selection criteria to demonstrate the variety of detailed information that is available during the analysis of monuments and the sites at which they are preserved. It is also shown that in the absence of published *Corpus* volumes for much of the primary study area (the western Midlands), there were specific problems of accessibility to information that had to be acknowledged and explored. These problems are presented and discussed to demonstrate how the methodology developed for this thesis provided the framework to successfully address the research questions outlined in the Introduction.

The significant, and altogether different, issues relating to the practicalities of collecting continental sculpture for comparison are discussed in the second part of this chapter. The rationale behind the choice of Lombard sculpture as the primary continental dataset is outlined and includes a statement about the limitations of the project in terms of the scope of the comparative material covered. The approach taken to locating, visiting and selecting the Lombard sculptural material, and the realisation of a need to consider and include other, non-sculptural models of artistic inspiration is then presented.

Recognising and cataloguing Mercian sculpture

The greatest persistent obstacle to the study of Mercian sculpture is recognising a Mercian 'style'. The apparent early desire amongst scholars to identify a Mercian style, undoubtedly helped by difficulties in defining the kingdom's geography, saw the grouping together of monuments from across much of England south of the Humber (Map. 2.A) with an emphasis placed on stylistic distinction from Northumbrian

sculpture.[1] Thus the primary obstacle at the outset of this study has been how to define sculpture as Mercian, and how to recognise which monuments were relevant to the debate about cultural interactions between Mercia and the Continent. It must be emphasised again here that it was not the intention of this study to undertake a detailed survey of all the pre-Conquest stone sculpture of greater Mercia. As mentioned in the previous chapter (p. 9), some sites with Mercian sculpture, notably Sandbach (Cheshire), Edenham and South Kyme (Lincolnshire), are now discussed in *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture* volumes; but even with a complete *Corpus* series, the task would be beyond the scope and capacity of this study.[2] However, in order to address the aims of this thesis, the first objective was to identify a Mercian dataset of sculpture relevant to the major research questions of the study, and which could be identified as exhibiting continental influence in form and/or content. The initial geographical parameters for data collection were loosely defined specifically to allow for the flexibility of borders during the late eighth and early ninth centuries, and to allow for the potential inclusion of anomalous relevant material which had previously escaped attention. For this reason, the cataloguing of material was only possible after a comprehensive literature review (Chapter One), in which the sources for defining Mercian territory, and therefore sculpture, were fully appraised. The process of research, identification and selection commenced with a survey of secondary literature ranging from large seminal studies primarily concerned with Mercian sculpture, to local, regional or thematic studies with a focus on aspects of Mercian sculpture.[3] These were used to identify extant sculpture described in previous scholarship as 'Mercian', despite the limitations of this loosely defined term, as discussed in Chapter One (pp. 8–10). This initial corpus of material was supplemented with sculpture discovered in more recent studies of individual or small groups of monuments as well as exploration of established regional sources of reference such as Nikolaus Pevsner's series on *The Buildings of England*, the ongoing *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)* and *Victoria History of the Counties of England* series, and catalogues available though the online *Historic Environment Records*, local *Sites and Monuments*

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[1] Cramp, 1977; Jewell, 1984; Mitchell, 2010.
[2] Everson and Stocker, 1999; Bailey, 2010.
[3] Clapham, 1928; Routh, 1937; Kendrick, T., 1938; Cramp, 1977; Plunkett, 1984; Jewell, 1982; Bailey, 1988, 1996b; Parsons, 1995; Henderson, 1997; Jewell, 2001; Hawkes, 2001, 2002a. This also included Mercian material catalogued in the published *Corpus* volumes, notably South Kyme and Sandbach as mentioned above and in Chapter One (p. 9) (Everson and Stocker, 1999: 248–51; Bailey, 2010: 99–122).

Records offices and the *National Monuments Record* office in Swindon.[4] This extensive exploration ensured that previously unidentified monuments, and those now lost but with adequate records, could be considered and included in this study. This process also uncovered early, unpublished photographs of some monuments, for example the Miracle at Cana scene fragment at Breedon (cat. no. 22), and further evidence for discovery at some sites.

The systematic cataloguing and management of information gathered was achieved through the design of a database adapted from that used by the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*. A catalogue of sculpture dating from the eighth and ninth centuries (as accepted in previous scholarship), and located within the greater kingdom of Mercia, as defined by Cyril Hart, was collated and is presented in Appendix 1.[5] Fields were created within the database to record for each monument the site name, the county, the GIS eastings and northings six-figure grid references, an initial description of the monument type (cross-sculpture, sepulchral, architectural or a figure-panel), the date range of the monument, the church dedication (if the sculpture was located on a church site), a short description of the principal design elements on the monument, stylistic relatives, bibliographic sources, notes on the monuments (including its condition), site type, notes on the site and image reference. Once completed, this catalogue was interrogated with a view to establishing the quality of the data and suitability for discussion. Some monuments were too fragmentary, of a worn condition or lacking suitable diagnostic features, specifically a lack of identifiable ornament. As it is not the aim of this thesis to compile a comprehensive and detailed catalogue of all extant sculpture in the modern counties that made up greater Mercia, a catalogue comprising approximately seventy pieces of sculpture represented the final sample. Monuments previously described as 'Mercian', but since reassigned and accepted as being part of alternative, or later traditions on stylistic grounds are listed in Appendix I but were excluded from the discussion, for example a number of pieces of sculpture now accepted as mid to late ninth-century in date or of Scandinavian influence. This included the cross-shaft fragments at Breedon, a number of the western Mercian cross-sculpture and the majority of the extant sculpture in Cheshire (cat. nos. 2, 16, 24, 28, 41, 43, 46 and 49). Of an initial corpus of nearly hundred items, the final dataset of seventy pieces of sculpture formed the core of this study.

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[4] Pevsner, 1960s to 1980s; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985; Bryant, 1990; Hawkes, 1995b, 2007; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008.
[5] Hart, 1977.

It was immediately apparent that it was difficult to categorise the material beyond identification of basic type: cross-sculpture (including cross-heads, shafts, arm fragments and bases); architectural (such as friezes, impost blocks and church fittings); figure-panels not immediately in the cross-sculpture or architectural category; and sepulchral (which at this stage of the process comprised sarcophagi, cenotaphs and grave-markers). Even these broad groupings highlighted the dangers of imposing restrictive and often arbitrary modern criteria on such a large, stylistically diverse and geographically dispersed corpus of material. For example, the category of carved panels included monuments such as the three apostle panels at Breedon (cat. no. 20), the fragments at South Kyme (cat. no. 62), and it is proposed the two figure-panels at Fletton, which after closer analysis were seen to have been part of monuments originally fulfilling a sepulchral function (see Chapter Five, pp. 175–7).[6] A different strategy was therefore adopted whereby the catalogue was mapped according to these four categories to reveal the spatial distribution of monument types (Map. 2.B). All the monuments were situated within the accepted, but nonetheless hypothetical geographical boundaries of greater Mercia, as proposed by Cyril Hart in 1977 (discussed in Chapter One, pp. 29–34). A number of distinct regional distributions by type were revealed. As acknowledged in previous scholarship, a distinct grouping of stylistically comparable cross-sculpture can be identified in the region of the Derbyshire Peak.[7] Similarly, remains of architectural sculpture appear to be clustered around the central and eastern Mercian sites of Breedon and Fletton. However, analyses of form and ornament on a regional level do not successfully account for the anomalous location of certain types of monument or their ornament. So, for example, the crosshead fragment at Bisley in Gloucestershire (cat. no. 10) bears little stylistic affinity to any of its neighbouring monuments though it is believed to be of a comparable date.[8] The closest comparison to the three-quarter length figures shown on the Bisley fragment is to be made with the cross-sculpture at Bradbourne in Derbyshire (cat. no. 12).[9] The broad clustering of different general types was distinct enough to warrant further investigation. Mapping of the sculpture revealed those regions in which no or very little Mercian sculpture of the pre-Viking period survives – notably Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire. The categorising and mapping process also emphasised

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[6] The reasoning behind and justification for the identification of these panel fragments as part of sepulchral monuments is presented in Part One of Chapter Five.
[7] Routh, 1937; Sidebottom, 2000; Hawkes, 2007.
[8] Clifford, 1938: 298, 305, pl. XV, fig. 28; Toynbee, 1976: 93; Henig, 1993: no. 252, pl. 60.
[9] Routh, 1937: 5–7; Hawkes, 2007: 437.

the unique class of monument, peculiar to Mercia: the group of sepulchral sculpture concentrated in central, central-northern and eastern Mercia.

From the initial survey of scholarship relating to Mercian sculpture, it was clear that some monuments or groups of monuments demonstrated a greater degree of continental 'influence' than others. 'Influence', as discussed by Baxandall, implies agency but does not necessarily acknowledge the active part played by the recipient in the adoption of artistic styles.[10] Michelle Brown has argued that 'influence' can nonetheless be a useful term for scholars of the medieval period.[11] The paucity of extant evidence identifying individual artists or their intentions means that the context for the production of artistic works has to be 'extracted' from the material itself – and the vagueness of the term 'influence' can make it a useful tool for analysing style and development in the early medieval period.[12] In Chapter One (pp. 13–17) the range of continental 'influences' or stylistic parallels identified by previous scholars in Mercian sculpture were outlined and reassessed. In broad terms, the stylistic parallels that have been recognised thus far can be categorised into two types: ornamental and figural. Ornamental parallels are dominated by vine-scroll patterns and foliate motifs, but also include abstract ornament such as the *pelta* design. Previous scholarship would suggest that ornamental similarities are particularly common in Mercian sculpture and show the widest distribution, from the foliate details in the vine-scroll of the Derbyshire and western Midlands cross-sculpture to those on the architectural vine-scrolls of the central and eastern Midlands friezes. Figural types of stylistic parallel are more limited, but are represented on a variety of Mercian monuments and at a variety of site-types – in the iconography of the Wirksworth slab and the drapery styles of the figures on the Breedon apostle panels. These types of stylistic parallel appear, according to previous scholarship, to be largely confined to the Mercian heartland and immediately adjacent regions.

Differing degrees on continental influence are, in part, a reflection of the bias in the amount of attention given by scholars to certain groups of Mercian sculpture. The size of the collection of extant sculpture at Breedon, for example, has ensured continued exploration of its stylistic affinity with continental styles. And consequently, Mercian sites known to have a historical relationship with Breedon, and at which sculpture survives, have received similar attention, specifically the sculpture of the 'Peterborough

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[10] Baxandall, 1985: 58–9.

[11] Brown, 2007a: 4.

[12] *op. cit.* For the unique role of Pictish art in uncovering 'attitudes of mind, cultural resources and foreign contacts' in early Medieval Scotland, see Henderson and Henderson, 2004: 213.

group' – Fletton, Castor and Peterborough.[13] When, in 2006 a beautifully preserved panel fragment was discovered beneath the nave of the cathedral in Mercia's one-time archiepiscopal seat of Lichfield, it received a thorough interdisciplinary appraisal of its form, art historical and archaeological context, placing it within the wider artistic milieu of the early medieval West.[14] The collection of cross-sculpture at Sandbach in Cheshire (cat. nos. 57 and 58) has similarly benefited from recent comprehensive study, which included an analysis of the relationship of the sculpture's ornament with continental artistic traditions.[15] In contrast, some monuments, inevitably those outside the Mercian heartland and away from documentable sites, have received very little recent attention and are rarely included in discussions about the links between Mercian and continental sculpture; notably the sculpture of the border territories in western Mercia, including Newent in Gloucestershire (cat. no. 48), Acton Beauchamp in Hereforshire (cat. no. 1), Pershore in Worcestershire (cat. no. 50) and Wroxeter in Shropshire (cat. no. 70). However, whilst the varying amount of debate about sculpture across wider Mercia made an initial assessment of the impact of continental styles quite difficult, a review of the scholarship did highlight inconsistencies in the level of continental affinity, which potentially might relate to the distribution of monument type. So, for example, is there evidence to suggest that public, didactic monuments such as standing crosses, of which there appear to have been more in the border regions of the kingdom, acknowledged contemporary public monuments on the Continent in their design? Conversely, does the distribution of smaller, votive or commemorative monuments reflect access to portable continental or exotic art forms, such as high status reliquaries, which might have had a specific and limited circulation within Mercia? This apparent variation, not fully acknowledged or pursued by previous scholars, presents the opportunity to challenge accepted traditions regarding the dependence of Mercian sculpture on continental styles and opens further new lines of enquiry for this research.

The initial distribution map suggested it was possible to detect evidence for relationships between the form and ornament of the sculpture and the types of sites at which they survive. This implied it might be possible to assess whether the appropriation of continental artistic styles was related to the type of site. Distinctions between the levels of continental affinity at royal, monastic, aristocratic or cult centres were suggested. Evidence for the types of sites was drawn from documentary, archaeological and landscape sources, including the *Historic Environment Records* and

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[13] Jewell, 1986, 2001; Bailey, 1988, 1996b; Mitchell, 2007, 2010 and forthcoming.
[14] Cramp, 2006a; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008.
[15] Hawkes, 2001, 2002a; Bailey, 2010.

aerial photographs gathered from the *National Monuments Record* centre in Swindon. Some sites, as discussed in Chapter One (pp. 37–8), were known to have been established monastic institutions by the late eighth century, often with documentary evidence for royal endowment or affiliation, such as Repton, Breedon and Peterborough; others were almost certainly monastic sites due to later records or a known cult focus, such as Wirksworth and Castor; some are likely to have enjoyed aristocratic patronage, but now appear as enigmas without any apparent documentary support, for example Bakewell and Acton Beauchamp; and some are known to have been centres of royal, diplomatic or community focus, including Cropthorne and Breedon. The evidence for the importance and role of some places is now lost so that the extant sculpture provides the earliest evidence for its existence. This is certainly the case for Newent, Bradbourne, Eyam, Rugby and Fletton. The collected information for the type of place, its history and archaeology is outlined in brief in each catalogue entry in Appendix I.

The processes of selecting Mercian sculptural material, mapping according to general type and investigation of the contextual evidence for the type of sculpture-location, together with the close analysis of previous scholarship, confirmed that the relationship between the development of Mercian sculpture and continental art forms did not involve a simple transfer and adoption of motifs and styles from the Carolingian Empire into Mercia. The complex relationship between different types or groups of sites and sources of continental inspiration suggests, in contrast, a conscious and localised reaction to continental models and the selected absorption of Carolingian ideas. This likely reflects varied access to different types of artistic models – access dictated and affected by the social and political exchange networks that different sculpture-sites were involved in. Royally endowed monastic centres in the Mercian heartland might have benefited from models circulating as a result of court gift exchange or contact with royal monastic centres on the Continent. The evidence for continental artistic affinity in the peripheral territories of Mercia might suggest limited access to such exchange networks perhaps, as at Cropthorne in Worcestershire, as a result of acting as key location on a royal itinerary. Or, it could be argued that there were different mechanisms of exchange in different regions resulting from the processes of trade, pilgrimage or aristocratic activity that operated independently of royal monastic centres (for discussion of these questions, see Chapter Four, pp. 142–8). It is therefore necessary to identify and explore the context within which artistic models and ideas entered, circulated and were consumed with the kingdom of Mercia. The differences in the modes of exchange

underpin the varied use and interpretation of continental artistic styles in Mercian sculpture, and consequently provide a common theme in the discussion of the following chapters in pursuit of the research questions.

Identifying the continental sculptural comparanda

Due to the constraints of the research (those of scale and rationale, closely followed by accessibility of material) it was unfeasible to undertake a comprehensive survey of all the extant early medieval sculpture of the Carolingian Empire. An initial survey of secondary literature revealed the issue of accessibility was a considerable obstacle. Only in France and Italy have attempts been made to catalogue early medieval stone sculpture in a standard format comparable to that of the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*. The French series is entitled *Recueil general des monuments sculptés en France pendant le Haut Moyen Age* and includes material dating from the fourth to tenth centuries. To date only four volumes have been published, covering the departments of Isere, Savoie, Haute-Savoie; Haute-Garonne; Paris, and Val-d'Oise and Yvelines.[16] The Italian series *Corpus della Sculptura Altomedievale* has published twenty three volumes so far, each covering material by diocese.[17] Production and distribution of stone sculpture was not consistent across the countries that made up the Carolingian Empire, reflecting a varying interest in and need for non-architectural stone sculpture in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Even within Italy, there did not appear to be the same tradition of non-architectural stone sculpture that can be found in Anglo-Saxon England; and in those areas that did have an earlier tradition, notably Merovingian France, there was a lack of continuity into the Carolingian period. So, for example as is explored in Chapter Five (pp. 157–8), the established Merovingian tradition of embellished stone sarcophagi, typified by the sarcophagi in the crypt at Jouarre, was discontinued in the Carolingian era.[18] These conclusions were reflected in the previous scholarship, which pointed to the location of the main sites for comparison in northern Italy, and thus the sculpture catalogued in the *Corpus della Sculptura Altomedievale* series. This catalogued body of Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture in northern and central Italy provides the *only* comparable corpus of sculptural material to that in Mercia. The limitations of previous discussions concerning the relationship between

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[16] Fossard *et al.*, 1978; Chatel, 1981; Sirat *et al.*, 1984; Deroo *et al.*, 1987.

[17] Barsali, 1959; Serra, 1961; Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966; Rotilli, 1966; Melucco Vaccaro, 1974; Novelli, 1974; Pani Ermini, 1974a; Pani Ermini, 1974b; Serra, 1974; Trinci Cecchelli, 1976; Fatucchi, 1977; Broccoli, 1981; Tagliaferri, 1981; Ramieri, 1983; Bertelli, 1985; D'Ettore, 1993; Paroli, 1995; Bozzo, 1996; Napione, 2001; Bertelli, 2002; Pani Ermini, 2003; Betti, 2005; Destefanis, 2008.

[18] Grabar, 1980: 23.

Mercian and Lombard sculpture have largely related to a lack of comprehensive investigation of the suggested links between the two sets of material, and an absence of critical discussion of why and how this material was accessed. It was therefore necessary to review the continental sculpture in order to identify those pieces that showed a close affinity with Mercian sculpture, and which may have provided models for the development of its stylistic repertoire. The variation seen in the reception and adoption of continental styles in Mercia also implied that, in addition to the continental sculpture, the places themselves and other forms of artistic media that could have been accessed at them played a role in the creation of a shared artistic repertoire.

The validity of the recognised links between Mercia and the Continent needed to be tested, but a review of the entire corpus of Carolingian-era sculpture could not be realised. To test and progress from current assumptions about sculptural links with Rome, Lombard Italy and elsewhere in Carolingian Europe, it was important to anchor the continental data collection process within a frame of reference. This frame of reference was provided by the sites mentioned in previous scholarship that had known historical links to Mercia during the late eighth and ninth centuries and those with sculpture that had been discussed as stylistically comparable to or influential on Mercian sculpture. Chapter One (pp. 45–8) outlined the known documented links between Mercia and the Continent, and from this evidence it is apparent that a complex network of communication underpinned Mercian access to Lombard, Carolingian and late Antique centres, bringing them into contact with concentrations of contemporary stone sculpture, but also the rich heritage of western late Antiquity, which maintained a very visible presence (as discussed in the following chapter). Sites that were considered of political, diplomatic, religious or artistic importance were therefore mapped to reveal locations linked to the possible motivational choices behind Mercian sculptural development (these sites are fully explored in Chapter Three, pp. 73–83). Map 2.C shows the distribution of these sites, which included foci such as Rome, monastic centres such as S. Salvatore in Brescia, and royal courts such as those at Pavia and Monza; but also accounted for sites on important routes of transmission, for example pilgrimage and trade routes which went through sites including Pavia and Brescia. Together with places of known sculptural concentrations, preserved due to the longevity of the sites as religious or political centres, it was possible to use this information to explore the relationship between the types of motifs that are paralleled in Mercia and the mechanisms for their transmission. It became apparent from this, that it was important to assess the exposure that continental and Mercian places and people had to late

Antique sources and whether transmission of these art forms reached Anglo-Saxon England directly from centres such as Rome and Ravenna or through intermediary Carolingian points of contact, such as the court schools or monasteries on pilgrimage routes. It was therefore also necessary to ascertain whether the similarities that exist between Mercian sculpture and continental art forms resulted from exposure to the same late Antique sources.

The enduring focus on Rome as a centre of pilgrimage, political affirmation and spiritual leadership ensured its popularity as a destination for a cross section of Mercian travellers. The documented links described in Chapter One (pp. 45–8) highlight a degree of overlap between strategically important sites on travel routes to Rome and concentrations of continental sculpture mentioned in previous scholarship (Map. 2.C). This alignment provided the framework for selectively sampling key sites with collections of sculpture that could be shown to have varying degrees of stylistic affinity with Mercian sculpture. This shortlist of sites formed the basis for a research trip to undertake a photographic survey.

The primary Lombard site identified was Pavia, which lay on one of the direct routes over the Alps towards Rome (Maps. 1.M and 2.C). Pavia houses one of the most extensive collections of Lombard sculpture dating from the mid-eighth century through to the Romanesque period.[19] As discussed in the previous chapter (pp. 46–7), documentary evidence corroborates Pavia's importance as a stopping point for Anglo-Saxon scholars and royalty in the early ninth century.[20] Similarly, the royal monastery of S. Salvatore in Brescia, and Pavia's parent monastery, acted as a stopping point for Anglo-Saxon royalty and had a refuge for travellers.[21] S. Salvatore not only preserves an extensive collection of Lombard architectural sculpture, but it is also renowned for its extant architectural stucco of the eighth century, discussed in the following chapter (p. 77). Brescia and Pavia were selected as two sites of key interest for this research and places of importance with a surviving range of sculpture that demonstrated the development of the Lombard sculptural style from the Liutprand Renaissance into the Carolingian era.[22] Christie has shown that the endowment of monastic and royal Lombard centres, of which the widespread emergence of decorative stone sculpture was an aspect, was part of a larger multi-regional reflection of stability brought about under

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[19] The sculptural collection at Pavia is also one of the most accessible due to its display in the museum of the Castello Visconteo.
[20] Moore, 1937: 73–4; Allot, 1974: 91; Keynes, 1997: 110–16; Walker, 2000: 58–9; Matthews, 2007: 50.
[21] Keynes, 1997: 104–5, 110–16; Walker, 2000: 58–9; Matthews, 2007: 50.
[22] Christie, 2006: 45–8; Mitchell, 2000: 348–9.

the reign of King Liutprand (712–44).[23] Liutprand subjugated all of the northern dukedoms as far south as Rimini and restored a number of towns and forts within the Ravenna exarchate to Rome thus unifying most of the Lombard kingdom between the Alps and central Italy.[24] It is not surprising therefore that the key monastic and royal sites within this region started to produce ornate stone sculpture to embellish their churches in the mid-eighth century. These sites, such as Pavia, Brescia, Cividale del Friuli and Grado retain large and important collections of sculptural material from this period of stability, forming part of the so-called 'Liutprand Renaissance'.[25]

Investigating other influential sites associated with the Liutprand Renaissance emerged as a potentially beneficial line of enquiry for uncovering further evidence for the motivations behind this period of sculptural production, and forming a body of comparable material from across a significant area of northern and central Italy. For this reason, the larger collections of Lombard and Carolingian-period sculpture at Cividale del Friuli and Aquiliea were included, as the sites also occupied strategic positions on communication routes in Italy.[26] What sets these key sites apart from other Lombard centres with extant sculpture is the degree of continuity of production. There are few sites with concentrations of sculpture that represent the changing traditions from the Liutprand Renaissance of the first half of the eighth century, through the second half of the eighth century and into the Carolingian era. The influence of Carolingian patronage at established Lombard ecclesiastical centres can be seen in the changing style of stone carving. At Pavia, Brescia and Cividale the sculptural collections document the standardization of style that developed under Carolingian patronage and which, elsewhere in Italy, is often only represented by fragmentary remains. However, concentrations of sculpture from the Carolingian era can be found in central Italy, most notably in Rome where the investment in churches during the late eighth and early ninth centuries saw the construction of elaborately carved stone-panelled church furniture. The wealth of Carolingian-era monumental endowment, including but not restricted to stone sculpture at churches such as S. Sabina and S. Maria Antiqua, illustrated the range of production in a city that had particular, and potentially different, production-agendas to the northern Lombard territories. Outside Italy, the impact of the Carolingian empire on stone sculpture production is less conspicuous. There are no great concentrations of early medieval stone sculpture to rival those at Pavia, Brescia and Cividale del Friuli.

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[23] Mitchell, 2000: 348–9; Christie, 2006: 45–8.
[24] Christie, 2006: fig. 6.
[25] Christie, 2006: 144.
[26] Wickham, 1981: 10–11.

The important collection of eighth- to ninth-century chancel panels from Saint-Pierre-aux-Nonnains, now in the Musée de la Cour d'Or in Metz, is a rare example of a collection of carved sculpture from the transition period between Merovingian and Carolingian influence, but is representative of only one site.[27] Similarly, the examples of Carolingian-era carved sculpture from Switzerland, Germany and northern Spain are limited to collections at a small number of individual sites, notably Müstair (Switzerland), Santa Maria de Quintanilla de las Viñas and S. Pedro de la Nave in Zamora (Spain), as mentioned in Chapter One (p. 15), and Ingelheim, Lauerach and Frauenchiemsee (Germany) (Map. 2.D).[28]

To supplement the primary sites of Pavia, Brescia, Cividale, Aquileia and Rome, a thorough examination of the twenty three volume Italian *Corpus della sculptura* revealed those sites preserving sculpture that could provide stylistic and documented historical support to the discussion of the development of Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture in Italy.[29] This included sites already argued by scholars to have stylistic affinity with Mercian sculpture, such as Milan, which houses sculpture from the church of S. Maria D'Aurona, and Ravenna, and sites of key historical interest for their particular connection with Anglo-Saxon England, but with limited surviving sculpture, including the monastery at Bobbio and the royal treasury at Monza.[30] To this collection of sites were added those that did not have any historical justification, for example they were not known to be situated on known communication routes towards or from Rome, but which preserved sculpture that demonstrated a definite stylistic affinity with individual Mercian monuments. So, for example, this included Gussago, where fragments of a Lombard sarcophagus survive. Through this process of selection and during visits to these sites, it became apparent that the majority of the sites of interest had long and established histories of monumental artistic expression, to which the sculpture of the Lombard and Carolingian periods contributed and complimented. This appeared to be largely due to the type of sites at which sculptural collections survive. Monumental sculptural works, such as the Altar of Ratchis at Cividale and the series of large ornamented commemorative epitaphs at Pavia point to the importance of these

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[27] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 28–9, fig. 34.

[28] For a survey of the fragmentary remains of carved stone sculpture in the Chur region of Switzerland, see Jerris, 1999.

[29] As with the *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, the *Corpus della Sculptura Altomedievale* catalogues every piece of sculpture at a site, irrespective of size, form or ornament. Sites with fragmentary remains of architectural sculpture bearing only geometric patterning or the Carolingian style 'triple-strand' interlace were not mapped, though these formed a large portion of the material published.

[30] In addition, the strategic Lombard centres of Lucca, Spoleto and Benevento, whose surviving sculpture has been compared with Mercian sculpture, were considered although the duchies of the latter two sites were south of the traditional Carolingian territories (Mitchell, 2000).

sites as seats of authority inherited and maintained by the Lombards and subsequently the Carolingians. At Pavia, and elsewhere at Milan, Aquileia, and for different reasons at Rome and Ravenna, sculptural embellishment of the late eighth and early ninth centuries signalled a long and often continuous use of the site as a centre of authority from late Antiquity into the Carolingian period. Understanding the ways in which Lombard and Carolingian-period sculpture was used as an expression of wealth and prestige therefore required an understanding of the development and artistic heritage of the sites at which it is concentrated. In the same way, in order to fully appraise the development of the Lombard sculptural style, the material had to be considered against the backdrop of preceding artistic traditions of other media, much of which was still adorning churches and would have been available as sources of inspiration.[31] In Rome and Ravenna especially, Lombard sculpture was erected in standing churches of late Antique foundation, many of which preserve monumental artworks in mosaic and stone. This wealth of artistic heritage and its role in the emergence and development of Lombard sculpture was brought into focus during research visits to the sites. The research trip was designed to visit, and where possible, photograph *in situ* the sculpture at all of the primary sites (those with documented links and those prominent in previous scholarship) and a selected number of secondary sites of interest (those with stylistic relevance as discerned from the survey of the Italian *Corpus* volumes). Due to problems of access and permission it was not possible to undertake a comprehensive photographic survey of all the Lombard sculptural material discussed in the thesis, but where possible photographs were taken by the author to complement images from other sources.

Investigating modes of transmission

In order to explore the nature of the relationship between Lombard and Mercian sculpture, and to investigate how non-Insular motifs found their way into the Mercian repertoire, it was important that non-sculptural art forms were included for comparison in this study. This material, including metalwork, ivories, textiles and manuscripts, was also selectively surveyed to illustrate the rich context of continental artistic production and exchange. These categories of smaller and portable material were explored initially through an examination of secondary literature and then during a number of targeted site visits, which made it possible to access key artistic collections, notably those in the treasuries of Monza and Aachen, in the Vatican Museums in Rome, and the

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[31] This approach mirrors that taken to the Mercian material, offering a similarly holistic context for the study of the material.

archaeological museums at Ravenna, Pavia and Milan. Site visits also made it possible to encounter unfamiliar material of interest, including the sculpture at Metz mentioned above, and the sixth-century pillar from Dacre, now in Venice, which as Chapter Four argues (p. 111), provides important evidence for motif transfer between different forms of media. The following chapter presents the artistic and socio-political context for the emergence and development of Lombard sculpture, including its influence outside Italy during the Carolingian-era. This places the relationship of Mercian sculpture with Lombard and Carolingian-era Italy within the context of other links involving sources available to both traditions – in the form of late Antique monumental and portable art, and contemporary or near-contemporary artistic traditions from further afield, notably the Christian East. By drawing attention to other categories of artistic material, it is possible to assess how the development of Lombard sculpture under the Carolingians was situated within the wider artistic aspirations of Charlemagne's courts. The underestimated importance of these additional, often non-sculptural, sources is reflected in the structure of both Chapter Three and Chapter Four, which follow thematic approaches to the discussion.

In summary, this chapter has highlighted the complex methodology of this research – one which evolved in response to analysis of previous scholarship and the results of the data selection and collection processes for the Mercian and comparative continental material. It has also been shown that the methodology was not designed to be exhaustive, but to provide a targeted and detailed means of fully addressing the research questions whilst acknowledging the breadth and dispersed nature of the datasets. In approaching the objectives of this research, the process of constructing a methodology brought to light the intricate relationship between the variety of responses within Mercian sculpture to continental artistic styles and the means by which these artistic styles were accessed. It became apparent that in order to understand how Mercian sculptors and patrons were accessing continental models and ideas, it was necessary to explore why they were looking to the Continent, and what it was about continental artistic styles that appealed to them. In order to address these issues, the following chapter appraises the development of the Lombard and Carolingian-sculptural style against the backdrop of late Antique monumental expression, to re-evaluate their impact on Mercian sculpture. In Chapter Four, this impact is comprehensively examined to reveal the nature and extent of non-Insular artistic influence within the Mercian repertoire – drawing attention to the underlying motives behind continental motif appropriation and its reflection in the variety of style seen in Mercian sculpture.

Chapter Three

Networks and Connections: Continental sculptural repertoires in the context of their artistic heritage

Introduction

The context for the development of the Lombard and Carolingian-era sculptural style in the late eighth and early ninth centuries is underpinned by a shared late Antique heritage. The importance of late Antique prestigious art-motifs endured in the agendas of continental and Mercian sculptors and patrons. The emergence of monumental expression in the Christian centres of Italy and the establishment of a continuity in style and iconography shaped early medieval art across the Continent and Anglo-Saxon England. The interrelated development of monumental and small-scale portable art in the promotion of the cult of saints and the self-promotion of artistic benefactors is argued to have contributed to the style of and motivations behind early medieval monumental art. This chapter emphasises the underlying socio-political and religious links that ensured Mercian craftsmen and patrons continued to look to the art of late Antiquity and its associated Christian authority for inspiration into the late eighth and early ninth centuries. The development, style, and indeed unique nature of Mercian sculpture cannot be understood without appreciating the longevity of this background.

Many of the key sculptural sites of interest situated within the Carolingian empire were established major secular and/or ecclesiastical sites by the year 774 when Charlemagne annexed the Lombard territories.[1] The survival of late Antique and Lombard monumental works including churches and their embellishments is testament to the continued and developing artistic tradition that existed in northern Italy and Rome, of which Carolingian-era sculpture was a part. The survival and maintenance of earlier fourth- to sixth-century churches as well as the emergence of new churches and monasteries between the late-seventh and ninth centuries illustrates the continued interest in and patronage of ecclesiastical sites despite the turbulent political background of numerous invading and occupying forces (see below, pp. 68–9).

The majority of sculptural embellishment that emerged from this continued patronage took the form of architectural features, particularly church furniture, friezes, pilasters and panels. Of particular note, as is discussed in more detail below (pp. 87–90) is that there is little evidence for an established tradition of figural carving in stone, and

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[1] Harrison, 1997: 140–3; Christie, 2005: 175.

the rare examples that do exist, such as the Altar of Ratchis at Cividale del Friuli, are firmly dated to the pre-Carolingian era. Indeed, the *consistency* of motifs in the decorative programme of the corpus of early medieval sculpture in northern and central Italy is arguably what distinguishes it most from Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture. In comparison to its Anglo-Saxon counterpart, Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture in Italy has very limited regional variation in either form or ornament. This stylistic coherence across such a large geographical area reflects a stability in the attitude of the patronising sector of society towards the endowment of Christian monuments – an attitude that was established in the fifth century and which persisted into and beyond the ninth century, despite the disruptions of invasions and internal conflict with the outposts of the eastern Roman Empire and Rome itself. Centres of strategic importance or religious focus maintained their status and thus their patronage by the secular and ecclesiastical elite and, particularly in the cases of Rome and Ravenna, provided the artistic models for the revival of early Christian imagery and architecture during the Carolingian period.

The material culture of the late Antique Church[1]

The legacy of late Antiquity has long been detected in the artistic styles of Charlemagne's court and the products of artistic workshops in Anglo-Saxon England.[2] The survival and preservation of late Antique monumental art-forms such as mosaics and architecture in the Christian centres of Italy ensured that they continued to provide inspiration to the artists of the late eighth- and early ninth-century West. In the declining years of the Roman Empire, Rome's importance as an imperial capital was eclipsed by the major cities of the northern plains, most notably Milan, Pavia, Verona and Ravenna (Map 3.A).[3] In addition to these centres, the northern plains contained the greatest number of cities in the fifth century, many of which became increasingly important for their position at the mouths of the main mountain passes into the Italian peninsula at a time when the Western Empire was facing external threats to stability.[4] Milan was, until

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[1] The term late Antique will be used here to describe the period from the later fourth century, before Ravenna became the favoured residence of the emperors of the Roman Empire in the West, up to the late sixth century when Milan and Pavia fell to the Lombards. For an overview of this period, see Moorhead, 2001: 38–142 and Arnaldi, 2005.

[2] Brøndsted, 1924; Kitzinger, 1936; Cramp, 1976: 270; Jewell, 1982: 57, 61, 82, 245; 2001: 249; Hawkes, 1995b; Cramp, 2006; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 79–80.

[3] Wickham, 1981: 10; Ward-Perkins, 1984: 52.

[4] Milan and Verona lay at the mouth of the central pass; Aquileia and Cividale lay at the mouth of the eastern pass and Turin and Ivrea lay at the mouth of the western pass. The other important cities of this period, Lucca, Spoleto and Benevento, were similarly situated in positions of control, at the mouths of the passes over the Apennines which separated the northern plain from the rest of the Italian peninsula (Wickham, 1981: 10–11).

the first decade of the fifth century, the administrative capital of the Western Empire and it was only its vulnerability to attack by Visigoths from the north that saw Ravenna assume its role.[5] Milan's position as an imperial capital had brought a great deal of wealth to the city and this was reflected in a programme of church 'monumentalisation' overseen by the metropolitan bishop Ambrose (d. 397) in the last two decades of the fourth century.[6] In what McLynn described as a realignment of religious topography, Ambrose added to Milan's existing imperial monuments to Christianity, which included the huge quatrefoil structure of S. Lorenzo, and the baptistery and cathedral S. Salvatore (later S. Tecla) built under Ambrose's predecessor Auxentius (d. 374).[7] As part of his vision for monumentalising Milan's Christian identity and in line with contemporary interest in the cult of saints, Ambrose positioned four *martyria* basilicas (S. Simpliciano, S. Dionigi, S. Nazzaro and S. Ambrogio) outside the city walls, encircling the city on the main routes into it, perhaps echoing the arrangement of the early churches in Rome (Map 3.B).[8] The original forms of several of these early churches have been preserved despite later alterations, and at S. Lorenzo, S. Nazzarro and S. Ambrogio it is possible to get an impression of their original splendour. The Chapel of S. Aquilino, a fourth-century imperial mausoleum adjoining S. Lorenzo, preserves contemporary mosaics including a lunette mosaic depicting Christ and the Apostles in a *Traditio Legis* scene.[9] Similarly, the fourth-century Sacello di San Vittore in Ciel d'Oro, a sepulchral chapel adjoining the basilica of S. Ambrogio and marking the cemetery of a number of early Christian martyrs, contains contemporary mosaics: a golden dome, after which the oratory is named, and six panels depicting the saints, including the earliest known representation of St. Ambrose.[10]

The activities of influential fourth-century bishops were felt elsewhere besides Milan, notably in the old provincial capital of Pavia, where interest in constructing extra-mural cemetery churches similar to those in Milan and Rome is recorded in the

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[5] Wickham, 1981: 15; Arnaldi, 2005: 1; Christie, 2006: 90.

[6] Christie, 2006: 108. Krautheimer went so far as to say that under Ambrose, whose episcopate began in 373, Milan became one of the great architectural centres in the Christian world and for some decades, the spiritual centre of the West (Krautheimer, 1965: 55; Krautheimer, 1983: 69–92). For a full account of Ambrose's activities in Milan, see McLynn, 1994.

[7] Krautheimer, 1965: 55–60; McLynn, 1994: 227; Christie, 2006: 108.

[8] McLynn, 1994: 226–7; Christie, 2006: 108–9. But for a discussion of the evidence to the contrary, see McLynn, 1994: 227–9. For an overview of the development of martyr cult in the city of Rome, see Thacker, 2007: 31–70.

[9] Beckwith, 1970: 13, pl. 15.

[10] Beckwith, 1970: 167, note 10; Mackie, 1995a. The Romanesque pulpit at S. Ambrogio is built above an elaborately carved fourth-century sarcophagus of the 'City-Gate' type (Lawrence, 1927: 6–7, Beckwith, 1970: 19, 20; Tcherikover, 1999).

documentary evidence.[11] The fourth-century episcopal church dedicated to the martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, and a second church, dedicated to SS. Nazaro and Celso were located in the cemetery area of the city outside the walls.[12] Such suburban 'martyrial sanctuaries', as Marazzi termed them, had their origins in early fourth-century Rome which, despite its decreasing importance as a political and economical centre, was still seen as the great Christian capital that Constantine had envisaged after he entered Rome in 312.[13] In addition to the great basilica cathedral of S. Giovanni in Laterano that Constantine built in the 320s within the city of Rome, the first major basilica to be raised was that above the tomb of St. Peter, outside the city walls on the Vatican Hill.[14] Also attributable to Constantine's programme of Christianising Rome, are the extramural churches of S. Lorenzo fuori le Mura, S. Agnes, S. Paolo fuori le Mura and S. Sebastiano.[15] The construction of two imperial mausolea, one for Constantine's mother Helena, next to SS. Marcellino e Pietro on the Via Labicana, and the centrally-planned S. Constanza next to S. Agnese for Constantine's daughter, demonstrate the important role that commemoration and the cult of saints played in the identity of early Christian Rome (Map 3.C).[16] The surviving mosaics in the ambulatory vault of S. Constanza testify to a programme of lavish decoration that is thought to have been applied to the interiors of all the Constantinian churches, visually emphasising the focus on the commemorated saint and to glorify the new faith of the city.[17]

Whilst the siting of churches within the walls of a city was not commonplace in the early fourth century, examples do survive in the other major sees outside Rome and Milan. The original episcopal complex at the large late-Roman city of Aquileia is thought to have been finished as early as AD 320 under the first patriarch Theodore and remains of its three-building plan and floor mosaics can still be seen beneath its fifth-

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[11] Bullough, 1966: 90. For contemporary church building activity in the western provinces of the Roman Empire, see Knight, 2007: 63–84.

[12] Bullough, 1966: 90; Christie, 2006: 107.

[13] Marazzi, 2000: 22. Rome's continued role as the heart of the Empire is testified by the poet Ausonius who described Rome in the late fourth century as 'the first of all cities' (Ausonius, I; Krautheimer, 1980: 5; Ward-Perkins, 1984: 38). Marazzi suggested that the building of churches outside Rome's walls in the cemetery areas was part of what Krautheimer had earlier seen as Constantine's 'shrewd political choices' when creating a Christian Rome in the fourth century (Krautheimer, 1983: 7–40; Marazzi, 2000: 22–3).

[14] Toynbee and Ward-Perkins, 1956; Krautheimer, 1980: 26–8; Lançon, 2000: 27–30. Constantine and his family only built three Christian buildings within Rome's walls: the Lateran basilica, mentioned here, its baptistery and S. Croce in Gerusalemme, built by Constantine's mother Helen in her palace (Krautheimer, 1980: 24; Verzone, 1968: 30).

[15] Muñoz, 1944; Krautheimer, 1980: 24–5.

[16] Krautheimer, 1965: 31; Krautheimer, 1980: 25–6.

[17] Although the full extent of the mosaic decoration of S. Constanza is now only preserved in sixteenth-century drawings, it is known to have included images of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Dome of Heaven and the Apostles as lambs, as well as the panels of vine-scroll and *putti* which can still be seen today (Krautheimer, 1965: 43–4).

century successor.[18] The huge floor mosaic of the southern part of the fourth-century cathedral, which is the largest known example of its kind and depicts donor portraits, Christian images and numerous birds and animals, is now preserved and still visible within the present eleventh-century church (Ill. 3.1).

Towards the end of the fourth century and into the first decade of the fifth, before the Visigothic occupation of the city in 410, numerous churches were built within the city walls of Rome as part of the growing dominance of the papacy in church building.[19] Many of these churches were lavish conversions of old Christian community meeting places within dense urban areas of the city and were designed to proclaim the authority of the Church.[20] One such church is that of S. Clemente, whose late fourth-century walls incorporated an earlier community centre, itself originally an industrial building, and a shrine to Mithras in a former house.[21] Similarly, the basilica of S. Pudenziana was built in the 390s on the site of a bath building, but was redecorated in the following fifteen years to reflect the 'new classical current' that had been embraced in the art of the Church in Rome.[22] The apse mosaic is the earliest surviving figural design of its kind in a Roman church and captures the papacy's desire to give the Church an imperial authority; an artistic development that would continue to influence monumental artistic production into the early medieval period and resonate across the Christian West, and as far afield as the northern kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England.[23] The mosaic depicts Christ in Majesty, enthroned in front of the walls of Jerusalem; with a Golgothic mound bearing a *crux gemmata* rising behind him, and flanked in the heavens by winged Evangelist symbols.[24] To either side of Christ, the Apostles and two allegorical female figures are shown in Roman dress, holding court and gesturing in various poses (Ill. 3.2).

The construction and endowment of churches continued in Italy during the fifth century despite the onset of a series of invasions by external forces, beginning in AD 401 with the Visigoths, under General Alaric (c. 370–410), which prompted the

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[18] Krautheimer, 1965: 23, 24, fig. 6; Verzone, 1968: 32–3; Christie, 2006: 96.

[19] For discussion of the motivations of these early popes, and the impact of the nobility and wealth of the families from which they came, see Krautheimer, 1980: 33–4.

[20] Krautheimer, 1980: 33–5. These late fourth-, early fifth-century churches include S. Maria in Trastevere, S. Sabina on the Aventine, S. Marco near the Capitoline, S. Anastasia on the Palatine, S. Pietro in Vincoli on the Esquiline and S. Vitale between the Quirinal and Viminal. For a full list, see Krautheimer, 1980: 33–5.

[21] Krautheimer, 1980: 34.

[22] *op. cit.*, 40.

[23] For a discussion of the appropriation of *Romanitas* and imperial authority in Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture, see Hawkes, 2003a: 69–100.

[24] Beckwith, 1970: 14, pl. 18. For the symbolic role of Jerusalem in the development of Rome's image as a Christian focus, and its impact into the Carolingian era, see Kessler, 2002: 695–778, especially p. 707.

relocation of the Western Empire's administrative centre from Milan to Ravenna.[25] Successive invasions by the Vandals in the 430s, the Huns in the 450s and the Ostrogoths in the 480s and 490s, whilst disruptive to the stability of the Western Empire, appear not to have impacted greatly on the continuity of church patronage.[26] In Rome, the building of the two great basilicas of S. Sabina on the Aventine (c. 425–432) and S. Maria Maggiore on the Esquiline (begun in the 420s but completed during the pontificate of Sixtus III, 432–440) epitomise the culmination of the papacy's desire to align the Church of Rome with the classical tradition (Map 3.C).[27] In appearance and scale, these two churches looked back to the monumental public works of Rome's classical past, assembling trabeated colonnades of classical columns and capitals to frame and give a vertical emphasis to the huge open space of their naves.[28] The mosaic decoration of these churches, of which only a fragment now remains in S. Sabina, was equally impressive and complex in its iconography, with the aim of further aggrandizing the buildings and emphasising their spiritual and actual wealth. In S. Maria Maggiore, original mosaics are preserved on the front of the apse and above the entablatures of the nave colonnades in the clerestory, forming a unique pictorial cycle of Old and New Testament images glorifying Christ as ruler of the world (Ills. 3.3 and 3.4).[29] At S. Sabina, the incomplete but unparalleled wooden doors, with carved relief panels depicting scenes from the Old and New Testament and symbolic imagery, bear further witness to the scale of adornment that these important basilicas enjoyed.[30]

The large basilicas of Rome became commonplace in the Christian topography of fifth-century Italy: in the mid-fourth century, the three-building complex at Aquileia was significantly enlarged to include a new large aisled basilica, and later a second one,

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[25] Christie, 1995: 70; Gillet, 2001: 131–67; Moorhead, 2001: 38; Arnaldi, 2005: 1–6.

[26] Krautheimer, 1980: 45–6; Ward-Perkins, 1984: 62; Christie, 1995: 70; Moorhead, 2005a: 118–39; Moorhead, 2005b: 140–51. Indeed, Arnaldi argued that the Germanic invaders, who were largely pagan but whose leaders often converted to Arian Christianity, stimulated 'the growing spread and consolidation of a new type of patriotism, both Roman and Catholic' (Arnaldi, 2005: 7). The Christian response to the Germanic invasions is encapsulated in Bishop Augustine of Hippo's *City of God*, which he wrote in the aftermath of the Visigothic sacking of Rome in 410 (Augustine; Krautheimer, 1980: 46). For the wide ranging influence of Augustine's writing, including the Venerable Bede, see Dyson, 2005 and Thacker, 2005. For an overview of the key politico-theological distinctions between Orthodox and Arian Christianity, see Krautheimer, 1983: pp. 71–2 and Pelikan, 1971.

[27] Krautheimer, 1983: 96, 103. Despite a limited Imperial presence in Rome, Gillet has demonstrated that Pope Sixtus' building programme, which included the redecoration of St. Peter's, St. John Lateran and St. Paul Outside the Walls, benefited from considerable donations by the Imperial family (Gillet, 2001: 145).

[28] Krautheimer argued that the centrally-planned church of S. Stefano Rotundo, c. 460s, was similarly derived in style from classical architectural traditions (Krautheimer, 1983: 107). See also, Brandenburg, 2005: 200–1.

[29] The complex iconographic programme of the S. Maria Maggiore mosaics and the relationship between the cycle on the apse wall, and those in the nave are discussed in detail in Spain, 1979: 518–540.

[30] Brandenburg, 2005: 175, ill. 93.

replacing the northern and southern halls.[31] These constructions were designed to reflect the size and wealth of their Christian communities, and to assert the dominance and integration of the Church in the surrounding urban landscape as well as in the minds of the people. The importance of community and the increasingly important role that the bishops played within them can be seen in the widespread construction of baptisteries during this period.[32] In Rome during the fifth century baptisteries were built at many of the old community churches including the Lateran, S. Cecilia in Trastevere and S. Croce in Gerusalemme. Elsewhere, as at Brescia, baptisteries were an intrinsic part of urban episcopal complexes.[33] In Ravenna, the original cathedral baptistery dating from the period when the city became a see, was embellished in the 450s under Bishop Neon with elaborate mosaic decoration (Ill. 3.5).[34] Both the mosaic decoration in the baptistery and that of the sumptuous mausoleum of Galla Placidia (392–450), the sister of Emperor Honorius, reflect the influence of imperial Byzantine tastes on Ravennate art of the first half of the fifth century (Ill. 3.6).[35] The mosaic of the dome in Neon's baptistery, with the arrangement of twelve apostles on a gold ground, separated by palm trees and encircling a central roundel depicting the Baptism of Christ, provided the inspiration for the Arian baptistery, of the later fifth century, which was constructed when Theoderic (c. 454–526) made Ravenna the capital of Ostrogoth Italy.[36] There was a general continuity in church building activity throughout the later-fifth century and into the sixth century, despite the arrival of the Ostrogoths under Theoderic in 489. It was during this time that the first intramural churches were constructed in centres such as Pavia, where the patronage of the Ostrogoth kings extended not only to the new churches of S. Eusebio, S. Pietro and SS. Cosma e Damiano, but also to the restoration of the city walls and the construction of a new palace.[37] The building programme that took place under Theoderic's rule was part of his desire to emulate and recreate the glory of the western Roman Empire, but at the same time was a means of asserting the

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[31] Cantino Wataghin, 2006: 289–90.

[32] Baptisteries were being constructed in Italy from as early as the fourth century, as the extant remains at Aosta and Milan testify (Krautheimer, 1983: 77; Christie, 2006: 108).

[33] Brogolio, 2006: 253. The theological significance of church building at this time is apparent in the sermons of Augustine, who highlighted the link between the fabric of earthly churches and the construction of God's Church and a sense of community (*Patrologia Latina*, vol. 38, col. 1474; Cantino Wataghin, 2006: 296).

[34] Verzone, 1968: 21; Wharton, 1987: 358–75; Mauskopf Deliyannis, 2010.

[35] Verzone, 1968: 29; Beckwith, 1970: 14–16, Deliyannis, 2010: 62–83. Of Galla Placidia's other famous monument in Ravenna, the fifth-century church of S. Giovanni Evangelista, only fragments of the original mosaic floor survive. All of the buildings constructed in Ravenna during this period reused *spolia* from earlier monuments. For a discussion of the symbolic and practical reasons for this, see Deliyannis, 2010: 18–19, 61 (and references on p. 311, note 55).

[36] Verzone, 1968: 52; Beckwith, 1970: 49.

[37] Bullough, 1966: 91; Ward-Perkins, 1984: 30; Christie, 2006: 107.

authority of the Arian branch of Christianity that the Ostrogoths followed.[38] Besides the baptistery, Theoderic oversaw the construction of two Arian churches in Ravenna, those now called S. Spirito and Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, in addition to the restoration of the palace in the city.[39] In Sant'Apollinare Nuovo (originally dedicated to S. Martino in Coelo Aureo), the only extant remains of Theoderic's church are the portions of mosaic preserved in the nave which show Classe, Ravenna's old port, Theoderic's palace and the representations of Christ and the Virgin (Ill. 3.7).[40]

After Ravenna had been reclaimed for the Roman Empire by Justinian in AD 540, the impact of renewed imperial connections was felt in previously Arian churches such as Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, and in new foundations such as San Vitale.[41] Following the conversion of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo to orthodoxy, the lower register of mosaic in the nave, which is thought to have originally depicted Theoderic and his court, was replaced by a procession of virgins on one side and a procession of martyrs on the other (Ills. 3.8 and 3.9).[42] In the upper registers of mosaic the classical influences on the style of figures can be seen in the nimbed saints depicted in the panels between each window of the clerestory, and above that, in the scenes from the life of Christ, which alternate with decorative panels along the length of the nave. The octagonal church of San Vitale, consecrated by Bishop Maximian after 547, is a monument to Byzantine Ravenna and demonstrates the wealth of patronage that the city enjoyed during the reign of Justinian. San Vitale's plan and its marble and stucco decoration are Byzantine in design, and the elaborate mosaic ornament which covers the side walls and arches of the presbytery and the apse and its preceding cross-vault are testament to the skill of the Byzantine mosaic artists. Of particular interest is the sprawling and lively acanthus scroll design which carpets the cross-vault in front of the apse, and the portraits of Justinian, Bishop Maximian and the Empress Theodora in the apse, which are not unlike Byzantine icons in their pose and expression, and which allude to the connections between the earthly court and the heavenly one, as represented by the central image of Christ enthroned (Ill. 3.10). As Yasin has highlighted, the connection is emphasised by the flanking position

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[38] Ward-Perkins, 1984: 72; Christie, 1995: 489–93; Wickham, 2009: 89–90; Moorhead, 2001: 46–7. For a complete account of Theoderic's activities in Italy, see Moorhead, 1992.

[39] Deliyannis, 2010: 114–19. The imposing and unusual circular mausoleum in which Theoderic was buried in c. 526, still survives. For a description of Theoderic's mausoleum and the origins of its design, see Krautheimer, 1965: 192, pl. 106B; Verzone, 1968: 58–60 and Deliyannis, 2010: 124–36.

[40] Beckwith, 1970: 48–9; Deliyannis, 2010: 146–74.

[41] Christie, 1989: 266–7; Wickham, 2009: 92–5; Deliyannis, 2010: 223–50. For an overview of the Eastern Empire during the sixth century and the demise of Ostrogoth rule, see Louth, 2005: 93–117 and Moorhead, 2005b: 148–51.

[42] Beckwith, 1970: 49. Yasin has suggested that the processing saints depicted on either side of the nave were carefully chosen for being named during the performance of the liturgy in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, as occurred at other contemporary Byzantine churches (Yasin, 2009: 258–9).

of these figures that draws the onlookers' eye in towards the central composition of Christ, who sits between two angels and Bishop Ecclesius on the left, and offers the crown of victory to St. Vitalis on the right.[43] This type of apsidal composition, whereby saints and contemporary individuals mediate the approach to the central figure of Christ, was a popular theme in sixth-century mosaic decoration. In Rome, this arrangement can be seen in the sixth-century church of SS. Cosma e Damiano in the Forum, where Christ is flanked by representations of the titular saints Cosmas and Damian, and by St. Theodore and Bishop Felix IV (526–30) (Ill. 3.11).[44] Similarly, the later sixth-century mosaics of the triumphal arch in S. Lorenzo fuori mura depict the introduction of the church benefactor Bishop Pelagius II (579–90) into the company of Christ with St. Laurence and other saints.[45]

In Ravenna, and also finished during the episcopate of Maximian (d. 556), is the elaborate mosaic in the basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, outside the city in the old port (Ill. 3.12).[46] The apse mosaic depicts Saint Apollinaris in the *orans* position, welcoming a procession of twelve sheep, beneath a *crux gemmata* flanked by the prophets and apostles of the Transfiguration. In the arch above the apse Christ is depicted with the four Evangelist symbols, while the apostles and angels rise up to meet them from below. Also dating from this period is the famous ivory Throne of Maximian, discussed in relation to Mercian sepulchral sculpture in Chapter Five, which is now housed in the Museo Arcivescovile in Ravenna (Ill. 3.13). The chair, which is thought to have been a gift from Justinian in Constantinople, has a wooden core but is covered with carved ivory panels depicting scenes from the life of Christ, the life of Joseph, and on the front the figure of John the Baptist between the four Evangelists. The panels are framed with carved border-panels of foliate ornament, inhabited by various birds and beasts.[47] Ravenna undoubtedly had a strong and well-established tradition of sculptural carving as can be seen in the quantity and range of surviving late Antique sarcophagi and chancel reliefs. In addition to the sarcophagi in the church of S. Francesco discussed in Chapter Five (p. 170) in connection with Mercian apostle iconography, fine sarcophagi survive in the mausoleum of Galla Placidia and S. Apollinare in Nuovo where the late Antique taste for symbolism can be seen in the

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[43] Yasin, 2009: 274–5.

[44] Kalas, 1999: 108–72; Yanis, 2009: 275–6.

[45] Beckwith, 1970: 66–7; Yanis, 2009: 276–8, fig. 6.15.

[46] Beckwith, 1970: 54; Deliyannis, 2010: 259–75.

[47] Beckwith, 1970: 52–5. The standing posture of the Evangelists is thought to derive from an early eastern Christian, and specifically Egyptian origin and use. For further discussion of the provenance of the chair and the style of carving of the ivory panels, see Capps, 1927: 61–101 and Morey, 1941: 48.

widely used inhabited vine-scroll, together with lamb and peacock motifs (Ills. 3.14 and 3.15).[48] In the cathedral, the carved marble *ambo* of Archbishop Agnellus, c. 556–569, is notable for the arrangement of animals and birds into gridded compartments, a design that persisted into the Lombard and Carolingian era, as discussed below (pp. 81–2).[49]

The wealth of artistic production during the late Antique period, and its inherent link to the promotion of the Church, provided a strong and influential foundation for the development of early medieval art in Italy and beyond, into the Carolingian territories of western Europe and the Insular world that included Anglo-Saxon Mercia. The enduring, classicising nature of the architectural and decorative styles produced between the later fourth and late sixth centuries thus provide the lynchpin for subsequent artistic development. As the following sections demonstrate, the legacy of late Antiquity not only influenced the style of later sculptural developments, but also the ways in which sculpture was used as a means of authoritative monumental expression.

The significance of royal and religious centres of the Lombards

In AD 568 the first of the Lombard invasions entered Italy from Hungary under the leadership of Alboin.[50] Some centres, such as Pavia, were able to resist the initial wave of invaders, but by 569 the Lombards had advanced westwards to Milan, on the way seizing strategic centres including Cividale del Friuli and Aquileia with little resistance (Map 3.D).[51] By the beginning of the seventh century the Lombards had gained control over two thirds of the Italian peninsular and by the late seventh century this control extended to three quarters of the peninsula.[52] The early centuries of Lombard control were a period of transition, with the gradual foundation of a Lombard state under Agilulf (590/1–616) and its eventual conversion to Catholicism by the end of the seventh century, largely as a result of Agilulf's catholic wife Theodolinda.[53] The remains of Theodolinda's royal treasury at Monza are testament to the wealth of the royal palace and cathedral there and the important role that gift exchange played in the

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[48] Beckwith, 1970: 56.
[49] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 100. One notable example is the eighth-century panel at S. Maria in Aracoeli in Rome, on which a grid of individual compartments house various animals, birds and geometric motifs (Pani Ermini, 1974a: 84–6, pl. 11, fig. 32).
[50] Wickham, 1981: 28; Christie, 1995: 70; Wickham, 2009: 140. Most of what is known from primary sources about the Lombards in Italy is derived from the accounts of Paul the Deacon, an eighth-century monk who wrote the *Historia Langobardorum* (Goffart, 1988: 329–431; Collins, 1999: 183–203, 213–18). For a translated volume, see *History of the Langobards*, W. Dudley Foulke (trans.), 1906 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania).
[51] Paul the Deacon, *Hist. Lang.*, ii. 9–10, 12, 14, 25; Brogolio, 2000: 302–9; Moorhead, 2005b: 152–3.
[52] Wickham, 1981: 28.
[53] Fanning, 1981: 241–58; Moorhead, 2001: 139; Arnaldi, 2005: 37, 39.

movement of prestigious objects.[54] In agreement with Pope Gregory the Great, Theodolinda endeavoured to create at Monza a focal centre for pilgrimage.[55] As part of this campaign, a great number of reliquary *ampullae*, including sixteen containing oil from the Holy Land, were endowed to the cathedral and many of these survive, with their original lists detailing which martyrs' tombs had supplied the oil.[56] The *ampullae* are decorated with intricate reliefs and draw on Palestinian late Antique mosaic and metalwork designs, including scenes such as the Adoration of the Magi, the Crucifixion and the Ascension (Ill. 3.16).[57] The treasury at Monza also preserves a remarkable collection of liturgical metalwork from this period, including a Byzantine cross bearing a niello Crucifixion scene, which is thought to have been one of many gifts to Theodolinda from Gregory the Great.[58]

Theodolinda was responsible for a number of church foundations in fortified Lombard centres, but arguably the greatest transformation of the ecclesiastical landscape during this period resulted from the rise in monastic foundations.[59] Since the foundation of the monastery at Bobbio by Columbanus in the first decade of the seventh century, the Lombard kings and aristocrats had begun to establish monastic institutions in central, and often strategic, locations.[60] Thus, monastic foundations were established in Pavia during the seventh century by king Grimoald (the convent of S. Agata) and in the eighth century by Liutprand (S. Pietro in Ciel d'Oro) and Ratchis (S. Maria della Cacce).[61] Similarly, the eighth century saw the foundation of S. Benedetto near Brescia by Aistulf (d. 756) and the foundation of S. Giulia in Brescia by Desiderius the last king of the Lombards (d. 786).[62] Whilst the Lombard kings appear to have used monastic institutions as landed centres for their royal power, and as will be shown their patronage and embellishment of these centres was extensive, there was continuity in the importance of constructing what Christie called 'commemorative landscapes' within

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[54] As well as the collection of high status objects surviving in the museum at Monza, Paul the Deacon records how the palace itself was beautifully decorated, with now lost frescoes (*Hist. Lang.*, iv. 22; Christie, 1995: 147, 161, 185–6). Wickham noted the importance of royal patronage in the changing scale of public building and 'private ostentation' (1989: 142).

[55] Christie, 1995: 185–6; Bougard, 2002: 48.

[56] Elsner, 1997, 118–19, 121–3; Di Corato and Vergani, 2007: 9–12. For sources relating to pilgrimage in the Holy Land during the late Antique and early medieval period, see Wilkinson, 1977: 1–13, 139.

[57] Conti, 1983: 24–5; Di Corato and Vergani, 2007: 12; Cormack and Vassilaki, 2008: 85, nos. 26 and 27.

[58] Di Corato and Vergani, 2007: 13. In addition to the range of metalwork, the treasury also houses a collection of early Christian and medieval textiles and ivories, which are discussed later in this section.

[59] Arnaldi, 2005: 37; Azzara, 2002: 95, 96.

[60] Azzara, 2005: 95; Christie, 2006: 143. The land at Bobbio, on which Columbanus founded the monastery, was provided by Agilulf after his marriage to Theodolinda, and was intended to assist with the conversion of the Lombards. For an overview, see Richter, 2008.

[61] Kingsley Porter, 1917b: 215–30; Azzara, 2002: 95; Christie, 2006: 107.

[62] Wemple, 1985: 86; Azzara, 2002: 95.

community churches.[63] In this way, the local community played an active part in the patronage and construction of churches that provided an enduring focus for the commemoration of the deceased from that community. This can most clearly be seen in the late sixth-century pavements of S. Eufemia and S. Maria delle Grazie in the fortified port of Grado where the mosaic donor inscriptions record a complex system of patronage that involved the whole community, with the bishop at its centre, in order to create a direct appeal to the saints' intercessory role (Ills. 3.17 and 3.18).[64]

The Lombards inherited a landscape that, through the Ostrogoths, had retained much of its imperial character and this provided the framework for the establishment of Lombard dukedoms across northern Italy and as far south as Spoleto and Benevento.[65] Pavia, and more specifically Theoderic's palace there, became the royal capital of the Lombard kingdom in the early seventh century, by which time the independence of the Lombard dukes had largely been eroded.[66] Perhaps as a result of the construction of a Lombard state, and one which was based on a central royal power, there is a noticeable hegemony to the style of monumental artwork produced in northern and central Italy between the seventh and the late eighth century. A programme of urban renewal, which included but was not limited to the foundation of monastic centres, encouraged what Christie called a 'substantial cultural revival'.[67] Indeed, Mitchell went so far as to state that 'the artistic patronage of the Lombard courts and the Lombard elite in the century before the Carolingian annexation of northern Italy in 773/74 was one of the most sophisticated, ambitious, and refined in Europe'.[68] The rise of monastic foundations necessitated a revival in building in stone which in turn prompted the development of decorative architectural ornament. The dominant form of decorative monument from the later seventh century onwards is a range of high quality bordered inscriptions and epitaphs that testify to the royal and ducal foundation and patronage of monasteries.[69] An extraordinary collection of these sizeable monuments is now preserved in the Castello Visconteo in Pavia, where epitaphs survive from the churches of S. Salvatore,

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[63] Christie, 2006: 174–5.

[64] Christie, 2006: 174–6; Yasin, 2009: 125–9.

[65] Moorhead, 2005b: 154–5. Moorhead highlighted that the Lombards minted coins in imitation of those being produced at Ravenna by the Byzantine imperial mint (Moorhead, 2001: 142). This would suggest that the Lombards were trying to create a state with comparable legitimacy and authority. Indeed, the royal complex at Pavia, which included the palace, a number of churches and bath houses, and of which sadly little archaeological evidence now remains, was unparalleled until c. 788 when Charlemagne began the construction of his palace at Aachen (Wickham, 1981: 38).

[66] Bullough, 1966: 94–7; Wickham, 1981: 38; Brogolio, 2000: 309; Vicini *et al.*, 2000: 236–40; Bougard, 2002: 45.

[67] Christie, 2005: 176.

[68] Mitchell, 2000: 347.

[69] For an analysis of the range and form of these epitaphs and inscriptions, see the sections by John Mitchell and Flavia de Rubeis in Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: 127–8, 132, 135–7.

founded by King Aripert (652–661), S. Ambrogio, founded by King Grimoald (662–671) and S. Maria alle Pertiche, founded by Queen Rodelinda (672–688) (Ill. 3.19).[70] Whilst the primary function of these monuments was to record the generous activities of the churches' benefactors, they also preserve in their borders the emerging Lombard style of inhabited and non-inhabited vine-scroll and geometric ornament that developed and became fully established during the period of the so-called 'Liutprand Renaissance' (712–744). The fragmentary epitaph for Queen Ragintruda from S. Maria alle Pertiche in Pavia is enclosed on two sides by a continuous border of stylised vine-scroll comprised of two single-stemmed vines interlocking to form roundels, each containing a single bunch of grapes or frond-like leaf (Ill. 3.20).[71] In the eighth century similar motifs with stylised vine-scroll were used on the funerary inscriptions for Audoaldo, c. 763, and Cunincpert (d. 700).[72]

By the middle of the eighth century the transference of these border designs to the developing ornament of architectural sculpture is evident. Frieze fragments and pilasters from churches in or near Pavia, including the Monastero della Pusterla and S. Pietro in Ciel d'Oro incorporate stylised vine-scroll and, at the latter, include iconographical references to the True Vine (in the form of a chalice from which the vine springs, and the Lamb of God at its top).[73] In addition to a preference for vine-scroll, the Lombards developed a distinctive repertoire of animal and bird motifs, which they applied to relief panels. At Pavia these are characterised by two panels that were once thought to have been part of Theodota's sarcophagus, but are now believed to be church furniture (Ills. 3.21 and 3.22).[74] One panel shows a pair of confronted peacocks drinking from a chalice, and the other depicts a pair of confronted winged mythical beasts on either side of a plant from which leaves, fruit and a pair of birds' heads sprout. Both panels are enclosed by a thick border of stylised single-stemmed vine-scroll forming roundels that contain fruit, leaves and pecking birdfs. The shallow carving of the relief and its delicate style epitomise Lombard sculpture of this period and is reminiscent of their ornamental metalwork. The open and rounded vine-scroll with geometric-style leaf

[70] Bullough, 1966: 99; Tolomelli in Vicini *et al.*, 2000: 240; Christie, 2006: 144.
[71] Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: fig. 87.
[72] Peroni, 1975: figs. 124 and 130. This style of bordered inscription appears to have been popular across the Lombard state. A comparable monument to those at Pavia is the epitaph for S. Cumiano (d. 736) in the Museo dell'Abbazia at Bobbio (Peroni, 1972, pl. xxix; Destefanis, 2008: 121–8). This epitaph was carved on the back of a late Antique sarcophagus lid and bears rope-twist ornament which Newman and Walsh have compared with an ornate cross on the east face of the Marigold Stone at Carndonagh (2007: 173).
[73] Peroni, 1972: pl. xxii; Peroni, 1975: figs. 106, 122. Comparable designs survive on architectural fragments in the cathedral at Spoleto (Serra, 1961: pls. xxvi a and b).
[74] Kingsley Porter, 1917a: 196; Haseloff, 1930: pl. 44; Gray, 1935: 197; Peroni, 1975: figs. 126–7; Christie, 2006: 144–5. For the history of Theodota in Pavia, see Peroni, 1972: 1–43.

shapes can certainly be paralleled in Lombard metalwork of the early seventh century.[75] Inspiration from metalwork can also be seen in the prolific and unique Lombard motif of triple-stranded interlace.[76] This motif occurs on architectural fragments throughout northern and central Italy and persists as the most common motif from the early eighth century into the twelfth (Ill. 3.24).[77]

The urban monastic foundations at Pavia were mirrored across the Lombard state, most notably at Brescia where archaeological excavations have provided valuable insight into the relationship between royal monastic institutions and other royal buildings such as palaces.[78] In the mid-eighth century land was given by King Aistulf to Desiderius (then only the Duke of Brescia, but who later became the last Lombard king) for the foundation of the female monastery of S. Salvatore.[79] Desiderius established his daughter Anselberga as the first abbess and after he became king in c. 753 he endowed the monastery with numerous relics.[80] This royal investment undoubtedly helped S. Salvatore become the important economic centre that the Carolingians encountered in 774 and ensured that it received their continuing patronage, although there is little archaeological evidence surviving to mark the transition.[81] Of Desiderius' foundation at Brescia the extant remains include carved architectural fragments and frescoes. Of the sculptural fragments surviving from this period, the triangular *ambo* panel depicting a peacock amongst vine-scroll best exemplifies the technical skill of the craftsmen (Ill. 3.23).[82] As on the panels at Pavia, the style of carving on the Brescia panels is characterised by its shallow relief and delicate detailing. The vine-scroll is similarly comparable in its form, being much stylised and forming roundels that enclose frond-like leaves and bunches of berries.[83]

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[75] Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: no. 18.

[76] Christie, 1995: pl. 15; Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: no. 49.

[77] Sites preserving fragments with triple-stranded interlace can be found in every volume of the *Corpus della Sculptura Altomedievale*, but notable examples survive at Pavia (Peroni, 1975: fig. 105) and Cividale del Friuli.

[78] Panazza, 1962; Brogolio, 1989: 156–65; Brogolio, 1999; Christie, 2006: 170. Mitchell and Brogolio have demonstrated how the extensive elite patronage of urban centres percolated out into rural sites in the surrounding countryside (Mitchell, 2000: 347–70; Brogolio, 2000: 299–323). For an overview of the relationship between urban and rural sites in the Lombard state, see Harrison, 1993: 54.

[79] Wemple, 1985: 86; Brogolio, 2000: 315.

[80] Wemple, 1985: 86–9; Balzaretti, 2000: 242.

[81] Kingsley Porter, 1916: 217; Wemple, 1985: 90; Christie, 2005: 176. Documentary evidence suggests that new buildings were not added to the complex at S. Salvatore by the Carolingians until the 830s, under the Frankish Bishop Rampert (Brogolio, 1993: 111–13; Christie, 2005: 176).

[82] Fragments of a second matching triangular panel, also appearing to depict a peacock, are also preserved in the museum (Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966: 49, fig. 30).

[83] Mitchell argued that these peacock reliefs were imitating fifth and sixth-century Ravennite models (2000: 349). This is explored in the following chapter.

The monumental expression of ducal and royal patronage is perhaps best preserved at Cividale del Friuli, the first Lombard duchy, where the Altar of Ratchis (737–744) and the *Tempietto Longobardo* (c. 760) demonstrate the diversity and quality of Lombard plastic art. The Altar of Ratchis, now housed in the cathedral treasury, is rectangular and just under a metre high, and formed by four panels, each bearing figural scenes of a type uncommon in the Lombard sculptural repertoire.[84] The front panel depicts Christ flanked by two cherubs in a mandorla carried by four angels; the two side panels depict Elizabeth's visit to the Virgin and the Adoration of the Magi; and the back panel contains crosses and a rectangular opening (Ills. 3.25–3.27). The altar is unusual in both its form and its content: as explored in Chapter Five, there are very few examples of Lombard sculpture that are free standing and not architectural, and as has been outlined in this chapter, the ornamental repertoire is dominated by decorative schemes using vine-scroll, geometric patterns and a limited range of animals. The combination of unusual form and unusual ornament provides a unique insight into the Lombard approach to monumentality and functional imagery. As a focus for worship or veneration the altar was an appropriate recipient for figural scenes imbued with iconographical significance in a way that architectural carving, which is often peripheral, was not. The Byzantine-influenced details of the figures' clothing, hair and eyes, combined with the compartmentalisation of scenery that is reminiscent of icon-art, would have evoked a sense of imperial grandeur fitting for a ducal monument. A near-contemporary monument of equal grandeur is the elaborate font of Callisto (737–756) now also in the cathedral treasury.[85] The large octagonal structure is formed by carved panels at the base, above which are eight re-used late Antique columns supporting eight arched panels. The influence of Byzantine and eastern artistic motifs can be seen in the fantastical beasts populating the arched panels, and the extensive use of intricately composed patterned borders of vine-scroll, acanthus-scrolls and geometric patterns.[86]

The *Tempietto Longobardo*, now within the complex of the convent of S. Maria in Valle in Cividale is a rare surviving example of Lombard monumental art in stucco.[87] The *Tempietto* is thought to have been constructed as a royal chapel, associated with a

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[84] Haseloff, 1930: pl. 45; Tagliaferri, 1981: 203–9, pls. 311–14. The altar is thought to have been made in the period between Ratchis' election to Duke of Friuli in 739 but before he became king in 744 (Tagliaferri, 1981: 206; Christie, 1995: 103–4).

[85] Kingsley Porter, 1917a: 198–9; L'Orange and Torp, 1977a: pl. 149; Tagliaferri, 1981: 210–14, pls. 85–97.

[86] The vine-scroll in particular closely parallels the decorative mosaic schemes in S. Vitale in Ravenna (L'Orange and Torp, 1979a: ill. 109).

[87] The dating of the chapel to the second half of the eighth century is based on Torp's palaeographic study of surviving lettering on the contemporary frescoes (Torp, 1959; Nordhagen, 1990f: 387). For colour plates of the surviving frescoes in the Tempietto, see L'Orange and Torp, 1977.

nearby residence, and the quality and extent of its internal decoration would certainly support royal patronage. The original stucco decoration of the chapel's west wall is arranged in two registers. The lower register is filled with a large and intricately deigned arch, composed of vine-scroll and ornate rosettes, framing the fragmentary remains of a contemporary fresco depicting Christ (Ill. 3.28).[88] Above are six near-life size female figures, four of which have tentatively been identified as martyrs.[89] The figures are dressed in full-length robes; all have haloes, and four of them wear crowns. Beneath and above the figures runs a continuous narrow frieze with a floral motif, and the group is broken in the middle by an ornate window surround. As with the Altar of Ratchis, the stucco figures in the chapel can be seen to have drawn on Byzantine models. The tall, slender form of the figures, the linear nature of the robes with their embellished trim, and the oval-shaped eyes are all in imitation of Byzantine art styles. As with the altar, this imitation was deliberate and probably designed to evoke the authority and status of the Eastern Empire and its exarchate at Ravenna.[90]

This review of the development of the Lombard sculptural style has emphasised the legacy of late Antiquity in both the style of sculpture that emerged in Lombard aristocratic centres, and the ways in which monumental decorative sculpture was used to reinforce the Lombard's dominance over the inherited landscape. This correlation between sculptural style and intended use or audience persisted into the Carolingian era when, as the following discussion reveals, it shaped the development of sculpture across the Carolingian territories of Italy and western Europe. Understanding this development, and more importantly the creative limitations that it fostered, exposes the key differences between the nature of Mercian and continental sculpture. Conversely, the following analysis illustrates the important stylistic links that are apparent between Mercian sculpture and other forms of artistic media made available through object circulation.

The Carolingian endowment of a Lombard legacy

In 774, after successful appeals to the Carolingian Frankish court by papal Rome, Charlemagne completed his takeover of the Lombard kingdom (Map 3.E). By this time, the Lombards had developed an accomplished sculptural tradition, working in stone,

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[88] Kingsley Porter, 1915: pl. 57, fig. 6; L'Orange and Torp, 1977a: pls. 95–9.
[89] L'Orange and Torp, 1977a, 1977b, 1979; Tagliaferri, 1981: 265.
[90] The figures can be compared with the processing virgins in the Justinian-era mosaics in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, or the equally Byzantine seventh-century fresco figure of St. Demitrios in S. Maria Antiqua (L'Orange and Torp, 1977a: ill. 151).

stucco and terracotta to create ornamented, predominantly architectural features. Under the Carolingians, patronage of established Lombard religious centres continued, and there was continuity in the style of embellishment that many churches received during the late eighth and ninth centuries. As Christie has highlighted, Lombard bishops appear to have remained in place after the Carolingian takeover, and indeed seem to have enjoyed greater local prominence.[91] As noted above in the discussion of S. Salvatore in Brescia, the evidence for renovation and embellishment in the period immediately following the Carolingian takeover is limited, and this is probably a result of the limited impact that the incoming Carolingians had on the existing Lombard ecclesiastical hierarchy. Thus, at other important centres in northern and central Italy which underwent urban renewal and artistic patronage during the 'Liutprand Renaissance', notably Pavia and Lucca, the evidence for Carolingian endowments does not manifest itself until the end of the eighth century.[92]

Sculpture and other monumental art forms produced during the transition period of the late eighth and early ninth centuries reflect the continuing persistence of local Lombard production and its distinctive style. In Milan, early ninth-century architectural sculpture from the church of S. Maria D'Aurona, founded in the mid-eighth century, demonstrates the accomplished Lombard sculptural style of this period.[93] As with Lombard material from the preceding period, the dominant forms of sculptural carving are architectural: predominantly friezes, pilasters and capitals.[94] Similarly, the most common types of ornament employed are vine-scroll and abstract geometric patterns, often incorporating triple-stranded interlace. Whilst the vine-scroll is characteristically stylised, the range of leaf designs and their careful arrangement within ornate moulded borders is more accomplished than their earlier counterparts. The frond-like leaves and the solitary grape bunches were still the most popular type of foliage on the pilasters (Ills. 3.30 and 3.31), but on the frieze-fragments triple-lobed buds and heart-shaped leaves enter the repertoire (Ill. 3.29). The decorative intention of these architectural pieces is unmistakable. The repetitive arrangement of the vine-scroll is mirrored in the varied geometric designs, where the influence of metalwork and, as Mitchell has argued, inlaid late Antique architectural decoration, can be seen in the cut-away

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[91] Harrison, 1997: 140–3; Christie, 2005: 175.

[92] Ward-Perkins, 1984: 244–9; Christie, 1995: 148–9; Christie, 2005: 176. The first site to receive Carolingian acknowledgment in the documentary evidence is S'Ambrogio in Milan, which was founded by Archbishop Peter in 789 and received subsequent Carolingian patronage (Balzaretti, 2000: 242).

[93] For a history of the sculpture collection from S. Maria D'Aurona and how it came to be housed in the Castello Sforzesco, see Dianzani, 1989: 21–5.

[94] Kingsley Porter, 1917a: 185–202.

geometric shapes (Ill. 3.32).[95] Where foliate ornament is employed in broader fields, notably the surviving capitals, the composition loses some of its rigidity and small birds and motifs such as decorative crosses are often included (Ill. 3.33).[96]

There is a degree of standardisation in both the style of carving and the motifs used throughout northern and central Italy in this period. At Cividale del Friuli, the significant collection of sculptural fragments in the Museo Archeologico and the oratory of S. Maria in Valle conforms to the common idiom of the Lombard sculptural style. The two corresponding fragments of the 'Sarcophagus of Piltrude', which probably formed part of a church screen and are now mounted within the *Tempietto*, display the Lombard affinity for compartmentalisation in design (Ill. 3.34). The lower third of each panel contains an arcaded panel enclosing a plant motif: one shows a fruiting tree, the other two intertwining vines with hanging fruit, leaves and pecking birds.[97] Above, decorative borders create small square panels, now largely blank, although some preserve abstract floral motifs. On one panel, the border is filled with a simple single medially-incised vine-scroll with tendrils terminating in tri-lobed leaves and buds, bunched fruit and flowers. The second panel has borders of looping triple-stranded interlace. The style of these panels, and particularly the combination of ornately bordered compartments with panels of discrete imagery, is characteristic of the way in which Lombard motifs were employed on sculpted church furniture. Panel fragments preserved in the Museo Archeologico show a similar concern for the ordered arrangement of decorative motifs, with the confinement of stylised and repetitive scroll patterns into distinct registers (Ill. 3.35). The decoration on one panel is arranged in six compartments created by continuous and intersecting triple-stranded cord (Ill. 3.36).[98] Within each compartment a single motif is framed: two contain an interlace design, another two contain bird imagery, one a leaf motif, and the other a cross. This arrangement is reminiscent of the late Antique style of sculpted church furniture, notably the *ambo* in Ravenna cathedral, mentioned in the opening section of this chapter, which is decorated with a grid of compartments, each containing a discrete

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[95] Mitchell, 2000: 349. Mitchell argued that at Pavia, the mid eighth-century slabs with cut-away inlay shapes were imitating Byzantine designs, such as the ciboria of Hagios Polyeuktos in Constantinople (Mitchell, 2000: 349).

[96] The widespread popularity of stylised vine-scroll is testified by the fragmentary remains of examples across northern and central Italy, including Rome, where fragments at S. Maria in Aracoeli bear comparable designs to those in Milan and Aquileia, and at Borgo San Dalmazzo and Turin in Piedmont where the vine-scroll is particularly stylised (Pani Ermini, 1974a: 88–91, pl. 15, figs. 38–9; Novelli, 1974: 74–6, 218–20, pls. 12 and 115, figs. 16 and 140, 141).

[97] L'Orange and Torp, 1977a: pl. 145.

[98] A fragment from Otricoli in Umbria, bearing very similar ornament shows how prevalent this type of design was across the Lombard state (Bertelli, 1985: 274–5, pl. 87, fig. 214).

motif. As with the pre-Carolingian period, the combination of fantastical beasts and complex scroll-designs that can be seen on the fragments of architraves and friezes from the late eighth and early ninth century shows a continuing interest in the designs and motifs of the Byzantine artistic style. The extent of Byzantine influence is explored in the following chapter, where its impact is assessed in the diversity of the Mercian sculptural style (see pp. 110–11, 115–17, 128–9).

Lombard architectural sculpture of the mid-ninth century shows an even greater degree of stylisation where panels, such as those at Aquileia, demonstrate how the composition of the ornament was dictated by a desire to use all of the available space.[99] A panel from the basilica of S. Maria Assunta in Aquileia not only shows the continuing interest in compartmentalisation, but also the way in which the animals and birds were squeezed into and around the decorative roundels and foliate motifs to create a very crowded composition (Ill. 3.37).[100] In the same way, another panel from the same church, with animal, bird and plant motifs arranged in square compartments, was designed so that each image filled as completely as possible its individual field (Ill. 3.38).[101] The interlace borders above and below the compartments show an equal degree of spatial economy, lacking any of the looseness or casual arrangement of their predecessors. This 'economical' form of interlace dominates the friezes and panels of the ninth century. A frieze fragment, also in Aquileia, is filled with interlace bounded by a running lozenge-design border. The style and compact arrangement is reminiscent of earlier metalwork patterns and might have been intended to evoke such an association.[102] This imitation may similarly be read into the design of extant fragments in the church of S. Maria della Grazie and the sculpture gallery of S. Eufemia in Grado. As at Aquileia, the churches in Grado benefited from patriarchal patronage, and this is demonstrated in the highly ornate architectural sculpture that survives from the mid-ninth century. Panels and architrave fragments preserve borders of triple-stranded interlace, stylised vine-scroll, compartmentalised designs of birds and lattice patterns, and ornamental plant motifs (Ills. 3.39 and 3.40).[103] The desire to evoke in sculpture some of the prestige of other art forms, such as metalwork, is captured in the ninth-century ciborium of St. Eleuchadius in Sant'Apollinare in Classe, outside Ravenna,

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[99] A development from Roman *intrecci*. See, Elrington, 1903: 10–21.
[100] Tagliaferri, 1981: 71–2, pl. 3, fig. 7.
[101] Tagliaferri, 1981: 72–3, pl. 4, fig. 9. Additional examples of both the square and roundel type of compartment-ornamented panel at Aquileia survive in the Museo Palaeocristiano (Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. 68, figs. 274, 275).
[102] Tagliaferri, 1981: 72, pl. 3, fig. 8.
[103] Tagliaferri, 1981: 350–79, pls. 188, 194, 210.

where the surviving structure gives an impression of how similar fragments preserved elsewhere in northern and central Italy were once assembled to create imposing and striking monuments (Ill. 3.41).[104] The grandeur of the churches of Ravenna, and presumably the enduring memories of its imperial past were certainly of interest to Charlemagne who carried off building and decorative materials to his cathedral at Aachen in an attempt to appropriate their grandeur.[105]

This analysis of the development of Carolingian-era sculpture reiterates the longevity of many of its most frequent features. Compartmentalisation, abstract and vegetal decorative designs and architectural compositions betray the continuing importance of Lombard design and production. The standardisation of design seen across the different forms of sculpture from this period demonstrates a common and persistent interest in the inheritance of late Antiquity, borrowing motifs such as the vine-scroll from non-sculptural monumental media, including opulent mosaics, but also imitating the prestige of portable models in the form of metalwork. This cross-fertilisation from artistic media outside the sculptural repertoire emphasises the continued importance that the exchange and circulation of objects played in the transmission and development of artistic styles in the eighth and ninth centuries. The following section discusses the role of Rome in this development and highlights the strategic position that the city and its papal patronage occupied in the mindset of early medieval artists and patrons.

The rise of Rome as a cultural focus in the early medieval West

Patronage in Rome had continued during the eighth century under the growing influence of the papacy (Map 3.F). Pope John VII (705–707) was responsible for refurbishing and decorating a number of churches, most notably S. Maria Antiqua in the Forum, where he embellished the existing seventh-century scheme of wall paintings by adding scenes in the sanctuary, the nave and its *transennae*, the chapel to the right of the choir and a number of individual panels.[106] Nordhagen has demonstrated the Byzantine

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[104] Deliyannis, 2010: 294, fig. 104. The ciborium bears an inscription to the saint Eleuchadius and survives from the church of the same name in Ravenna that disappeared after the thirteenth century (Deliyannis, 2010: 258).

[105] Einhard, iii. 26; Deliyannis, 2010: 297–8. An extant letter from Pope Hadrian I, preserved in the *Codex Carolinus*, authorizes Charlemagne's removal of mosaics and marbles from Ravenna to Aachen (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, I, p. 614).

[106] Nordhagen, 1990d: 297–306; 2000: 121–2; Lucey, 2004: 83–95; van Dijk, 2004: 113–27. The excavation of S. Maria Antiqua in the early twentieth century revealed one of the greatest surviving examples of early medieval wall painting, with decoration preserved throughout: on the walls, the *transennae* and even the columns of the nave. The paintings have received much scholarly attention (summarised in Nordhagen, 2000), but see Rushforth, 1902: 1–119; Nordhagen, 1990b: 150–76;

influence in both the seventh- and eighth-century schemes of paintings, noting in particular the importance of certain iconographic features, such as the figure of St. Anne, the apocryphal mother of the Virgin Mary, which is the earliest representation of its kind.[107] However, hints that Rome remained removed from Constantinople and its artistic strictures are apparent in Pope John's use of what Nordhagen called 'politically-charged images as part of imperial propaganda'.[108] In the apsidal image of the Crucifixion, the four popes depicted include Pope John (with a square halo to denote that he was still alive) and Pope Martin I (649–655), who had defended Roman orthodoxy against what Noble described as the 'Byzantine tyranny and religious perversity' of the Quinisext Council of 691–92 (Ill. 3.42).[109] For Brubaker, Pope John's compositions were designed to promote not only papal authority, but also Roman ideology and the orthodoxy of the popes.[110]

Papal patronage of the later eighth century further strengthened the position of the popes as promoters of this Roman ideology. Pope Hadrian I, no doubt bolstered by Charlemagne's focus on Rome and his support for recreating the early Christian heritage of the city, undertook a campaign of renovation and refurbishment at a great number of churches including St. Peter's, S. Maria Maggiore, the Lateran, San Clemente and S. Maria Antiqua.[111] Popes Hadrian I and Paschal I (812–52) were responsible for translating a significant quantity of relics into the city, and for adapting churches for the increasing number of pilgrims, many of whom were being encouraged to visit Rome by Charlemagne.[112] Pope Paschal's church of S. Prassede, constructed in the 820s, was designed to house the many relics that were translated there and echoes

Nordhagen, 1990c: 177–296; and Osbourne, Rasmus Brandt and Morganti, 2004. Pope John's activities, and his 'eccentric behaviour' with regard to including his own portrait in the churches he decorated, are outlined in the *Liber Pontificalis* (I, p. 385). Pope John's projects included the decoration of the Oratory of the Virgin in Old St. Peter's. A framed fragment of the mosaic decoration survives in the gift shop of S. Maria in Cosmedin.

[107] Nordhagen, 1990b: 164–5, pl. XVII; Nordhagen, 2000: 115–16.

[108] Nordhagen, 2000: 130, 134.

[109] Noble, 1984: 19; Nordhagen, 1990a: pl. I; Brubaker, 2004: 43; Nilgen 2004: 129. On the use of the square halo in early Medieval art, see Osbourne, 1979: 58–65. On the Quinisext Council, see Herrin, 1987: 284–8, and for its impact elsewhere in the paintings of S. Maria Antiqua see Nordhagen, 1967: 388–90 and Brenk, 2004: 67–81.

[110] Brubaker, 2004: 44. See also Kalas, 1999: 223–34.

[111] Krautheimer, 1980: 112; Osbourne, 1987: 192; Kalas, 1999: 255; Christie, 2005: 178–9. In Schieffer's overview of Charlemagne's relationship with Rome he discussed the documentary evidence that records the gifts Charlemagne made for the enrichment of Rome's churches, including the provision of roof beams for St. Peter's (2000: 289–90).

[112] Ward-Perkins, 1984: 57; Christie, 2005: 172; Christie, 2006: 161. One such church that was adapted for pilgrim traffic during this period was S. Maria in Cosmedin, which gained a unique hall-crypt with niches to hold the relics (Krautheimer, 1980: fig. 87). In the ninth century the vulnerability of the relics prompted the reversion to the older annular-crypt in churches such as S. Prassede (Krautheimer, 1980: 113).

the layout of Constantine's St. Peter's.[113] The decoration of S. Prassede similarly reflects the Carolingian concern for the revival of early Christian art in Rome during the ninth century. The apse mosaic recycles the sixth-century Apocalyptic Christ imagery seen in SS. Cosmas and Damian, and depicts Christ at His Second Coming flanked by Peter and Paul, St. Praxedis, her sister Pudentiana, her brother and Pope Paschal (Ill. 3.43).[114] Similarly the mosaic above the apse in the contemporary church of S. Maria in Domnica draws on early Christian imagery in the depiction of the Apostles approaching Christ in a mandorla (Ill. 3.44).[115] On either side of Christ, the apostles process towards Him with their robes lifting behind them to convey their movement and echoing the lively figures on the fifth-century arch mosaic in S. Maria Maggiore. The influence of Byzantine models is still apparent in Carolingian Rome, and is best exemplified in the enthroned Madonna and Child mosaic adorning the apse in S. Maria in Domnica, and in the mosaic decoration of the San Zeno chapel in S. Prassede (Ill. 3.45). The composition on the ceiling in the Zeno chapel, which architecturally resembles an early Christian mausoleum, has four angels lifting up a central roundel containing the bust of Christ and parallels surviving schemes in S. Vitale and the Archbishop's Chapel in Ravenna (Ill. 3.46).[116] The cross-shaped chapel, derived from late Antique Roman models became popular in Carolingian Rome and can be seen elsewhere in the city, as at the church of the Quattro Coronati (Ill. 3.47). This appropriation of antique architecture extended to the incorporation of Roman *spolia*, particularly columns. In S. Prassede, the desire to harness and embellish the grandeur of early Christian Rome is seen in the juxtaposition of antique columns and architraves with ninth-century reworking and imitations.[117]

Sculptural decoration in Rome's churches was an important element in the ninth-century building programme for the re-construction of early Christian monumentality in the city, and in the continued embellishment of existing churches. In addition to imitating and reworking late Antique architectural carving, elements of the Lombard style of carving persisted into the ninth century and can be seen across Rome in churches such as Quattro Coronati and S. Sabina. In S. Sabina, the marble chancel furniture, including the *cathedra*, *ambo* and *schola cantorum* were added to the fifth-century church by archpresbyter Eugenius II (824–827). The ornament of these pieces, and particularly that on the panels of the *schola cantorum*, typifies the style of carving

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[113] Krautheimer, 1980: 123; Wickham, 2009: 240–1; Goodson, 2010: 228–44.
[114] Krautheimer, 1980: 125–6; Kessler, 2002: 710–12; Wood, 2005: 769.
[115] Krautheimer, 1980: 127. This revival of Rome's Christian antiquity is also apparent in the mosaic decoration of SS. Quattro Coronati and S. Cecilia, both constructed during the Pontificate of Paschal I.
[116] Krautheimer, 1980: 131–2; Deliyannis, 2010: pl. V; Goodson, 2010: 160–72.
[117] Krautheimer, 1980: figs. 109–12.

at that time, which fused characteristically Lombard elements with more retrospective classicizing designs such as the 'cross under arch' motif. Nordhagen argued that this motif revived a traditional pattern of late Antique Italy and combined it with Germanic ornament, presumably elements such the triple-stranded interlace, to create a 'glorifying' design similar in intention to the framed figures of Christ and the Apostles seen in early Christian sarcophagi.[118] This motif is widespread across Carolingian Italy, and in Rome can also be seen on fragments preserved at S. Agnese (Ill. 3.48). At Quattro Coronati, the surviving panel fragments of ninth-century carving mounted in the walls of the cloister show a similar adherence to Lombard styles, incorporating identifiable early Christian motifs and decorative elements. One panel fragment shows two peacocks drinking from a chalice, comparable in style to earlier examples at Brescia, above a cross-filled wheel of interlace with decorative roundels between each arm (Ill. 3.49). The inspiration for this design can certainly be found in late Antique Italian models. In Ravenna, a sixth-century panel in the *schola cantorum* of S. Apollinare Nuovo depicts two peacocks sitting on a fruiting vine, which emerges from a chalice, and flanking a cross (Ill. 3.50). The Lombard fascination with compartmentalisation is seen on a second fragment, where strands of interlace intertwine to form roundels containing stylised foliate motifs, which frame a central space occupied by a characteristically simplistic goat-like animal (Ill. 3.51). Similar stylisation occurs on other forms of architectural sculpture during this period. At S. Maria in Aracoeli, also in Rome, the scrolling interlace on a number of early ninth-century frieze fragments creates roundels housing individual bird and foliate motifs (Ill. 3.52).[119] Pierced architectural sculpture also takes a prominent position in ninth-century church fittings. At S. Maria in Cosmedin the pierced window inserts at the west end of the nave and in the side chapels at the east end are geometric in composition and combine interlace patterns with round and semi-circular cut-through spaces to evoke the decorative mosaic schemes of late Antiquity and the stucco ornament of high status sites such as the *Tempietto* at Cividale (Ill. 3.53). Likewise, at Ravenna the lattice-style pierced carving of the chancel screens in S. Apollinare Nuovo combine vine-scroll as a framing element to an otherwise decorative and abstracted foliate design with a cross concealed in the middle (Ill. 3.54).

The influence of the Roman revival of the classical past, which has been seen as the backbone of Charlemagne's 'Renaissance', can not only be detected north of Rome

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[118] Nordhagen, 1990e: 366–70.
[119] Pani Ermini, 1974a: 90–1; pl. 14, figs. 39a and b. Comparable fragments are also preserved in the Forum (Pani Ermini, 1974b: pl. 87, fig. 307).

in the independent monasteries of Italy identified by Christie, but also north of the Alps in the Carolingian heartland.[120] In addition to the Lombard scholars that joined his court, the influence of Lombard sculptural styles and Roman revivalist architectural styles can be seen in elements of Charlemagne's building activities at Paderborn, Ingelheim and Aachen.[121] In his desire to create a *Roma nova* at Aachen, Charlemagne's chapel can be seen to have drawn on the centrally planned buildings of Ostrogoth and Byzantine imperial traditions. In both architecture and ornamentation, Charlemagne's chapel at Aachen mirrors elements of Theoderic's mausoleum and San Vitale in Ravenna.[122] In addition, the metalwork railings from the upper level of the chapel's interior reflect both late Antique styles (in the form of the plant-scroll ornamentation) and contemporary fashions in pierced stone fittings (seen in the grillwork of the same railings).[123] The acanthus scroll can be compared to the plant-scroll in the mosaic scheme in San Vitale and in Galla Placidia's mausoleum (Ill. 3.55), and the grillwork of the railings is reminiscent of the pierced chancel screens in S. Apollinare Nuovo (Ill. 3.54), all in Ravenna. For Schutz, this imitation and emulation was an important demonstration of Charlemagne's desired continuity of imperial succession and a legitimisation of the traditional context within which he was conducting his 'Renaissance'.[124] Elsewhere, the revival of early Christian, and particularly Constantinian architecture and the adoption of Italian sculptural styles can be seen in the early ninth-century plan of the abbey church at Fulda, and in the carved panels at Ingelheim, Mainz, Lauerach and Müstair (Ills. 3.56–3.59).[125]

The role of sculpture and the development of continental style under the Carolingians

This section contextualises the emergence of a Carolingian style of sculpture and reasserts the dominant legacy of late Antique and Lombard influences that can be seen in both the form and content of the sculpture. Much of the sculptural embellishment that occurred during the 'Liutprand Renaissance' and the pontificates of Hadrian I, Leo III and Paschal I was designed to compliment already ornate churches. The overwhelming majority of early medieval Italian sculpture that survives today is architectural, in the form of decorative pilasters, screen panels and arched ciborium fragments. As has been

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[120] Christie 2005: 178.
[121] Schutz, 2004: 360.
[122] Schutz, 2004: 361–2; Nees, 2002: 102. For the possible mystical symbolism within the design of Charlemagne's chapel at Aachen, see Schutz, 2004: 365–7.
[123] Schutz, 2004: figs. 43a and d.
[124] Schutz, 2004: 361.
[125] Krautheimer, 1980: 139; Schutz, 2004: 345, 350, figs. 50, 68a–d.

shown in the above analysis, this group is complimented by less frequent examples of pierced window inserts and pulpit fragments. In addition to these architectural forms there are rare survivals of more monumental designs, notably the altars at Cividale and Ravenna, the sarcophagus fragments at Gussago and bordered inscriptions, a great number of which survive in the Castello Visconteo in Pavia.

Even within this varied range of forms, the consistency of the ornamental repertoire across the sites in northern and central Italy, and in Rome is striking. The favoured motif from the earliest Lombard sculpture of the early eighth century right through to the Carolingian era and beyond into the eleventh century is the vine-scroll. Unlike its Anglo-Saxon counterpart, the Italian vine-scroll is rarely inhabited, particularly in the period before Carolingian patronage. It is characterized by its close, almost geometric design, whereby fruits, leaves and tendrils are contained within a rigid and compact symmetrical arrangement, as seen in the early eighth-century bordered inscriptions at Pavia. There is none of the organic, fleshy character of the Anglo-Saxon vine-scroll as typified in the Breedon scrolls, nor its variety; and the combination of shallow relief carving and the highly stylised nature of the Italian designs mean that it does little to evoke the original quality of a living plant.[126] The desire for the purely decorative in stone sculpture extends to the geometric ornament of Italian design and reaches its pinnacle under Carolingian patronage between the end of the eighth and ninth centuries. During this period the characteristic triple-stranded interlace prevails as the new decorative concept and can be found on all forms of monument and at almost all the sites across Italy that preserve sculpture from this period. The distribution of this type of interlace extends far south of the traditional Carolingian territories, into the duchies of Benevento and Spoleto. But this motif is not to be found in the corpus of Anglo-Saxon period sculpture, although it can be seen outside Italy in Carolingian Francia and even northern Spain.

In addition to vine-scroll and interlace motifs, the Lombard repertoire consistently includes a limited number of animals and, as Verzone noted, these were largely chosen for their symbolic importance.[127] The most frequently depicted animals are peacocks, always shown in pairs and often, as at Pavia and Brescia in the eighth century and at Quattro Coronati in Rome in the ninth century, shown drinking from a chalice. The association of these birds with eternal life, and their juxtaposition with

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[126] This distinction would appear pivotal in understanding the differences in the iconographic significance imbued on Anglo-Saxon and Italian sculpture. For the particularly important role that evoking plant-life played in Anglo-Saxon iconography, see Hawkes, 2003b: 263–86.

[127] Verzone, 1968: 122.

chalices, vine-scroll or crosses would have acted as a potent reminder to the onlooker of the promise of eternal life offered through the sacrament. This imagery was widely used in late Antique sculpted art, for example on a sixth-century sarcophagus in Ravenna (Ill. 3.14), and could be appropriately applied to a range of monuments – public, private, commemorative or votive. Similarly, the small birds and animals that sometimes populate the vine-scroll of Lombard frieze-work were chosen for their symbolic reference to the community of the Church and its life within Christ the vine as described in the New Testament.[128] This meaning would make the use of vine-scroll on visible architectural features such as friezes particularly relevant to the members of the community that entered and worshipped in the church it adorned.

Even before the advent of the Iconoclasm controversy in c. 730, which appears to have had little impact on the repertoire of imagery used in stone carving in Lombard and Carolingian-era Italy, there is little evidence for a developed or developing tradition of figural or narrative imagery in stone.[129] It is interesting, however, that the rare examples of figural or narrative imagery occur in a monumental setting. Thus, the Altar of Ratchis, which is decorated on three sides with biblical imagery, is a stand-alone monument, designed to be seen and read from all angles. Similarly, the near life-size stucco figures in the *Tempietto* at Cividale are one component in a monumental decorative scheme for a royal chapel. To these examples can be added the fragmentary remains of three ninth-century votive figures in Brescia, two of which are the Virgin and Child, carved in the round and comparable in style to the Byzantine-inspired stucco figures at Brescia (Ills. 3.60, 3.61 and 3.62). But, despite a strong developing tradition of figural representation in manuscript art, ivory carving and frescoes, Carolingian artistic production in Italy and elsewhere in central Europe appears to have suppressed what little tradition there was of figure-carving in stone prior to 774.

The style of Lombard carving that persisted in northern and central Italy, and which was taken up in certain places in the Carolingian heartland, appears to have retained the dual influences of Byzantine and Germanic decorative motifs that first characterised it in the early eighth century.[130] No doubt the Lombard endowment of existing late Antique strategic secular and religious centres with accomplished sculptural decoration induced Charlemagne to recognise their elite status and equate the certain style of carving with elevated status and wealth. By the ninth century such sculptural embellishment might have been perceived as synonymous with a sense of

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[128] John, 15.1.
[129] Kingsley Porter, 1917a: 265.
[130] Verzone, 1968: 201.

legitimacy and legacy at a site, which for Charlemagne was the exact context he hoped to appropriate for his new empire, and which he appears to have exported to his palaces north of the Alps.

Understanding the context for the emergence of a sculptural tradition in Carolingian Europe allows for comparison with the Mercian tradition. This context reveals three points for consideration. The first is that the legacy of late Antiquity was a crucial and consistent undercurrent in the development of sculptural and non-sculptural art-forms during the Lombard and Carolingian eras. Late Antique classicising styles and the associated imperial prestige and legitimacy can be detected in the monumental commissions of the period between the 'Liutprand Renaissance' and the rise of papal patronage in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. The Carolingian sculptural tradition should also be viewed as an extension of the established Lombard tradition, whereby the standardised repertoire of form and content endured after the Carolingian annexation and most likely continued to be produced by Lombard sculptors in centralised workshops. Even outside the Lombard territories, the Lombard repertoire influenced the style of Carolingian-era sculpture. Finally, as this chapter has introduced, the cross-fertilisation of styles derived from different artistic media played a formative role in the development of a continental sculptural repertoire. Between the later fourth and late sixth centuries the development of a continental sculptural tradition reflected the impact of portable, small-scale art-forms, whose motifs were appropriated for their perceived prestige, and whose imitation reveals the extent of the exchange networks that circulated them across the Christian West. It is in the light of this complex artistic heritage that a full reassessment of the relationship between Mercian sculpture and the art of the Continent can be undertaken.

Chapter Four

The evidence for exchange in Mercian stone sculpture

Introduction

A review of the relationship between the development of Mercian sculpture and the artistic traditions of the Carolingian continent provides the first reassessment of the breadth of continental artistic traditions that contributed to the unique style of Mercian sculpture. Through an in-depth analysis of the stylistic links between Mercian sculpture and the art of late Antiquity, the Christian East and the Carolingian West, this chapter ascertains the motivations behind the appropriation of non-Insular motifs in the creation of a Mercian style of monumental expression. As outlined in Chapter One, a reflection of the socio-political dialogue that existed between Mercia and the Carolingian continent in the late eighth and early ninth centuries has long been looked for in Mercian sculpture of the period.[1] The documented relationship that Mercia enjoyed with Rome and the Carolingian courts was a product of a reciprocal and maintained network of communication, which had been established with the Augustine mission of the sixth century, and was consolidated in the seventh and eighth centuries through the journeys of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims, royalty and missionaries to the Continent, and scholars, clerics and Papal envoys from the Continent to England.[2] This was shown in the overview of the documented links between Mercia and the Continent in the eighth and ninth centuries (Chapter One, pp. 45–8). Both the Mercian and Carolingian courts were looking to Rome for political and religious affirmation of their authority.[3] As part of Charlemagne's campaign to create in his territories a new Holy Roman Empire, he can be seen to have encouraged and supported the revival of Constantine's artistic legacy: in the Lombard territories, through the continuing patronage of the Lombard classicising style; and in Francia, through the translation of late Antique architectural and artistic styles during the creation of his palaces and court schools (as discussed in Chapter Three). Mercia's alignment with Charlemagne's programme, and thus with the propagandist activities of the papacy, which provided the underlying support for these

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[1] Clapham, 1930; Kendrick, T., 1938; Stone, 1955; Kidson *et al.*, 1965; Cramp, 1976, 1977, 1986a; Jewell, 1982, 2001; Plunkett, 1984; Bailey, 1996b; Mitchell, 2010 and forthcoming.

[2] *HE* v. 7; Moore, 1937: 126–7; Levison, 1946: 78–81, 167–8; Duckett, 1951: 84; Cramp, 1974: 34; McCormick, 2001: 160; Matthews, 2007.

[3] Moore, 1937: 107, note; Levison, 1946: 112–13; Parks, 1954: 77; Whitelock, 1979: 849; Birch, 1998: 40.

developments, would have presented the opportunity for imbuing the Anglo-Saxon kingdom with a similarly symbolically-loaded frame of reference, through its monumental art.

Elements of the adoption of contemporary and late Antique classicising styles have been identified by previous scholars at key sites in Mercia, notably at Lichfield, and at Breedon and other sites in the orbit of Peterborough, where certain motifs have been shown to closely parallel those at individual continental sites, especially sites in Lombard Italy such as Brescia, Milan and Cividale del Friuli.[1] Given the established and widespread production of stone sculpture in northern and central Italy from the late Antique period through to the Carolingian period, and its dominant influence on the style of sculpture produced elsewhere in the Carolingian Empire, it is not surprising that elements of its style are paralleled in Mercian sculpture. The particularly prevalent triple-stranded interlace motif of Lombard sculpture was certainly adopted outside Italy, and can be seen in the very western regions of the Carolingian Empire, for example on the ninth-century chancel panel fragments at Vienne, Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne and La Muraz in southern-central and south-eastern France.[2] Interestingly however, as will be shown below, the triple-stranded interlace motif does not seem to have been adopted in Mercian sculpture and this points to a selective and more complicated process of style emulation.[3] The very limited evidence for parallels between Mercian sculpture and material produced in areas that had a near-contemporary tradition of ornamental stone sculpture, but which were outside the influence of the Lombard tradition, notably Spain, further supports the idea that if the Mercians were looking at sculptural models, they were focused on those regions that were already of interest to them for political or religious reasons, that is Charlemagne's Italy.[4]

Previous scholarship has shown that the evidence for inspiration from Italian sculpture is most convincingly found in the architectural sculpture of Mercia, where it reflects the dominant use by the Lombards of vine-scroll motifs in an architectural

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[1] Cramp, 1976: 270, fig. 5f; 1977: 225, 230; Jewell, 1982: 57, 61, 82, 245; 2001: 249. See also Chapter One, pp. 13–17.

[2] Chatel, 1981: 79, 120–1, 127–8, pls. XLV no. 129b, LXXIII no. 219, LXXVI no. 228.

[3] The only example of what appears to be triple-stranded interlace in England is on a carved slab reused in a window at Terrington in North Yorkshire (Lang, 2001: ill. 783; D. Craig, pers comm.). The overcrowded and squashed appearance of the interlacing design is, however, very unlike Continental forms.

[4] See Chapter One, p. 15, for an overview of the previous scholarship relating to the stylistic parallels between certain animal motifs in Mercian sculpture and those used in the architectural sculpture of Visigothic Spain (Cramp, 1977: 230; Jewell, 1982: 115, 182, 188).

setting.[5] So, for example, the narrow frieze at Breedon, which is ornamented with a continuous scrolling motif, mirrors the arrangement seen on an early ninth-century pilaster from S. Maria D'Aurona in Milan, not only in the form of the scrolling motif, but also in its application as a continuous design to the long, narrow face of an architectural feature.[6] The stylistic parallels seen in the friezes at Breedon and other Mercian sites, such as Fletton, are undoubtedly a reflection of the dominance of architectural sculpture in the Italian repertoire.

But, compared with the Lombard and Carolingian-era sculptural repertoire, architectural sculpture in Mercia constitutes only a small proportion of the range of extant material that survives from the late eighth and early ninth centuries. The standing crosses, sepulchral monuments and figural panels that complete the Mercian corpus are all but unparalleled on the Continent and cannot be seen to draw directly on continental sculptural counterparts either in the Lombard tradition or elsewhere, especially in terms of their form.[7] Previous exploration of the extent to which the non-architectural stone sculpture of Mercia drew on contemporary continental sculptural styles has been limited, but would suggest that certain motifs paralleled in a continental architectural contexts were adopted in Mercia for use on a variety of monument types. So for example, as noted in Chapter One (pp. 13–17), Cramp drew comparisons between the animal-headed terminal motif on the Cropthorne cross-head (Worcestershire) and an architectural frieze at Müstair, Switzerland, and the patterning of the animals' bodies on both the Cropthorne cross-head and the Acton Beauchamp cross-shaft (Herefordshire) were compared to carving at Santa Maria de Quintanilla de las Viñas in northern Spain.[8] Similarly, Jewell noted that the type of trefoil seen on the cross-shaft at Wroxeter, Shropshire, parallels a motif on a fragment in the *Tempietto* at Cividale del Friuli.[9] Nonetheless, as previous scholars have noted, many of these motifs can also be found in other contemporary art forms, such as metalwork and manuscripts, further suggesting that the Mercians were not solely reliant on contemporary sculptural models. For example, Jewell demonstrated that whilst the peacocks and the hounds which appear in

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[5] Whilst direct contemporary parallels for the use of vine-scroll in an architectural setting are found in Italy, the popularity of this motif in the Anglo-Saxon artistic repertoire was long-established in non-architectural stone sculpture, notably the standing crosses of eighth-century Northumbria such as at Bewcastle and Ruthwell, and in other media including metalwork such as the Ormside Bowl (Bakka, 1963: fig. 5; Cramp, 1965; Cramp, 1984: ill. 1428; Bailey and Cramp, 1988: ill. 91). The impact on Mercian sculpture of inherited Anglo-Saxon styles, including the vine-scroll motif, is explored below.

[6] Cramp: 1976: 270; Jewell, 1982: 57, 61; Bailey, 1996b: 55–6.

[7] But, for the limited evidence of a Lombard tradition of sepulchral stone sculpture and its relationship with Mercian monuments, see the following chapter.

[8] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 101; Cramp, 1977: 225, 230; Haseloff, 1980: 24.

[9] Jewell, 1982: 57.

the vine-scroll at Breedon could be compared to those at S. Pedro de la Nave in Zamora, Spain, they are more closely paralleled in contemporary metalwork.[10]

Despite the continued reiteration of certain key stylistic links between Lombard and Mercian sculpture, and the recent identification of similarities in the cultural context within which these traditions emerged, the extent to which Mercian sculptural development paralleled, and was affected by the widespread and pervasive style of Lombard sculpture has not been fully explored.[11] The motivations behind the development of a distinct sculptural style in both regions are comparable: the need for land-based legitimising strategies stimulated the growth of monumental patronage at secular and religious centres of significance is a theme common to both regions. Both were receptive to and reflective of stylistic developments in other media, and both became vehicles for monumental expression, with the capacity to relate contemporary religious and political concerns. Whilst Lombard Italy is unusual within continental Europe in terms of its early medieval sculptural development, Mercian sculpture was built on the foundations of a strong and established tradition of monumental stone sculpture production in Insular Britain. Even so, the style and range of sculpture produced in Mercia in the late eighth and early ninth centuries marks a definite departure from the sculpture of earlier and contemporary Anglo-Saxon England and Ireland.[12] This would also suggest that the Mercians were looking outside Anglo-Saxon England for sculptural influences, and perhaps points to Carolingian Italy where the Lombard sculptural style would have been recognised as an established and relevant method of signalling wealth and status. This chapter will demonstrate, however, that whilst the Mercian sculptors were aware of established sculptural styles on the Continent, in particular those that dominated production in northern and central Italy, the development of Mercian sculpture stands alone in western Europe, in terms of its range, quality and synthetic style. Within the context of the varied methods by which artistic ideas and models were circulated within Mercia and between the kingdom and the Continent, Mercian sculpture will be shown to have depended very little on contemporary stone sculpture production outside Anglo-Saxon England. Instead, the motifs that are shared between Mercia and the Continent, and which are often interpreted as evidence for direct sculptural stylistic exchange, will be shown to be minor markers of a similar attitude to monumental sculpture production. Any emulation

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[10] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pls. 6 and 7; Jewell, 1982: 182, 188.

[11] Mitchell, 2000; Jewell, 2001; Mitchell, 2007, 2010 and forthcoming.

[12] For an alternate view of the development of Mercian sculpture and, in particular, the relationship between northern Mercian sculpture and the Northumbrian tradition, see Sidebottom, 1994: 17, 171 and Sidebottom, 1999: 206–19.

of the Lombard sculptural style, beyond the use of monumental patronage itself as a tool for demonstrating wealth, was really an emulation of the heritage that the Lombards and subsequently the Carolingians were trying to harness in their continuation of classicizing artistic traditions. This is reiterated in the types of existing Anglo-Saxon artistic motifs and iconographies that were synthesised by the Mercians, and the dominance of contemporary and late Antique imagery from the Continent and beyond that provided the models for the majority of the innovative Mercian material.

Underlying the range and quality of the Mercian 'synthetic style', and what ultimately distinguishes it from Lombard and Carolingian stone sculpture, is its reliance on the styles of portable prestigious items such as ivories and textiles of both eastern and western origin. As will be shown, this highlights two points: firstly, that the Mercians were concerned with translating into the permanence of stone (as was the established Anglo-Saxon tradition) the perceived prestige of objects that they were coming into contact with as a result of the developing dialogue and alignment with Charlemagne's courts and Rome; and secondly, that these portable objects, which through internal networks or gift exchange were reaching centres throughout Mercia, and probably independently of the Mercian heartland, were responsible for the breadth of design in Mercian sculpture not seen in its continental counterpart. Nonetheless, despite the influence of regional networks and exchanges and the localised development of certain styles or 'schools', including the inconsistent adoption of continental sculptural motifs, the close interrelationship between sculpture across the kingdom and other Mercian art forms such as metalwork and manuscripts betrays a shared agenda. As will be shown below, this agenda was the deliberate and dynamic synthesis of artistic styles drawn from across the range of external and internal exchange networks, with the intention of creating a Mercian artistic identity.

Part I

External influences and parallels

Late Antique models

Figural representations

The relationship between Mercian sculpture and the artistic styles of late Antiquity provides a well-evidenced link between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and the Continent in

the late eighth and early ninth centuries (for a map of late Antique sites mentioned in the text, see Map 4.A). In parallel with Lombard sculptural developments, the Mercians looked to the longstanding classicizing styles of monumental art from both the western and eastern late Antique traditions, surviving in the greatest quantity at accessible sites such as Ravenna and Rome. As explored in the context of monumental sculpture production related to the cult of saints (Chapter Five), Mercian sculptors drew on late Antique plastic art, such as ivories and stone carving, and non-plastic art such as mosaics and painted icons, as models for the arrangement and style of figural scenes. The complex and unusual iconography of the Wirksworth slab was shown by Jane Hawkes to have its closest counterparts in early plastic models, including portable ivories in the form of diptychs and book covers, and more monumental works such as Maximian's throne in Ravenna.[13] The arrangement of the scenes on the slab without formal organisation and whereby the figures occupy the whole space is peculiar in the Mercian repertoire, and points to similarly early models but in the form of fourth-century frieze sarcophagi of what Coburn Soper described as the 'Latin tradition'.[14] This aspect of the Wirksworth slab's design is in fact the only element at this site and elsewhere in Mercia to be borrowed from the Latin tradition. The early ivories that Hawkes has shown provided the model for the figural scenes at Wirksworth are all products of the 'Asiatic' or Italo-Gallic tradition that developed in centres outside and independent of Rome in the centuries following the Visigoth invasions of AD 401 (see Chapter Three, pp. 68–9).[15] The innovative synthesis of eastern and 'native' Roman styles that characterises the Italo-Gallic sculptural tradition, and which was prevalent in Gaul and northern Italy, including Ravenna, was very influential in the style of Lombard sculpture and assumed a parallel role in Mercia.[16] As is discussed in the following chapter (pp. 169–70), the influence of the eastern-inspired architectural style of the Italo-Gallic sarcophagi can be seen in the form and style of the apostle-arcade sepulchral sculpture at Peterborough, Breedon, Castor and Fletton.

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[13] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 120; Schiller, 1971a: pl. 71; Hawkes, 1995b: 250.

[14] Coburn Soper, 1937: 148. Coburn Soper distinguished the Latin tradition of late Antique sculpture from the 'Asiatic' tradition by its direct development of 'native' Roman styles as opposed to the innovative incorporation of eastern styles from Anatolia (Lawrence, 1927: 1–45 and 1932: 103–85; Coburn Soper, 1937: 148, 151; Beckwith, 1970: 8–35).

[15] Coburn Soper, 1938: 147–50.

[16] The Italo-Gallic tradition also developed in centres on the Dalmatian (Adriatic) coast and, as in northern Italy, can be seen to have inspired the early medieval sculptural tradition of that region into the ninth and tenth centuries. See for example the three early ninth-century slabs of a sarcophagus in Zara, Croatia, whose architectural style is reminiscent of fourth-century columnar sarcophagi of the Italo-Gallic tradition (Bagnall-Oakeley, 1900: figs. 1 and 2). These slabs might be compared to contemporaneous Lombard monuments for their use of similar compartmentalised decorative motifs (*op cit*, fig. 3), but in their use of narrative scenes and architectural design they are markedly different and point to an interesting and divergent tradition.

The appropriation of eastern styles, which derived from fourth-century Anatolia but were coming from as far east as Syria by the sixth century, is manifest in ivories, metalwork and mosaics of the Italo-Gallic tradition, in addition to sarcophagi, and its influence in Mercia was similarly not confined to sepulchral monuments.[17] Across the repertoire of Mercian figural sculpture, the stimulus of late Antique models of eastern origin can be seen. Two such examples can be found at Breedon, where both the fragment depicting the Miracle at Cana (Ill. 4.1) and the votive bust of the Virgin (Ill. 4.2) parallel late Antique models of the Italo-Gallic tradition. The small panel fragment thought to be part of a scene depicting the Miracle at Cana is mounted in the south wall of the south aisle at Breedon and is the only surviving narrative panel at the site.[18] The fragment is bounded at the bottom by a horizontal moulded frame above which, and forming the right-most motif, sits a rectangular platform divided into two square compartments by incised vertical lines, each filled with an incised diagonal cross. To the left of this platform can be seen two spherical pots with open necks, one above the other. Between the pots and the platform, the worn depiction of a right leg can be seen descending from the curling hem of a short tunic. To the right, and placed on the platform, is what appears to be the damaged and fragmentary remains of a left foot, shown frontally, suggesting the figure was positioned in at least a three-quarter front-facing pose. The presence of the pots suggests that this scene is a representation of the Miracle at Cana, and thus the earliest known example in Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture.[19] The depth of carving and the use of undercutting to emphasise the relief of the scene would imply that it was inspired by a carved model, and given the lack of comparative examples of this scene in the Anglo-Saxon sculptural repertoire; it is noteworthy that the closest representations are found in ivory.

Jewell noted that the closest parallel for the style of the leg and drapery visible in the scene is provided by a seventh-century ivory carving of the Miracle at Cana from Syria, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Ill. 4.3).[20] But, the very spherical shape of the pots in the scene at Breedon, which Jewell recognised as being quite different

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[17] Árnason, 1938: 193–226; Coburn Soper, 1938: 147; Morey, 1941: 41–60.

[18] It is thought this fragment was discovered during restoration work in the late 1950s, as it does not appear in any of the earlier surveys of the Breedon material (Jewell, 2001: 259). An apparently unpublished photograph in the National Monuments Records centre at Swindon shows the fragment before it was mounted in the lead-lined recess of its current position (Ill. 4.4)

[19] Jewell, 2001: 260–1; Mitchell, 2010: 264. Jewell drew attention to the depiction of this scene on the ninth-century cross-fragment at Dewsbury in Yorkshire, but noted that it was 'of quite a different order with a strong provincial style' (Jewell, 2001: 260; Coatsworth, 2008: ill. 207). The pots in the scene are reference to the six stone water jars described in the account of the Miracle at Cana in St. John's Gospel (John, 2:1–11; Jeffrey, 1992: 124).

[20] Weitzmann, 1972: 57–8, fig. 13; Jewell, 2001: 260–1. For the dating of this ivory see Williamson, 2003: 47–50.

from this ivory, are unparalleled in medieval representations of the scene before the eleventh century, and instead echo late Antique depictions in which the pots tend to be more spherical.[21] Similarly spherical pots may be seen in representations on a fifth- to sixth-century ivory carving in Berlin, and in stone at Venice in a detail on the architrave of St. Mark's basilica (Ills. 4.5 and 4.6).[22] All of these works belong to the Italo-Gallic tradition and emphasise the influence of early Christian styles from the East: Syria, Palestine and Egypt. The eastern origin of the late Antique model behind the Miracle-scene fragment at Breedon is further highlighted by the depiction of a servant, identified by his short tunic, whose inclusion in representations of the scene was an eastern innovation of the early fifth-century.[23] The popularity of such models in the early medieval period, and evidence that they were circulating in the West by the early ninth century, is further demonstrated by the Andrews Diptych, a Carolingian ivory of that date that includes the Miracle at Cana scene, together with a servant in a short tunic and spherical pots (Ill. 4.7).[24]

The survival at Breedon of a fragment from what must have been a monumental narrative depiction of the Miracle at Cana raises interesting questions about the role of sculpture in the church and its installation alongside other monumental, and possibly didactic or votive, panels (including the Virgin and the Angel discussed below, pp. 99–100, 105–7) as well as the sepulchral and architectural sculpture that survives at the site. The Miracle at Cana, during which Christ miraculously turned water into wine at a wedding feast, was established in biblical exegesis as symbolic of the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies of Christ's glory, as it was the first of His miracles.[25] From Bede's homily for Epiphany-tide, the feast with which the Miracle at Cana is associated,

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[21] Schiller, 1971a: 163; Jewell, 2001: 261. See for example an ivory panel, c. 1084 from Salerno, depicting the Miracle at Cana, including spherical pots with narrow necks (MacLagan, 1921: pl. 3a). The closest stylistic parallel of a comparable date is found in metalwork, on an early ninth-century reliquary of Pope Paschal I depicting scenes from the Life of Christ (Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 199). In a scene of the Miracle at Cana, the pots are near-spherical and have incised horizontal lines.

[22] Árnason, 1938: 206, figs. 4 and 6; Rosenbaum, 1954: fig. 1; Jewell, 2001: 261.

[23] Árnason, 1938: 206. The distinctive short tunic of the servant in the Miracle scene can be seen in the ivory panel at Berlin mentioned above; an early columnar sarcophagus at Cività Castellana in Italy and a now lost silver vase formerly in the Bianchini collection at Rome, all of the Italo-Gallic tradition (Árnason, 1938: figs. 3, 5 and 6).

[24] Árnason, 1938: fig. 7. At the time Jewell discussed the relationship between the Breedon fragment and the Andrews Diptych, it was thought that the latter was a fifth-century work. Besides the shared spherical shape of the pots and incised detailing, there are no grounds for comparison between the two representations and, given the strong links to eastern models evident in the Breedon fragment, it is unlikely that the Breedon sculptor was influenced by such Carolingian models. This does not, however, rule out the likely mutual awareness of the shared popularity of Italo-Gallic models in both areas of production.

[25] Jeffrey, 1992: 124–5. Bede explained how Christ, 'the Bridegroom', came forth from the 'nuptial chamber' described in the Psalms to marry the Church through this first miracle (Bede, *Homilia*, I. 14; Psalm, 19: 5–6; Martin and Hurst, 1991: 135).

this episode in the life of Christ provided a moral lesson on the promise of salvation to the faithful.[26] In particular, Bede understood the story to highlight that only those who knew how 'to emigrate from vices to virtues by doing good works, and from earthly to eternal things by hoping and loving' were worthy of Christ's grace.[27] In this respect, Bede saw the water-pots in the story as symbolic of 'the strong vessels of our heart' that could be filled with 'the waters of saving knowledge by paying attention more frequently to sacred reading'.[28] In the context of the other extant monumental panels at Breedon, the Miracle at Cana scene complements and confirms the underlying messages of the Angel and Virgin panels, both of which signal the promise and fulfilment of salvation through Christ. Indeed, the Miracle scene specifically links these two panels. The 'nuptial chamber', from which Christ 'the Bridegroom' emerged to marry the Church through performing the miracle, was understood by Bede to be the Virgin's womb, and it was the Archangel Gabriel who foretold Christ's birth.[29] An interesting example of this juxtaposition of iconography can be seen on a sixth-century gold medallion from Istanbul, now in the Bode Museum in Berlin, which shows the Miracle at Cana scene on one face and the Annunciation on the reverse (Ill. 4.8).[30]

The panel at Breedon depicting a bust of the Virgin shares with the Miracle scene evidence of inspiration from late Antique models of eastern origin (Ill. 4.2). The panel, mounted in the wall of the east end of the church, conforms to the general idiom of Mercian figure sculpture, with a round-headed architectural niche framing a figure clothed in stylised drapery. The figure is front-facing, veiled and has pierced eyes, all comparable to the Virgin figure on the Peterborough cenotaph (Ill. 4.9).[31] Similarly, the linear quality of the drapery and the flattened sense of the figure's body closely parallel the style of the figures on the Peterborough cenotaph and the panels at Castor (Ill. 4.10) and Fletton (Ills. 4.11 and 4.12). Another, idiosyncratic, detail is the book that the Virgin holds in her left hand, to which she gestures with her right hand. As Cramp and Jewell noted, this attribute is more commonly given to representations of the Apostles and Christ;[32] and early ninth-century examples of this pose, including the closely comparable Evangelist portraits in the Book of Cerne (Cambridge, University Library,

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[26] Bede, *Homilia*, I. 14; Martin and Hurst, 1991: 134–48.
[27] Bede, *Homilia*, I. 14; Martin and Hurst, 1991: 136.
[28] Martin and Hurst, 1991: 146.
[29] Luke, 1: 19, 26; Bede, *Homilia*, I. 14; Martin and Hurst, 1991: 135.
[30] Grabar, A. 1968: 97–8, ill. 247; Beckwith, 1970: pl. 43. The representation of the Miracle scene on this medallion also provides the closest parallel for the arrangement of the pots in the Breedon fragment, suggesting that they too were originally shown in a pyramid formation.
[31] Cramp, 1977: 210; Jewell, 2001: 253; Mitchell, 2010: 264.
[32] Cramp, 1977: 210; Jewell, 2001: 253.

MS Ll.I.10), are a reminder that the Breedon sculptor was not just looking back to earlier models, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Mitchell has suggested that the book the Virgin holds might be identified as the *Liber Vitae*, containing the names of the monks and benefactors who were to be remembered in prayer at Breedon, and a symbol of the Virgin's role as intercessor.[33] The origins of this votive Marian panel and its main stylistic features are undoubtedly to be found in late Antique models.[34] As Jewell observed, the depiction of the Virgin without a halo is reminiscent of eastern early Christian icons, such as the late sixth- or early seventh-century relief panel from Hagios Polyeuktos in Istanbul and an early sixth-century eastern Mediterranean ivory depicting the Adoration of the Magi (Ill. 4.13 and 4.14).[35] The type of veil that the Breedon Virgin wears is also most closely paralleled in an eastern model: on a painted icon of the sixth or seventh century depicting the Virgin and Child enthroned between St. Theodore and St. George, in which the front-facing Virgin wears a veil that folds to frame the face in exactly the same way (Ill. 4.15).[36] But early models of eastern character that were more accessible to Anglo-Saxon artists of the early ninth-century, and indeed provide the closest comparison, may be sought nearer to home. Inside the basilica of S. Sabina in Rome, mounted above the famous fifth-century wooden doors, survives the dedicatory mosaic inscription of the same date. Flanking the inscription are two female personifications of the Church, and it is the *ecclesia ex cicumcisione* figure on the left that bears a striking resemblance to the Breedon Virgin (Ill. 4.16).[37] Both figures are robed with veils that closely frame the face, but in a mirror of the Breedon pose, the S. Sabina figure also carries a book in her left hand and gestures towards it in a blessing action with a long-fingered right hand held above, and at forty five degrees to, the upper arm. The stylistic links between the S. Sabina figure and a mosaic bust of the same date in the Archbishop's palace in Ravenna suggest that both were products of the Italo-Gallic school of late Antique art, further demonstrating the connection between it and the development of Mercian sculpture (Ill. 4.17).[38] Furthermore, the rare depiction of a spiky haired apostle, identified as St. Andrew, on the reverse of the Peterborough

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[33] Mitchell, 2010: 266 and forthcoming.

[34] The context for the production of a votive Virgin panel at Breedon, notably the late eighth-century rise of the Marian cult in Anglo-Saxon England and Breedon's dedication to the Virgin and St. Hardulf, are discussed later in this chapter (but see below, pp. 99–100, for the evidence that the Virgin panel was part of a panelled composition above the chancel entrance). For an overview of the not infrequent use of Marian imagery in Anglo-Saxon art, including St. Cuthbert's Coffin and stone sculpture, see Clayton, 1990: 142–78.

[35] Jewell, 2001: 253; Cormack and Vassilaki, 2009: no. 22; Yasin, 2009: fig. 6.18.

[36] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 75.

[37] Coburn Soper, 1938: fig. 46.

[38] Coburn Soper, 1938: 170–1, fig. 47.

cenotaph indicates that the sculptors were aware of eastern Mediterranean conventions, where St. Andrew is distinguished from the other apostles with radiate hair, as in the sixth-century mosaics of the Bishop's palace and S. Vitale in Ravenna, or with 'unruly' hair, as in the Arian baptistery, also in Ravenna.[39]

The connection between the eastern art styles of late Antiquity and Mercian sculpture can be detected at various sites in the wider kingdom, in figural sculpture that is otherwise largely distinct in style from the Breedon monuments. Similarities to the votive quality of the Breedon Virgin panel can be seen in a number of half-length figures on cross-sculpture and panel-fragments, suggesting common motives or models. Hawkes has recently argued that the half-length figures on one of the broad faces of the cross-shaft at Eyam in Derbyshire evoke eastern icons.[40] Two front-facing half-length robed figures are portrayed, one above the other, each filling and framed by moulding (Ill. 4.18).[41] The lower figure is complete and preserves the round-headed upper portion of its frame that creates a niche-like setting comparable to the Breedon Virgin. The emphasis that this architectural setting places on the sole inhabitant of the space it defines, combined with the front-facing pose of the figure, invites the viewer to engage with it on a one-to-one level reminiscent of icons.[42] The stylised linear drapery, notably around the neck, and the disproportionally small head preserved on the lower figure also parallel the Breedon Virgin, though the addition of what appear to be small feet poking out from beneath the hems constitutes a regional feature not seen in the figure sculpture of central Mercia. Parallels for the style of figure can be seen on a fragment of cross-shaft from Rugby in Warwickshire (Ill. 4.19) and a fragment of a cross-head at Bakewell, also in Derbyshire (Ill. 4.20).[43] On the fragment from Rugby, the more complete of two squat small-headed figures in round-headed arches, carries a book and

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[39] Mitchell, forthcoming; Bailey, 1996b: 58–9. The origins of this tradition in insular art are hinted at in an eighth-century text of possible Irish context *De tonsura apostolorum*, which describes St. Andrew with 'the sign of the cross in his hair' (Davis-Weyer, 1986: 78–9; Higgitt, 1989: 277; Mitchell, forthcoming).

[40] Hawkes, 2011: 230–42. Routh stated that the cross-shaft and head were raised into their current position in the eighteenth century, having lain neglected in the churchyard before then (Routh, 1937: 30; Rollason, 1996: 28).

[41] Routh, 1937: 27–8; pl. xivb; Cramp, 1977: 218–19; Rollason, 1996: 30.

[42] Hawkes, 2011. The tradition of portraying individual figures in arched niches was not confined to Mercian cross-shafts, as outlined in the discussion of apostle arcades in Chapter Five (pp. 168–74). The fragment of a ninth-century cross-shaft at Otley in Northumbria preserves on one face two busts of figures, each under an arch within a square frame (Coatsworth, 2008: ill. 564). Whilst the motivation for placing icon-like figures on a cross-shaft at Eyam might be indicative of a familiarity with Northumbrian forms of sculpture, the clear stylistic differences in the figural and non-figural ornament at Eyam and elsewhere in Derbyshire show that the sculptors were conforming to Mercian rather than Northumbrian tastes, as is demonstrated later in this chapter. The evidence for shared models is discussed below, but for an overview, see Cramp, 1977: 224–31 and Bailey and Cramp, 1988: 70.

[43] Kendrick, T. D. 1938: 164; Jewell, 1982: 233–4; Cramp, 1977: 224; Rollason, 1996: 31; Hawkes, 2007: fig. 25.

wears similarly heavy, stylised drapery, and at Bakewell the worn remains of a similar figure are discernable. Whilst it is not possible to identify with any certainty the lower figure on the Eyam shaft, although it appears to be holding a scroll-like object across the body that might denote an apostle, the upper figure is most likely to be the Virgin, with the Christ child on her lap holding a scroll-like object.[44] For Hawkes, the evidence for a late Antique model behind this scene is suggested by its juxtaposition with the angels depicted on the cross-head.[45] Eastern prototypes for this arrangement can be seen on a sixth-century icon from St. Catherine's monastery in Sinai and on a sixth- to seventh-century limestone sculpture from Luxor, now in the Coptic museum in Cairo, depicting the Virgin in Majesty (Ills. 4.15 and 4.21).[46]

In a study of Virgin and Child imagery surviving on Insular sculpture, Hawkes showed that the pose seen on the Eyam cross is apparently unique and does not conform to the main composition types, including those elsewhere in Mercia, whereby the Virgin is seated, either facing the onlooker or in a half-turned pose, with the Christ child's face turned to look at either his mother or the viewer.[47] Similarly, the occurrence of the Virgin and Child image as an individual motif at Eyam, and not part of the more popular Adoration of the Magi scene, would suggest that it was intended to be viewed as an icon-like image, emphasising the Virgin's humility as the Mother of God.[48] However, close parallels for the composition at Eyam can be seen in two sixth-century ivories from the eastern Mediterranean; one depicting the Adoration of the Magi, and the other the Virgin and Child flanked by two angels (Ill. 4.14 and 4.22).[49] In the first ivory, the Virgin is front-facing holding the Christ child, also front-facing, centrally on her lap with her toes peeping out over the edge of the scene.[50] As appears to be the case at Eyam, the Christ child on the Adoration ivory holds a scroll in his left hand and raises his right hand in blessing. The figures, including the three Magi and an archangel are also contained within a round-headed arch, echoing the Eyam setting. These attributes are shared by the second ivory, a diptych from Istanbul, which also depicts the Virgin

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[44] Bailey, 1988: 2; Bailey, 1996b: 6; Rollason, 1996: 32; Cramp, 1977: 218–19, pl. xxx.

[45] Rollason, 1996: 32–3; Hawkes, 2007: 443.

[46] Schiller, 1976: pl. 414; Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 73; Hawkes, 2007: 443.

[47] Hawkes, 1997: 108, 121. Despite its unique composition not seen elsewhere, the inclusion of angels might point to a familiarity with Irish 'Columban' artistic influences, which have been shown to have inspired Virgin and Child imagery on contemporary sculpture at Sandbach and Dewsbury (Hawkes, 1997: 128; Hawkes, 2002a: 110–13, figs. 2.2 and 3.14). These shared influences are discussed below.

[48] Virgin and Child imagery appears to have been comparatively popular in Insular stone sculpture, with the figures predominantly occurring in Ireland and Scotland within scenes depicting the Adoration of the Magi (Hawkes, 1997: 107–8). The earliest 'iconic' image of the Virgin and Child is on the seventh-century Cuthbert Coffin and is thought to draw on Irish models (Kitzinger, 1956: 228–80; Bonner, Rollason and Stancliffe, 1989: 268; Clayton, 1990: 157; Hawkes, 1997: 127).

[49] Cormack and Vassilaki, 2008: nos. 22 and 25.

[50] *op. cit.*, no. 22.

and Child enthroned and front-facing, flanked by two angels.[51] Both ivories also echo the Eyam image in that the Virgin and Child are depicted without halos; a feature that Hawkes understood to further emphasise Christ's humanity.[52] The amalgamation in the Eyam image of elements from both narrative and iconic depictions of the Virgin and Child would suggest that the sculptor was not dependent on a single model, but that there was a conscious adoption of features appropriate to both the context of the scene: a framed, defined space on a cross-shaft below a canopy of angels within the cross-head; and the intended, iconic, role of the monument itself. That the complete cross was designed as a monumental form of icon is perhaps indicated by the ornament on the cross-head − a sculpted canopy of angels. The central roundels on both sides of the cross-head, together with the facing and end surfaces of the surviving arms, are filled with portrait busts of angels, some trumpeting and others holding staffs (Ills. 4.18 and 4.23).[53] This arrangement, which is peculiar in the corpus of extant insular cross-heads, is reminiscent of late Antique double-sided icons depicting busts of angels in individual panels, flanking the figures of saints, such as a sixth-century painted example from the monastery of St. Apollo at Bawit in Egypt.[54] The inclusion of figure-busts on cross-arms is not limited to Derbyshire: a cross-head fragment from Bisley in Gloucestershire (Ill. 4.24), previously thought to be part of a Roman altar, preserves two robed figure-busts in the surviving lower cross-arm and might be compared with the cross-head at Hoddom in Dumfriesshire.[55]

From literary sources, including hagiographies and exegetical material, it is clear that angels were a popular focus within Anglo-Saxon liturgy and iconography between the seventh and ninth centuries; for their fellowship with humanity and as figures of contemplation, an important aspect of Church life.[56] At Eyam, the canopy of angels not only emphasises Christ's humanity, as mentioned, but also acts as a reminder to the

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[51] *op. cit.*, no. 25.

[52] Hawkes, 1997: 124

[53] Hawkes has identified that the figure in the end of the north-facing cross-arm is not an angel, but a single male bust (Hawkes, 2007: 435, fig. 26d).

[54] Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 61. Angels are not uncommon on Insular cross-sculpture, though they usually appear in groups. See, for example the sculpture from Otley in Yorkshire, Halton in Lancashire and the Cross of St. Oran on Iona (Collingwood, 1927: fig. 92b; Hawkes, 1997: fig. 4; Hawkes, 2007: 437; Coatsworth, 2008: ills. 565 and 575). A surviving cross-head fragment at Bradbourne in Derbyshire also depicting angel busts similar to Eyam, one with a trumpet and one with a rod, would suggest that the original monument had a similar iconographical scheme (Hawkes, 2007: 437, figs. 28a and b).

[55] Clapham, 1928: pl. 36, fig. 3; Clifford, 1938: 298, 305, pl. XV, fig. 28; Toynbee, 1976: 93; Henig, 1993: no. 252, pl. 60.

[56] O'Reilly in Connolly, 1995: xvii–lv; Thacker, 1992: 153. In his homilies, Bede understood angels to be 'colleagues of men in prayer' (Bede, *Homilia*, 2.10; Hawkes, 2007: 439). For a comprehensive survey of the liturgical background to the role of angels in Anglo-Saxon iconography see Hawkes, 2007: 431–48.

onlooker of the importance of a contemplative life in the pursuit of spiritual understanding of the Divine.[57] In addition to the concentration of angelic figures at Eyam, and presumably originally at Bradbourne, angels figure prominently in Mercian sculpture, for the most part unconnected to narrative scenes.[58] Angels can be seen on Mercian sepulchral sculpture, as part of narrative scenes and as stand-alone figures, at Lichfield (Ill. 4.25), Fletton (Ill. 4.11) and Wirksworth (Ill. 4.26). At Fletton near Peterborough the sepulchral figure-panels discussed in the next chapter are complemented by seven fragments of an architectural frieze, now mounted inside the church in the east end wall (Ill. 4.27). [59] The frieze fragments combine ornamental and figural imagery, and include figure-busts, two of which are nimbed angels that appear to perform a complementary role, in a similar fashion to those at Eyam (Ills. 4.28 and 4.29). The focus of the frieze would seem to have been a row of arcaded front-facing and nimbed figure-busts, of which only three now survive (Ill. 4.30). The central figure, identifiable as Christ by the cross in his halo, is flanked on the left by a female figure wearing a veil, presumably the Virgin, and on the right by a male figure with a slender face and short cropped hair, identified by Mitchell as St. Peter.[60] In style, these three figures are related to the larger figure-panels at Fletton, the arcaded apostle fragment at Castor and the Peterborough cenotaph both in terms of their much worn incised halos and linear drapery, but also their arrangement under round-headed arcading. Arguably dictated by the nature of their architectural setting, the bust-length of the figures at Fletton clearly differentiates them from their sepulchral counterparts; whilst finding a closer analogy in the figural representations on the Derbyshire crosses than in the friezes at Breedon.[61] Whereas, as will be discussed in subsequent sections, the Breedon friezes are essentially decorative despite the juxtaposition of figural and non-figural motifs, the Fletton frieze fragments are suggestive of a more votive function.[62] The Fletton figures are not only front-facing, presenting themselves to the viewer, as the votive Breedon Virgin panel does, but the angle of the angels' shoulders and the manner in which they gesture with one raised hand, invites the viewers' gaze to travel in the

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[57] Hawkes, 2007: 442.

[58] Cramp, 1977: 219.

[59] Until the 1980s these frieze fragments were mounted outside in the south-east corner of the chancel (Irvine, 1891–3: 160, figs. 4–9; Clapham, 1928: 221, 236, figs. 2–4; Page *et al.*, 1936: 170–2; Pevsner, 1968: 245–7; Taylor, 1983: 149).

[60] Clapham, 1928: pl. XL; Cramp, 1977: 211; Jewell, 1982: 233–5; Plunkett, 1984: 20, 22, 45; Mitchell, 2010: 264; Mitchell, forthcoming.

[61] Jewell, 2001: 256.

[62] Mitchell described the three bust-figures at Fletton as forming an 'intercessional triad' (forthcoming). A fragment of frieze-sculpture at Bisley in Gloucestershire preserves what appears to be a similar round-headed arcade containing one complete and one partial figure-bust (Portway Dobson, 1933: 272, fig. 14). The figures appear to be nimbed but are otherwise unidentifiable.

direction they are signalling. If, in the original composition the frieze blocks containing the angels were in reverse positions, they would have been gesturing towards the arcaded figures. This complementary position echoes the arrangement of the angels and the iconic imagery at Eyam and similarly suggests an original iconographic scheme whereby angels were included to prompt the viewer into contemplation of the holy figures. The much worn bust of what appears to be an angel carrying a staff is depicted on one of the narrow faces on the collar stone of the Newent cross-shaft in Gloucestershire, performing a similarly supportive role to the figural ornament of the cross-shaft faces (Ill. 4.31).[63]

As at Eyam, the Fletton figure-busts betray awareness of late Antique models.[64] The foliate-arcading of the central figures is likely to be ultimately derived from early Christian sarcophagi (see Chapter Five, pp. 163–71), as is the stance of the figures, whereby they appear to hold attributes up and across their chests at an angle.[65] The rods that the angels carry over their shoulders, one of which preserves its trefoil terminal, are similar to both the rod carried by the larger Fletton angel panel and the rod of the Breedon Angel (Ill. 4.32). These staffs, unlike the floriate rod of the Lichfield Angel, understood by Hawkes to reaffirm the iconography of the Annunciation scene of which it was a part, are indicative of the angels' roles as messengers and are common in early Christian art, itself drawing on late imperial art in which messengers to the court were depicted carrying staffs of office.[66] The Fletton angels can thus be compared to two sixth-century eastern Christian ivories, both now in the British Museum; one depicting the Archangel Michael with his staff of office, and the other depicting the Adoration of the Magi (Ills. 4.14 and 4.33).[67] But the popularity of angel imagery within the Mercian sculptural repertoire, and the skill with which it drew on classicizing models is no better demonstrated than at Breedon, where the monumental, metre high, portrait of an angel is preserved in the tower.[68] The angel stands within, and fills, a round-headed arched frame composed of two slender columns, mounted on stepped bases and supporting on cupped imposts a similarly slender moulded arch. The angel steps towards the viewer with his right leg, and raises his right hand up level with his head in the gesture of a

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[63] Conder, 1905–7: 478–9, figs. A–D; Allen, 1907: 197–200, figs. 1–4; Verey, 1970: 303.

[64] The stylistic links between these bust-figures and contemporary parallels in other media, notably on two continental reliquaries are explored in the following chapter (pp. 174–5) and below in the section 'western early medieval models'.

[65] See for example the late fourth-century sarcophagus re-used as an altar in S. Francesco, Ravenna (Ill. 3.7) and the fifth-century sarcophagus at Narbonne (Christern-Briesenick, 2003: no. 389, pl. 95.5; Lawrence, 1932: 171).

[66] Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 79–80.

[67] Kitzinger, 1969: pl. 8; Beckwith, 1970: pl. 68; Cramp, 2006a: fig. 1; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 80.

[68] Clapham, 1928: pl. 37, fig. 2; Cramp, 1977: 211, 218, fig. 58c; Jewell, 2001: 256–8, fig. 17.4.

Greek blessing, whilst in his left hand, he holds in front of him a rod with a trefoil terminal.[69] The sense of movement in the figure is exaggerated by his right foot, hand and wing tip which all break out of the bounds of the niche to suggest the angel is stepping down to the viewer. The classicizing, heavy style of the angel's floor-length robes and the inclusion of plant motifs at the feet are comparable to the Lichfield Angel, though in detail the two carvings are dissimilar.[70] In addition to being frontally facing, the Breedon Angel does not have drilled eyes and has unusually plain wings. Despite David Parsons' suggestion that the angel might, therefore, be a product of the tenth century, Cramp showed that the angel's individuality, a 'strange mixture of the antique and the late ninth century' was well placed within the range of Mercian figural sculpture discussed here.[71] Details such as the rounded, cupped imposts of the arch and the lack of drilled eyes are distinct from the other panels at Breedon, finding closer parallels in contemporary manuscripts, but the architectural setting and the reliance on early Christian models is in keeping with the stylistic concerns of ninth-century Mercian sculptors, mirroring both the Virgin panel at Breedon and the smaller figure panels at Fletton.[72] Jewell pointed to an eastern origin of the model used, as evidenced in the treatment of the angel's face and wings, and in the pose, all of which are closely comparable with the angel depicted in the Annunciation panel on the back-rest of Maximian's throne in Ravenna (Ill. 3.13).[73] In both depictions the angels step forward and raise their right hands to give a Greek blessing.[74] The arrangement of the Breedon Angel panel, with the figure emerging from an architectural setting, is also seen in eastern early Christian models: in the individual figure-panels on the front of Maximian's throne and on a sixth-century ivory panel from Constaninople depicting the Archangel Michael, now in the British Museum.[75] In its combination of eastern stylistic influences and purposeful use of the Greek form of blessing, the Breedon Angel alludes to the significance of angelic salutation that had developed in eastern visual practice, and which by the early eighth century was absorbed into the art of Rome under Pope

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[69] Clapham noted the unusual depiction of a Greek blessing, using the first, second and little fingers, rather than the more common Latin blessing, using the thumb and first two fingers (Clapham, 1928: 233–4).

[70] Cramp, 2006a: 3.

[71] Parsons, 1976–7: 40–3; Cramp, 1977: 218; Cramp, 2006a: 3.

[72] Cramp noted the parallels between the style of imposts in the Breedon Angel panel and the Evangelist portraits frames in the Book of Cerne, discussed below (Cramp, 1977: 211; Wheeler, 1977: fig. 67).

[73] Beckwith, 1970: fig. 94; Jewell, 2001: 257–8.

[74] Jewell, 2001: 258.

[75] Beckwith, 1970: figs. 68 and 94; Jewell, 2001: 257.

John VII, himself a Greek.[76] Within the iconography of Annunciation scenes in particular, the significance of the Archangel Gabriel's greeting to the Virgin, 'Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee',[77] often emphasised with an inscription, was understood to be an expression of the Virgin's pivotal role as the Mother of God and prompted viewers to address the Virgin in the same way when inviting her intercession in prayer.[78] Whether the Breedon Angel was originally 'saluting' the Virgin in a lost sister panel as part of an Annunciation scene, as Parsons, Mitchell and Jewell have suggested, or whether the extant votive Virgin panel was always the sole focus, the motivation behind the Breedon Angel must have been to echo the significance placed by eastern traditions on the role of her salutation.[79] Together with the other panels at Breedon, the Angel panel points to a conscious 'scaling-up' of classicizing sculpted models with the intention of creating a monumental iconographic scheme within the overall artistic design of the church's interior.

As seen in the figural iconography of the cross-sculpture in the Derbyshire Peak, such monumental schemes were not restricted to architectural settings. And at Repton, the influence of late Antique models can be seen to have extended beyond the votive to include more secular themes. There survives at Repton part of the top of a rectangular cross-shaft.[80] In their comprehensive analysis of the stone's style and content, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle have demonstrated that the ornament on both faces is unparalleled in Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture but draws on a familiarity with a broad selection of contemporary and late Antique imagery.[81] The wider face of the stone depicts a rider in battledress wearing a sheathed blade in a scabbard and holding a shield aloft in his left hand, but without a helmet, sitting on a stallion moving leftwards, and looking out at the viewer (Ill. 4.34). Although the left-most side of the scene is missing, the flat shape above the rider's head would suggest that he was brandishing a sword. This depiction of a secular image is unique in the corpus of pre-Viking Age sculpture. The surviving narrow face of the fragment depicts a human-headed serpent-like creature, whose segmented body coils downwards (Ill. 4.35). From the mouth of the serpent, and to either side of its body, two human figures dangle by their necks, giving the impression

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[76] Early artistic representations of this iconography were employed in Rome, in the now lost mosaic decoration of Pope John VII's early eighth-century oratory in Old St. Peter's and the mid seventh-century frescoes in Santa Maria Antiqua in the Forum (van Dijk, 1999: figs. 7 and 10). For the supporting evidence provided by fifth- to sixth-century eastern texts, notably hymns and homilies, see van Dijk, 1999: 420–36.

[77] Luke, 1:28.

[78] van Dijk, 1999: 426.

[79] Parsons, 1976–7: 45; Jewell, 2001: 258; Mitchell, 2010: 265 and forthcoming.

[80] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 233–92, figs. 3 and 4, pls. 6 and 7.

[81] *op. cit.*, 1985: 233, 271–3.

that the snake has their heads in its mouth. Of the two motifs, the composition of the rider motif on the broader face of the Repton Stone clearly betrays late Antique sources of inspiration. The *Adventus* scene, on which the Repton rider is thought to be modelled, was a common motif in classical and late Antique art, and portrayed the arrival of a triumphant emperor at a city or province or on the battlefield. Objects such as the fourth-century Belgrade Cameo and the sixth-century Barberini Ivory depict mounted imperial figures riding to victory holding aloft their weapons, and are the likely type of models that the Repton sculptor drew on (Ills. 4.36 and 4.37).[82] In tangent to these classicizing models and their validation of the rider's importance by imperial style, the rider also appears to include contemporary Germanic practices in his choice of weapons and ring-mail shirt, giving emphasis to his suitability as a subject for a cross-shaft at a royal Anglo-Saxon site.[83]

Vine-scroll and ornamental schemes

The influence of late Antique models on the style of Mercian figure sculpture was prevalent throughout the kingdom and is clearly evidenced both within the Mercian heartland, at Breedon and other sites in the orbit of Peterborough, and beyond in the cross-sculpture of Derbyshire. In addition to this, late Antique models can be seen to have inspired elements of non-figural Mercian sculpture, including those that set it apart from contemporary and earlier Anglo-Saxon traditions. Jewell's thorough assessment of the ornamental friezes at Breedon convincingly detailed the imaginative adoption and adaptation of late Antique ornamental motifs – an assessment that cannot be improved, but which will be outlined here to show how it relates to the non-figural sculpture at other Mercian sites.[84] The friezes at Breedon form the largest component of pre-Conquest sculpture at Breedon, and are of two types: a narrow frieze of continuous vine-scroll, approximately 17cm high, preserved in two lengths, set in the east end wall behind the altar and the south wall of the tower (Ills. 4.38–4.45); and a broad frieze of inhabited vine-scroll and other ornamental motifs in discrete panels, approximately 22cm high, set in the tower and variously in the nave, in the spandrels of the arcades

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[82] Beckwith, 1961: fig. 49; Bianchi Bandinelli, 1971: ill. 329; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 255; Cutler, 1998: 329–39.

[83] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 265, 269. For an overview of Anglo-Saxon ruler portraits in other media see Karkov, 2004: 3. For the links between imagery and imperial authority in Carolingian Europe, see Garipzanov, 2008: 24–9 and Nelson, 1989: 194–205. A later Mercian example of this equestrian imagery survives at Breedon on a fragment of late ninth-century cross-shaft.

[84] Jewell, 1982 and 1986.

and the north and south aisles (Ills. 4.46–5.61).[85] Although vine-scroll was a well-established motif in Anglo-Saxon sculpture, as the section below on Northumbrian use of the motif on cross-sculpture discusses, the range and type of plant scrolls and their inhabitants at Breedon mark a clear departure from earlier traditions, most notably in the motivations behind the choice of motifs.[86] For Cramp and Jewell, both types of frieze were ultimately derived from Classical and late Antique architectural prototypes, for the most part borrowing elements and details from eastern early Christian traditions so as to become, as Jewell described it, 'completely unrelated to the classical acanthus scroll'.[87] From analysis of the foliate types at Breedon, Cramp and Jewell understood the heart-shaped and the trefoil leaves of the single-stem scroll on the narrow frieze to derive from late Antique sources of eastern origin, particularly examples in metalwork and textiles.[88] The heart-shaped leaf, unique to Breedon where it is used repeatedly in the narrow frieze, is traceable to late Antique Near Eastern art and specifically textiles of Sassanian origin.[89] These textiles are best preserved in Byzantine burial sites in Egypt, such as those from Akhmīm now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and provide close parallels for the heart-shaped leaves at Breedon.[90] The trefoil leaf at Breedon can similarly to be traced to Sassanian art, in textiles such as the Antinoë silks and in Coptic art in relief carving such as the early sixth-century carved wooden doors from the church of St. Barbara in Old Cairo, now in the Coptic Museum (Ill. 4.62 and 4.63).[91] These two leaf types are used in the single-stem and double-stem scroll friezes at Breedon, the latter of which Jewell has shown also draws on forms of Coptic and Syrian architectural sculpture. A close parallel and early prototype for the 'medallion scroll' of the double-stem design at Breedon are the fifth- or sixth-century cornice fragments from Ahnas, now in the Cairo Museum and a frieze fragment in a similar style, of unknown provenance now in the Brooklyn Museum, the latter inhabited with

[85] Clapham, 1928: 221–9, fig. 1; Cramp, 1977: 194–207; Jewell, 1982: 15, 52–118, 142–233; Jewell, 1986: 95–6, 100.

[86] Brøndsted and Kitzinger first demonstrated the late Antique and specifically eastern origins of the Anglo-Saxon vine-scroll in their discussions of earlier Northumbrian monuments (see below, p. 132, and Brøndsted, 1924 and Kitzinger, 1936).

[87] Cramp, 1977: 194; Jewell, 1982: 93, 98, 144; 1986: 99.

[88] Cramp, 1977: 206; Jewell, 1982: 52–6; 1986: 96–8.

[89] Jewell, 1982: 52–6; 1986: 97. The Sassanian Empire, the second Persian Empire, between the third and mid-seventh century, included the modern country of Iran, parts of Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. For a history, see Daryaee, 2009. Sassanian artistic motifs are known to have made their way into the repertoire of Roman and Byzantine art during the fifth centuries through the importation of luxury goods such as silks (Gonosová, 2007: 40, 45).

[90] Kendrick, A. F. 1922: nos. 795, 800, 808, pls. 24, 22 and 25; Jewell, 1986: 97; Gonosová, 2007: 45.

[91] Volbach and Kuehnel, 1926: vii; Beckwith, 1963: pl. 135; Jewell, 1986: 97; Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 133.

leaping animals.[92] Details such the ridged nodes of the narrow frieze at Breedon also closely mirror Coptic sculpture, where they can be seen on the carved sixth-century capitals from the monastery of St. Jeremiah at Saqqara (Ill. 4.65).[93]

Eastern sources of influence are also apparent in the broad friezes at Breedon where the inhabited vine-scrolls are occupied with an imaginative array of small lively figures and animals, many of which are drawn from a range of late Antique media and, as will be shown, express conscious motivations behind their inclusion.[94] The arrangement of figures amongst and gripping the vine-scroll that contains them is certainly derived from the late Antique harvest scenes, which depict *putti* in amongst grape vines, as can be seen in the borders of a sixth-century Coptic ivory panel now in Trieste.[95] Five fragments of a fourth- or fifth-century limestone frieze from Oxyrhynchus in Egypt depict crowded vintage scenes with small animated figures gathering grapes from large stylised vines (Ill. 4.64).[96] Jewell showed that the kneeling spearman, the winged quadrupeds and the back-biting hounds that inhabit the Breedon scrolls have eastern origins.[97] Comparisons have been made between the winged quadrupeds on the Breedon frieze and those on fourth- to fifth-century Egyptian textiles; the spearman at Breedon and those on fourth- to fifth-century textiles from Akhīm, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum and a fifth-century consular diptych; and the Breedon hounds and comparable animals on a fifth-century Byzantine stucco frieze at Salamis in Cypress.[98] The indirect influence of Sassanian art can be detected behind many of these motifs. The winged quadrupeds of the Breedon friezes are likely to derive from the popular Sassanian *senmurv*, a mythical winged animal, which appears in Sassanian textiles, stucco, metalwork and stone and was believed to be the distributor of plant seeds to mankind.[99] The *senmurv* and other fantastical beasts such as centaurs and sphinxes appear on prestige, often silk, textiles worn by nobles of the Sassanian Empire and following their export to and imitation in the West, they were used both as garments and ornaments for liturgical spaces; such as the eighth-century

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[92] Beckwith, 1963: pl. 76; Jewell, 1982: 98, pl. 38; 1986: 100.
[93] Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 45.
[94] Jewell, 1982: 145.
[95] Beckwith, 1963: pl. 37; Jewell, 1982: 116; 1986: 102. These *putti* first appear in pre-Christian art of the second century, after which they became a popular inclusion in decorative scenes in other media, such as in a fourth-century mosaic depicting a vintage scene in the Mausoleum of Constantina in Rome where grape-gathering became symbolic of the Eucharist and the 'vine of the Lord' (Grabar, A., 1968: 34, ills. 74–9; Beckwith, 1970: pl. 11).
[96] Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 92.
[97] Jewell, 1982: 111, 117, 184–7.
[98] Volbach and Kuehnel, 1926: pl. 45; Jewell, 1982: 111, 114, 117, 187, fig. 98.
[99] Harper, 1961: 95.

imperial silks from Istanbul, now in Lyon, Paris and Berlin (Ill. 4.66).[100] Such silks are known to have been markers of social status and formed an important component of imperial gift exchange, and it is not unlikely that exotic animal motifs such as the *senmurv* became synonymous with prestige and were imitated as such.[101] The interrelationship of motifs in different media, and in particular, the direct influence of textiles on stone carving is evidenced from at least the late sixth century in the eastern Byzantine Empire, where decorative pillars, including one from Acre now outside S. Marco in Venice exhibit a clear, contemporary, adoption of Sassanian textile design.[102] In addition to textiles, Sassanian silver is thought to have been greatly significant in the development of medieval decorative art, producing common themes such as the hunting rider, certain animals and mythical creatures like the *senmurv*.[103] A number of animals popular in Byzantine ivory carving, such as the stags, rams and rampant lions which inhabit the vine-scroll borders of Maximian's throne in Ravenna, may have been inspired by Sassanian models.[104] Sassanian metalwork certainly provides early prototypes for the figures on horseback, the chicken-like birds and the peculiar winged quadrupeds with human faces in the Breedon friezes. In both the animated pose of the riders and their mounts, and the variety of weapons they wield, including lances and swords, the Breedon motifs are markedly similar to the depictions of princely hunting themes on Sassanian silver objects such as a fifth-century silver plate now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Ill. 4.67).[105] Similarly, the curious strutting cockerels of the Breedon frieze, thought to derive from vintage scenes, are just as likely to derive from Sassanian motifs of a similar nature, as can be seen on two silver bowls, both now in America (Ill. 4.68 and 4.69).[106] And, the peculiar winged quadrupeds with human

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[100] Harper, 1961: 95; Beckwith, 1970: pls. 144–6; Osbourne, 1992: 312–13. For an overview of Byzantium's early dependency on foreign, and particularly Near Eastern, silk and the subsequent development of its own silk manufacture industry, see Oikonomides, 1986: 33–53; Muthesius, 1995b in Muthesius, 1995a, pp. 119–34 and Jacoby, 2004: 197–240. For the relationship between gift exchange and medieval economies in the east, see Cutler, 2001: 247–78. From *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, it is known that in the seventh century Wilfred endowed his foundation at Ripon in Northumbria with silk hangings, and it is not unlikely that they were products of the East (Eddius Stephanus, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid*: LV).

[101] Jacoby, 2004: 199. The potential symbolism of other Sassanian animal motifs has been explored but is still relatively unknown (Grabar, O., 1967: 68–70; Gonosová, 2007: 44).

[102] Volbach, 1961: 352, pl. 208. Within Anglo-Saxon England, this link is clearly evidenced at Otley where the remains of an early ninth-century cross-shaft bear on two faces hybrid beasts – part lion, part bird and part serpent (Cramp, 1970: 55–63; Lang, 2000: 111; Coatsworth, 2008: 220, ills. 573 and 574). These *Senmurv*-like creatures were thought by Lang and Cramp to have entered the Northumbrian sculptural repertoire through imported silks (Cramp, 1970: 61; Lang, 2000: 111).

[103] Grabar, O., 1967: 23–4.

[104] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 94.

[105] Grabar, O., 1967: no. 2.

[106] *op. cit.*, nos. 27 and 39.

faces bear a striking resemblance to creatures adorning an embossed sixth-century Sassanian shallow gold bowl (Ill. 4.70).[107]

The influences of late Antique artistic traditions in the architectural sculpture at Breedon are both specific and broad-ranging. In terms of the general dominance of vine-scroll, in both inhabited and non-inhabited forms, within an architectural setting, the inspiration is certainly derived from late Antique counterparts, both from the sub-classical West and eastern regions such as Coptic Egypt. Individual elements of the vine-scroll itself and its inhabitants appear to draw on a range of sources, dominated by small-scale portable and often prestigious art forms, notably ivories, textiles and metalwork.[108] Within this repertoire there is a clear preference for eastern motifs associated with social status, specifically certain animal types and mounted figures comparable to Sassanian depictions, which are known to have been absorbed into western court art through Byzantine imperial culture. But the overall arrangement of the Breedon friezes, particularly the interaction of the figures and animals with the vines and the juxtaposition of inhabited vine-scroll and other ornament, was seen by Jewell as peculiarly Insular.[109] Indeed, of the geometric ornament at Breedon, Jewell argued that only the key pattern derives from late Antique architectural sculpture, and as will be shown below, many of the other animals and birds have their closest parallels in contemporary artwork.[110]

Beyond Breedon, where very little Mercian architectural sculpture survives, is it possible to see the same degree of influence of late Antiquity in non-figural sculpture? Certain decorative elements, such as the trefoil leaf, can be found elsewhere, notably in the cross-sculpture of the western Midlands: at Cropthorne (Ill. 4.71), Acton Beauchamp (Ill. 4.72) and Wroxeter (Ill. 4.73). But, in the context of the other ornament employed at these sites and their application on cross-sculpture, as is discussed later in this chapter, they are more likely to be a reaction to contemporary uses of the motif in metalwork, manuscripts and continental sculpture rather than to late Antique models. Nonetheless, as at Breedon, individual foliate elements used on these monuments point to exotic sources, however indirectly they might have been reached. One leaf-form at Acton Beauchamp, composed of two round parts and a central elongated oval part, finds its closest parallel in the sculpture of Coptic late Antiquity, on a sixth-century limestone

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[107] Dalton, 1964: 8–9, pl. VIII, 18.
[108] Cramp, 1977: 195, 206.
[109] Jewell, 1982: 152.
[110] Jewell, 1986: 103.

capital from the monastery of St. Jeremiah at Saqqara (Ill. 4.65).[111] A parallel process is evidenced in the north of Mercia, where the cross-sculpture of the Derbyshire Peak, at Bradbourne (Ill. 4.74), Eyam (Ill. 4.18) and Bakewell (Ills. 4.75 and 4.76) is dominated by a form of plant-scroll that incorporates elements of contemporary forms from both Northumbrian and Mercian sculpture with other, quite distinct, features, resulting in a style of plant-scroll that is quite dissimilar to other sculptural traditions.[112] This form of plant-scroll is characterised by its fleshy and coiling nature, whereby the tendrils of the plant form exaggerated, uninhabited spiral scrolls with ridged nodes and offshoots terminating in berry bunches and oval leaves or buds. Those elements, which appear to be peculiar to the Peak District cross-shafts, can be argued to derive directly from late Antique sources, presumably bypassing the traditions of both central Mercia and Northumbria. The exaggerated, uninhabited scroll, in which the tendril coils in on itself numerous times before terminating in a berry bunch or leaf forms draws directly on late Antique mosaic design, where the closest comparable analogue is found in the ornament of the Neon Baptistery in Ravenna (Ill. 4.77).[113]

Eastern early medieval models

Sculptural models

As well as models from the late Antique period, works of art in various media produced from the seventh century onwards in the East or in western centres under eastern, Byzantine influence continued to make an impact on the stylistic development of Mercian sculpture (see Maps 4.B and 4.C for the early medieval sites mentioned in this chapter). In terms of sculptural sources of inspiration, the most noticeable difference between the range of early medieval models from the East and their late Antique predecessors is the comparable lack of carved ivories. In the later sixth century there was a reduction in the demand for ivory, which weakened both the means of supply and the skilled carving tradition that was not revived until the late eighth century under Charlemagne.[114] Sculptural models from the East during this period are therefore largely in the form of architectural stone carving, much of which shows a continuity in style

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[111] Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 45.

[112] Routh, 1937: 5–7, 18–20; Kendrick, T. D. 1938: 164; Cramp, 1977: 194, 218–19, 224; Moreland, 1999: fig. 1.

[113] Volbach, 1961: 338–9, pl. 140. A similar form of this exaggerated scrolling is discernable on sculpture at Lowther in Cumbria but it is quite dissimilar in form – with much more slender tendrils arranged in a less compacted fashion (Bailey and Cramp, 1988: 127–8, ills. 426–31, 436–43).

[114] Cutler, 1987: 437, 454–7; Mitchell, 2007: 267–8.

from late Antiquity, particularly within Coptic Egypt and the eastern territories of the Byzantine Empire. Cramp first drew attention to the parallels between the friezes at Breedon and the seventh-century carvings from the Coptic monastery of St. Apollo at Bawit on the Nile.[115] The Bawit friezes and pilasters preserved in the Coptic museum in Cairo and the Louvre in Paris provide convincing prototypes for the juxtaposition of animal and abstract ornament within friezes. In particular, Cramp compared the medallion scroll at Breedon (Ills. 4.43–4.45) with a similar motif at Bawit (Ill. 4.78).[116] Individual foliate elements in the single-stem vine-scroll friezes at Breedon, notably the bunched-berry terminals and the small curling offshoots (Ill. 4.42), are also closely comparable to those on strip friezes from Bawit.[117] Jewell argued that the Breedon panel depicting a heraldic lion (Ill. 4.79) was likely to have been inspired by a model akin to a sculpted lion at Bawit.[118] The Breedon Lion is unparalleled in the Mercian sculptural repertoire, both in style, carved in high relief against a plain background, and in pose, whereby it holds a leafy stem.[119] There are examples of heraldic lions in architectural schemes on the Continent: at Pomposa, in northern Italy (early eleventh century), Fiquefleur in north-west Francia (seventh century), and in Bulgaria at Stara Zagora (tenth century), but none of these are contemporary in date with the Breedon lion.[120] Lions also appear in eighth-century Lombard sculpture of Italy, as at Aquileia, where a very stylised and simplistic lion is depicted in profile on a ciborium fragment; and at Cividale where a pair of equally simplistic lions adorns one arched face of the font in Santa Maria Assunta.[121] But, no stylistic comparison can be made with the Breedon Lion, and the difference in context, whereby the Lombard lions are only one element in an ornamental scheme and the Breedon Lion assumes a heraldic pose on its own, also suggests a difference in function. The Breedon Lion panel, which is over half a metre square in size, was almost certainly drawing on the prestige associated with the symbol in eastern art – in Sassanian, Coptic and Byzantine textiles and carvings.[122] In addition to the Lion panel at Breedon, Jewell argued that the style of hounds depicted in the

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[115] Cramp, 1977: 194, 206; Mitchell, forthcoming. The monastery at Bawit was founded in the fourth century, but most of the carving that survives dates from the seventh century, during which time it reached the height of its prosperity (Torp, 1971: 35–41; Coquin and Martin, 1991: 362–3; Bénazeth, 2002: 4). For parallels between the carvings at Bawit and earlier Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture, see Kozodoy, 1986: 67–94, especially pp. 72 and 88.

[116] Beckwith, 1963: pls. 86–8; Torp, 1971: pl. 31; see also Kodozoy, 1986: pl. XLa.

[117] Atalla, 1989: no. 7124; Bénazeth, 2002: fig. 34.

[118] Jewell, 1982: 252; Bénazeth, 2002: fig. 26.

[119] Cramp, 1977: fig. 53b; Jewell, 1982: 252; Dornier, 1996: 41; Jewell, 2001: 253. There are paired and highly stylised lions in the broad frieze at Breedon but, as Jewell noted, they have little in common with the lion panel (Jewell, 2001: 253).

[120] Jewell, 1982: 252; Filow, 1919: pl. 2; Dornier, 1996: 41, fig. 2.

[121] Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. 71, fig. 282, pl. 86, fig. 317.

[122] Dalton, 1961: 706; Beckwith, 1970: pl. 144; Buckton, 1994: no. 54; Muthesius, 1995a: pl. 44, 105.

friezes (Ill. 4.46) was derived from eastern models, such as an eighth- to ninth-century Byzantine carving of a hound on a slab in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, which shares the same elongated body and limbs.[123] A similar hound-like animal can be seen at Scalford in Leicestershire (cat. no. 59), where a length of frieze containing inhabited vine-scroll, c. 30cm in length, is mounted in an access passage (Ill. 4.80).[124] Despite its worn state and awkward position, a snaking loop of incised, single-stem vine-scroll that appears to fill the height of the available plane can be discerned, with the trace remains of a moulded border above and below it. Details such as the trumpet binding at the stem junctions, and a small offshoot can still be identified. Within the two visible curves of the vine-scroll, worn depictions of leaping hound-like animals can be seen. The hounds' long bodies and limbs and pointed snouts are analogous with those of the hounds depicted on a section of broad frieze in the wall of the tower at Breedon (Ill. 4.46).[125]

Byzantine slabs of the seventh century onwards continued to use motifs from the Sassanian artistic repertoire, and the hounds and other animals with which the Breedon motifs can be compared are likely to have developed from that tradition.[126] One such Byzantine development was the carving in shallow relief of ornament or a motif against a uniform flat background, a characteristic that set it apart from the earlier, late Antique tradition of carving in deep relief, and one that was widely adopted by continental sculptors in Lombard Italy and elsewhere.[127] In Mercia, this technique appears to have had little influence, with the exception of certain figural carvings that combine this low relief style with the front-facing rigidity of early Byzantine icons that would suggest a familiarity with such models. Thus, the style of the Breedon Virgin, as mentioned above, has been compared by Jewell to the early seventh-century low relief panels from a chancel barrier at Hagios Polyeuktos in Istanbul (Ill. 4.13).[128] This emulation of style might also point to an emulation of function. Both the unusual depiction of the Virgin with a book and the lack of narrative context highlight the intercessory role of the Virgin, which would be fitting if it had originally formed part of a series of panels, as at Hagios Polyeuktos, which included depictions of the apostles and Christ above the entrance to the sanctuary.[129] A similar convention in style was adopted in the carving of

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[123] Jewell, 1982: 187; 1986: 104, pl. 46d.
[124] Parsons, 1996: 17.
[125] Jewell, 1986: pl. 49a.
[126] Sheppard, 1969: 65.
[127] Sheppard, 1969: 65, 67–8.
[128] Jewell, 2001: 253; Nees, 1983: figs. 2–5.
[129] For the role of pre-Iconoclastic chancel barriers, beams and Deesis imagery in personal intercession, see Nees, 1983: 15–26. It has been argued that panelled Byzantine chancel panels, depicting individual

panel fragments at St. Andrew's church in Pershore, Worcestershire (cat. no. 50), and Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire (cat. no. 8).[130] At Pershore the panel-fragment built into a wall of the church bears a front-facing half-length robed figure holding a rope-like object, but missing its head (Ill. 4.83).[131] The figure is contained within what must have been an arched frame, the right-hand column of which and the base of a matching left-hand column survive. The panel is edged with plain moulding and between the bases of the columns is an arcade-motif. The setting of the figure within an architectural space, its low relief style of carving, the frontality of the figure's pose and its stylised heavy drapery all parallel the Breedon Virgin. As with the Breedon Virgin, these features are in keeping with the panels from Hagios Polyeuktos, suggesting the panel may also have formed part of a larger panelled composition within the church.

The influence of eastern sculptural models produced in the Byzantine Empire is thus discernable in Mercian sculpture. But, complimenting this is the evidence suggesting Mercian sculptors were familiar with sculptural sources beyond the Christian East, in the newly acquired territories of the early Islamic Empire during the Ummayad period.[132] Stylistic links have been demonstrated between the medallion scroll in the narrow frieze at Breedon and the elaborate vine-scroll ornament on the façade of the early eighth-century palace at Mshatta in Jordan, preserved in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin (Ill. 4.81).[133] Parts of this façade also include mythical creatures such the *senmurv* and centaurs, which interact with the vine-scroll that encloses them in a comparable fashion to the broad friezes at Breedon.[134] Similarly, Jewell compared the lizards and naked human figure clutching stems on either side in the broad frieze at Breedon to motifs seen in the stucco ornament at the early eighth-century palace of Qasr al-Hayr West in Syria.[135] As with Byzantine sculpture during this period, early Islamic art incorporated existing styles and motifs, especially Sassanian royal symbols because,

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half-length figures, were already known to Anglo-Saxon artists in the seventh century. The figural panels described by Bede that Benedict Biscop brought back from Rome to adorn the Northumbrian church at Monkwearmouth in c. 678 are thought to have been based on panels like those at Hagios Polyeuktos – designed to be set in a row above a chancel barrier to mark the transition between the nave and the sanctuary (Meyvaert, 1979: 64–7; Nees, 1983: 20–1; Davis-Weyer, 1986: 74). Likewise, it has been suggested that the arrangement of the twelve half-length apostles on the Cuthbert Coffin mirrors the composition of Byzantine chancel barriers and beams (Kitzinger, 1956: 265–73; Nees, 1983: 21–2).

[130] The fragment of a possible third example in this style is preserved at St. Cuthbert's church in Great Glen, Leicestershire (cat. no. 39). It has been argued that the fragment represents part of two figures, from a Lazarus scene (Bailey, 1980b: 2–4, fig. 2). However, it seems just as likely that the fragment was from a composition similar to that at Pershore.

[131] King, J., 1992: 129–34.

[132] For a history of the Umayyad period, see Hawting, 2000.

[133] Dalton, 1961: fig. 447; Grabar, O., 1973: pls. 120–3; Jewell, 1986: 100; Grabar, O., 1987: 243–7. For a survey of the development of early Islamic art during this period, see Creswell, 1969.

[134] Grabar, O., 1973: pls. 122.

[135] Jewell, 1982: 155, fig. 74; Flood, 2001: ill. 38.

for early Islamic rulers, it was a 'means by which to express a concept of kingship in architectural as well as ceremonial terms'.[136] As well as adopting and developing Sassanian and other Near Eastern artistic styles, early Islamic artists borrowed and imitated contemporary Byzantine techniques and iconographies, so that as Grabar termed it, a 'constant stream of influences flowed in both directions' between the seventh and ninth centuries.[137] Thus, whilst it is possible to note stylistic parallels between Mercian sculpture and that of the early Islamic East, it is uncertain whether specific elements of vine-scroll or animal ornament were transmitted as a result of direct contact with architectural sculpture in the Near East, or whether they were available and accessed through intermediary models produced in Byzantine centres in the West.

Non-sculptural models: textiles and mosaics

Parallels can be found between Mercian sculpture and other forms of monumental, albeit non-sculptural, eastern art of the seventh to early ninth century. The elaborate vine-scrolls developed in early Islamic relief carving were translated into decorative mosaics and metalwork in mosques and court buildings as part of the motif's transformation from a background design into what Flood called 'a major architectonic and iconographic element'.[138] At the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, completed AD 691–92, foliate motifs dominate the decorative schemes, and the exaggerated mosaic vine-scrolls with fruit and bud terminals provide a possible prototype for the Mercian motifs at Breedon, and elsewhere at Bradbourne, Eyam and Rugby (Ill. 4.82).[139] In particular, the twinned sprouting leaves which emerge from the nodes into the spandrels between the scroll roundels on the Derbyshire crosses bear a close resemblance.[140] The influence of eastern early medieval mosaics might also be seen in elements of the style of Mercian figural sculpture. Comparison can be made between the drapery style of the Breedon Virgin and seventh-century Byzantine models, noting the similarities between the heavy triangular folds of the Breedon Virgin and those in a seventh-century mosaic in Salonika depicting St. Demetrius (Ill. 4.84).[141] The highly stylised drapery conventions of early Byzantine mosaic figures, caused by restrictions of the medium

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[136] Bier, 1993: 60; Baer, 1999: 32.
[137] Grabar, O., 1964: 70, 79; 1973: 15–16.
[138] Flood, 2001: 57, 68. For the use of the vine-scroll motif within early Islamic and Byzantine ornament as an architectonic framing device to define sacred space, see *op. cit.*, 68–77.
[139] Grabar, O., 1959: 33–62; Grabar, O., 1973: 58–65, pls. 8 and 9; Jewell, 1982: pls. 18, 24–6; Flood, 2001: 87–100, ill. 55.
[140] Kitzinger, 1936: fig. 5a.
[141] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 140; Jewell, 2001: 254.

itself, whereby tonal contrast is used to give the impression of volume, were also translated into manuscript art. An early ninth-century Latin copy of St. John Chrysostom's Sermons on St. Matthew, thought to be based on a seventh-century Byzantine model, includes a portrait of St. John Chrysostom that is a painted, but otherwise faithful imitation of Byzantine drapery conventions depicted in mosaic (Ill. 4.85) (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS. cod. 1007, fol. 1).[142] Not only is the drapery highly stylised, hanging in voluminous and heavy folds from the figure of the saint, but the shape and folds of the drapery are created using high-contrast colouring, mimicking mosaic technique. Further evidence for this consistency in style across different media at this time is seen in the monumental painted figures that survive in the church of S. Maria Antiqua in the Forum of Rome. As discussed in the previous chapter, the existing seventh-century frescoes and those added by Pope John VII in the early eighth century adhered to Byzantine artistic conventions both in terms of iconography and style.[143] So, for example, the Maccabees scene uses a similar tonal high-contrast style to create the folds of the figures' drapery, and to convey a sense of the volume of their bodies underneath (Ill. 4.86). This type of stylisation is seen in the Breedon Virgin, albeit in stone, where it is also possible to see a mirroring of the pose in the St. John Chrysostom manuscript portrait. Both the Breedon Virgin and St. John Chrysostom are front-facing, carrying a closed book in their cloaked left hand, whilst gesturing towards it with a long-fingered right hand held up in blessing.

The portability of manuscripts makes them a plausible source for the models behind the eastern-inspired stylistic elements in Mercian sculpture. To these can be added textiles, which as mentioned above, are known to have been circulating throughout the early medieval period, within the Byzantine territories and beyond. Seventh-century silks of eastern manufacture continued to include motifs that were later echoed in Mercian sculpture; including foliate motifs such as the heart-shaped leaf in the Breedon friezes, which Jewell found on a seventh-century Egyptian silk from Akkhīm (although likely to be derived from earlier Sassanian prototypes).[144] Similarly, an eighth-century Egyptian textile, now in the Rietberg Museum in Zürich, is ornamented with heart-shaped leaves comparable to those at Breedon, but also the curling tendrils and double-offshoots seen elsewhere in Mercia, in the cross-sculpture of the Derbyshire Peak (Ill. 4.88).[145] Early Medieval eastern textiles depicting figural

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[142] Beckwith, 1970: 70, pl. 137.
[143] Nordhagen, 1990b: 164–5, pl. XVII; 1990c: 177–296; 2000: 115–16.
[144] Volbach and Kuehnel, 1926: pl. 22; Jewell, 1982: 53.
[145] Peter-Müller, 1976: no. 64.

scenes share stylistic elements with Mercian figural sculpture. An early ninth-century silk of Alexandrian, Syrian or Byzantine origin depicting the Annunciation provides a contemporary eastern textile model for the active and interactive pose popularly assumed by Mercian representations of the Archangel Gabriel, notably at Breedon and Lichfield (Ill. 4.89).[146] The lobed rod, diadem and stylised folds of the drapery seen in the textile depiction of the Archangel are a close parallel for the style of the Breedon Angel. Similar textile parallels can be sought in a carved panel at Peterborough that shows two robed figures, standing either side of what Cramp described as a date palm (cat. no. 51) (Ill. 4.87).[147] The figures are stylised with linear drapery that gives little sense of the bodies beneath and are unique in the Mercian repertoire. Elements of the panel point to a late Antique model; the Phrygian caps that the two figures wear are paralleled on a sixth-century eastern Mediterranean ivory of the Adoration of the Magi, and one of the sixth-century Palestinian *ampullae* with the same scene, at Monza (Ill. 3.16).[148] The Magi depicted in the Justinian mosaic of S. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna also wear Phrygian caps (Ill. 3.8).[149] Further eastern influences can be discerned in the stance of the figures, including the way they hold their spears and the position of their feet, which parallels the design of an eighth-century silk from the tomb of Saint Servatius in Istanbul.[150]

Western early medieval models

Sculptural models

Despite the wealth of contemporary or near-contemporary eastern models from which the Mercian sculptors may have drawn, stylistic analysis would suggest that the majority of motifs were late Antique in origin and enjoyed a continuity in use within both the Byzantine and early Islamic artistic milieu. As will be shown, this continuity in use of late Antique motifs, which included a degree of adaptation, is evidenced in the

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[146] Schiller, 1971a: ill. 73.
[147] Cramp, 1977: 211.
[148] Schiller, 1971a: ill. 259; Cormack and Vassilaki, 2009: nos. 22 and 27. Cramp identified the type of cap worn by the Peterborough figures as Phrygian, and suggested that the figures could have been representations of bishops (1977: 211, 216). The frequency with which the Magi are depicted wearing Phrygian caps in representations of the Adoration would suggest that this panel had originally formed part of a larger composition depicting this scene. If so, there is no obvious model for it within the repertoire of either late Antique or early Medieval art, and it is unparalleled in Anglo-Saxon sculpture. An interesting comparison may be made with the figure, who wears a similar style of hat, on an end panel of the eighth-century Northumbrian Franks Casket depicting Hos on the 'sorrow-mound' (Webster and Backhouse, 1991; Webster, 1999).
[149] Beckwith, 1970: 49.
[150] Buckton, 1994: no. 137.

sculptural and non-sculptural arts of the early Medieval West (here defined as those territories not under direct Byzantine control). In particular, both the form and content of Lombard sculpture, which constituted the largest body of contemporary sculptural material available to the Mercians as outlined in the previous chapter, developed in the most part from existing late Antique artistic styles. And, as a result of the movement of Anglo-Saxons between England and the Continent known from documentary evidence, discussed in Chapter One (pp. 45–8), it is highly likely that the Mercian sculptural community were familiar with Lombard sculptural models. Within the Mercian corpus there are definite instances of stylistic parallels with contemporary Lombard sculpture. Cramp and Jewell identified elements in the Breedon friezes that parallel motifs commonly used in Italian architectural sculpture; notably the rounded coils, short tendrils, leaf whorls and trefoil leaf design which are also seen in sculpture at Brescia, Este, Milan, Cividale and Rome.[151] Whilst Jewell demonstrated that most of these motifs were originally derived from eastern models, it is likely that their use on architectural sculpture in Mercia was indeed influenced by their application to Lombard and Carolingian-era friezes and pilasters in Italy. Thus, whilst the narrow frieze at Breedon belongs to late Antique and Byzantine traditions of strip friezes, the style of its continuous vine-scroll ornament is most closely connected with contemporary Italian foliage.[152] Certainly, the heart-shaped leaf seen at Breedon that Jewell showed was most readily available in early Christian models, specifically eastern, was quite prolific in late Antique and Lombard stucco and sculpture in northern and central Italy.[153] For example, it can be seen in the stucco ornament of the archiepiscopal chapel in Ravenna and on an early ninth-century frieze fragment from S. Maria D'Aurona, now in the Castello Sforzesco in Milan (Ill. 3.29).[154] Similarly, individual elements on the Derbyshire crosses can be seen to mirror contemporary Italian sculpture; and details such as the double oval leaves and the tri-part offshoot from the nodes on the Bakewell and Eyam plant-scrolls can also be seen in a similar arrangement ornamenting the architectural sculpture from S. Maria D'Aurona in Milan.[155]

In the frieze fragments at Fletton the trefoil leaf motif, which as discussed above has Sassanian roots, can be seen across northern and central Italy at Cividale del Friuli,

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[151] Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966: pls. 19, 21, fig. 54; Serra, 1974: fig. 211; Cramp: 1976: 270, fig. 5f; Jewell, 1982: 57, 61; Bailey, 1996b: 55–6; Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: fig. 161.
[152] Jewell, 1982: 93, 74.
[153] *op. cit.*, 52–6.
[154] Pasquini, 2002: fig. 47.
[155] Dianzani, 1989: pls. V1b and 2b, XVI 16d, XX 32a, XXXIII 16.

Otricoli in Umbria, Savigliano in Piedmont, and in Rome (Ills. 4.91 and 4.92).[156] Likewise, an Italian sculptural influence might be detectable in the much worn ornamental designs in the two angel-bust sections of the Fletton frieze. The remains of what appears to be an incised and interlocking spiralling motif fills the space next to each angel figure (Ills. 4.28 and 4.29). It is difficult to draw close comparisons between this motif and the trumpet-spiral patterns that appear at both South Kyme and Breedon, but the patterning can be compared with continental sculpture, such as the ninth-century chancel panels in S. Sabina in Rome and in the crypt of the church at Schänis in Switzerland.[157] Here, the panel is filled with a symmetrical and geometrically arranged carpet of continuous acanthus-scroll that springs from a central stem and unfolds into rows of circular leaf whorls.[158] That sections of the Fletton frieze were imitating continental architectural sculpture is also suggested by the deep, almost undercutting, style of carving which gives the panels a pierced quality, similar to the panels in S. Sabina, and elsewhere at Ravenna in S. Apollinare in Nuovo. The composition of these two sections at Fletton is unusual and undoubtedly formed part of a more complex scheme of carving in the original scheme of the frieze. As elements in a larger composition, these two panels echo the imagery on a sixth-century silver-gilt cross of Justin II, now in the Vatican Museums in Rome, where the two horizontal cross-arms each depict a bust in a roundel at the end of the arm, flanking a scrolling plant motif (Ill. 4.90).[159] Here, the plants draw the eye of the viewer in towards the central roundel on the cross which contains the *Agnus Dei*. It is not hard to imagine that the two Fletton angel frieze-fragments framed a central image of similar importance, perhaps a complete arcade depicting Christ and all of the Apostles, as discussed above. Such an arrangement can be seen on the Hoddom cross-head where an angel carrying a rod is shown at the end of one horizontal cross-arm, with a panel of animal ornament between it and the figure of Christ in the central roundel, and on the previously mentioned Derbyshire cross-sculpture.[160]

At Edenham in Lincolnshire, in addition to the lower part of a mid ninth-century cross-shaft, there are preserved *in situ* two decorative roundels thought to date from the same period (cat. no. 33).[161] In one of these roundels, four single plant stems spring

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[156] Novelli, 1974: 71, fig. 91; Pani Ermini, 1974a: pl. 87, fig. 307; Bertelli, 1985: 274, fig. 213.
[157] Elrington, 1903: fig. 1; Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 27.
[158] But, see below, pp. 127–9, for stylistic parallels in contemporary continental manuscript art.
[159] Kozodoy, 1986: pl. XXXIXd.
[160] Clapham, 1928: pl. 36, fig. 3.
[161] Pevsner and Harris, 1964: 26, 522; Taylor and Taylor, 1965a: 227; Plunkett, 1984: 84–91; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 160–2, ills. 168–9; Plunkett, 1998: 211.

from the centre to form a cross, with a pellet in each of their interstices. Each stem spirals in an anti-clockwise direction away from the centre to end in a hatched, elongated single leaf, which crosses out of its spiralling stem, with the curled tip filling the spaces between each spiral and the border of the roundel (Ill. 4.93). The second roundel appears to be damaged and only a lower third is visible (Ill. 4.94). Nonetheless, it is possible to see that the original motif was an equal-armed cross with large hollow bosses at the end of each arm, which filled the roundel.[162] In the visible spaces between the arms of the cross, a tear-shaped leaf-form curls in towards the centre from the outside border. As Everson and Stocker noted, there are no sculptural parallels for these two roundels in the Mercian repertoire, although they fit within the tradition of architectural decoration evidenced at Breedon, Fletton and later at Barnack.[163] However, the form and content of their design does point to possible sources of inspiration. The high-relief nature of the carving and the geometric focus of their design are reminiscent of both stucco and stone architectural decoration in early medieval Italy. The roundel containing the equal-arm cross is carved so that the spaces between the cross-arms are cut-away to give the impression of being pierced, which throws the cross into high relief. This effect might be compared with the pierced window inserts in the baptistery at Albenga, where equal-arm crosses fill a series of roundels with the spaces between the arms being cut away (Ill. 4.95).[164] The bosses at the ends of the cross-arms at Edenham can also be paralleled in a ninth-century stucco fragment from S. Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome, where an interlace-filled equal-arm cross fills a hemispherical panel, and has a large circular, indented boss at the end of each horizontal arm.[165] Such decorative architectural details may have precursors in ornamental metalwork, which often employed the compartmentalised nature of cloisonné design to create abstract patterns in a confined space. A sixth-century cloisonné rosette brooch from Schretzheim in Germany, which contains four tapering beak-like elements circling a central roundel, provides an interesting parallel for the design of the complete Edenham roundel.[166]

Parallels for the figural sculpture of Mercia are hard to find in the early medieval monumental sculpture of the Continent. Iconic images of the Virgin dating from the

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[162] Everson and Stocker, 1999: 161.

[163] *op. cit.*, 161–2.

[164] L'Orange and Torp, 1979: ill. 227.

[165] Pasquini, 2002: fig. 162.

[166] Plunkett noted the parallels between the decorated surfaces of the Edenham leaves and contemporary Anglo-Saxon metalwork (Plunkett, 1984: 84). These are explored later in this chapter. The Schretzheim brooch was discovered in a grave along with two early Lombard brooches (Chadwick, 1958: 32–3). For discussion about the possible Lombard origins of Germanic cloisonné and the influence of Byzantine metalworking techniques on its development, see Holmquist, 1955: 32–3.

early ninth century can be seen on the Continent, but they usually include the Christ child, to emphasise Mary's role as the Mother of God, or *Theotokos*.[167] Continental iconic representations of the Virgin survive in stucco, such as the two early ninth-century Madonna *Theotokos* busts preserved in the museum at S. Salvatore and Santa Giulia in Brescia, both of which draw on eastern figural styles (Ills. 3.60 and 3.61). These two carvings exhibit the delicate linear quality of painted images of the Virgin and female saints, and can be closely compared with the seventh-century image of St. Barbara in Santa Maria Antiqua, which has a similarly long Byzantine face.[168] The influence of Byzantine figural style on Lombard carving is best exemplified at Cividale del Friuli, where the near life-size stucco figures adorning the *Tempietto* recall the upright formality of the late Antique mosaic figures in San Vitale in Ravenna (Ill. 3.10). Whilst such monumental stuccos might have offered a contemporary source of inspiration for the production of otherwise unprecedented larger-scale figural carving in Mercia, such as the Breedon Angel, there are few points of stylistic comparison between the two traditions. In the same way, the few extant examples of monumental sculpted narrative scenes on the continent bear no similarity to the style of Mercian panel-sculpture. The eighth-century Altar of Ratchis in Cividale (Ills. 3.25–3.27) is more akin to the style of carving seen in near-contemporary Visigothic sculpture, for example on the capitals of the chancel arch at San Pedro de la Nave where the depiction of the Sacrifice of Isaac shares the same clunky use of space and simplistic style of carving seen on the altar panels at Cividale (Ill. 4.96).[169]

An interest in and reliance on late Antique models is almost certainly the greatest shared influence in the development of continental and Mercian sculpture. Within both the Lombard and Visigothic sculptural traditions, the popularity of late Antique motifs, such as the peacock, demonstrates their common heritage.[170] Similarly, a shared late Antique, and specifically Byzantine, source of inspiration might be sought in the arrangement of Visigothic figural sculpture at Santa Maria de Quintanilla de las Viñas, which although quite unlike the Breedon carving in terms of content or style of carving, might have shared a comparable purpose within the church. At Santa Maria de

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[167] Holmquist, 1955: pl. XIX, fig. 47. Clayton noted that this was also the preferred image of the Virgin to be portrayed in Northumbrian sculpture, as seen on the eighth-century Ruthwell Cross (Clayton, 1990: 151).

[168] Nordhagen, 1990a: pl. 63a.

[169] Kingsley Porter, 1928: 35–6; de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 7; Andaloro *et al.*, 2001: 58. For further discussion of the stylistic relationship between these two areas, see Werckmeister, 1962–4: 173–4.

[170] Compare, for example, the peacocks on the ambo panels at Brescia (Ill. 4.28); those on panels at Pavia (Ill. 4.25) (Peroni, 1975: nos. 121 and 126) and those inhabiting the carved friezes at Santa Maria de Quintanilla de las Viñas in Burgos, Spain (Clapham, 1937: pl. XVII, fig. 2; Hillgarth, 1961–3: 170; Andaloro *et al.*, 2001: 61).

Quintanilla, surviving panels of relief carving depicting representations of the Sun, the Moon and Christ, each flanked by angels, and two separate panels depicting book-carrying bust-figures, are thought to have formed part of a sculptural scheme on and above the chancel arch, in a supportive role to a hanging crucifix.[171] Such an arrangement would have emulated the Byzantine tradition described earlier in this chapter, and paralleled the function proposed above for the Virgin panel at Breedon and the panel-fragment at Pershore.[172] Further evidence that the Mercians were not alone in looking to the East is seen in the adoption of other Antique elements throughout the sculpture-producing areas of the Continent – in the Lombard, Carolingian and Visigoth territories. The characteristic triangular grape-bunch terminal of Sassanian art was employed widely on the Continent, and can be seen at Saint-Denis in France on a late eighth-century column base; on Visigothic architectural sculpture of the seventh and eighth century at Santa Maria de Quintanilla de las Viñas and San Salvador in Toledo, and on an altar screen at Müstair.[173] And, in parallel to the Mercian appropriation of fantastical eastern creatures seen in the inhabited vine-scroll on the Breedon friezes, the two *Senmurv*-like creatures on one of the large marble panels at Pavia, several chancel panel fragments at Aquileia and on the ciborium panels at Cividale confirm the longevity and popularity of models derived from Sassanian art.[174] But, despite their apparent shared sources of inspiration, little stylistic comparison can be made between the types of birds and animals seen in the sculpture of the Continent and those from Mercia. Jewell's analysis of the animals of the Breedon broad friezes showed that representations of the same animal, specifically the lions, where found on the Continent for example at Aquileia, were stylistically unrelated.[175] The Lombard animals are characterised by their flat, simplistic style often with disproportioned heads and limbs, and lacking the accomplished in-the-round depth of relief seen at Breedon.

As discussed above, elements of the style of both the figural and non-figural sculpture of Mercia drew on late Antique sculptural models in ivory. Whilst there is little evidence in the repertoire of continental sculpture to suggest that late Antique ivories were ever as popular within that tradition as they were in Mercia, the Carolingian revival of ivory carving resulted in the increased circulation in the Christian

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[171] Kingsley Porter, 1928: 37–8, pls. 15, 16A and B; Clapham, 1937: 26–7; pl. XX.

[172] The evidence for liturgical exchange between Anglo-Saxon England and Visigothic Spain is discussed in Crehan, 1976: 87–99, especially p. 93.

[173] de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pls. 10 and 11; Schutz, 2004: fig. 68a; Caillet, 2005: fig. 48.

[174] Peroni, 1975: no. 128; Tagliaferri, 1981: pls. IV, fig. 9; LXVIII, figs. 274 and 275; LXXXVI, fig. 315.

[175] Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. LXXI, fig. 282; Jewell, 1982: 115.

West of not only late Antique exemplars, but new, contemporary adaptations.[176] Carved ivories such as the Lorsch Gospel covers, products of Charlemagne's Palace School, c. 810, faithfully recall the architectural setting for individual figures and the stylised drapery of sixth-century eastern works such as Maximian's throne (Ills. 4.97 and 4.98).[177] The front cover, now in the Vatican Museum, is composed of five panels: two horizontal panels, one above and one below three vertical panels. In the central vertical panel Christ is shown trampling the beasts (Psalm 90:11–13), flanked in panels on either side by the figures of staff- and scroll-bearing angels who turn towards Christ between them. Above, two angels carry a central rosette containing the Cross, and below are depictions of the Wiseman meeting Herod on the left (Matthew, 2:7), and the Virgin and Child on the right. On the back cover, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, an enthroned Virgin and Child fills the central panel, flanked on the right by John the Baptist and on the left by Zacharias.[178] In the top panel, angels bear a rosette containing a bust of Christ, and below is a depiction of the Nativity and the Annunciation to the Shepherds. As might be expected given their common artistic heritage, these ivories share a number of similarities with the figure carving of central Mercia. As well as the architectural setting for the individual figures, all of whom except the Virgin are shown full-length and standing; the figures on the ivories share the lively stance of the arcaded-apostles at Breedon, Castor and Fletton, and that of the Angel at Breedon. Details on the Lorsch ivories, such as the angels' tri-lobed staffs and the visibility of the rear hem on the figures' robes, are also paralleled in the Mercian panels and reinforce the shared eastern late Antique origin of the models behind their production.[179] Similarly, Jewell noted the parallels between leaf-types and the grape-bunch terminals on the eastern late Antique-inspired vine-scroll in the border of an ivory casket-panel, c. 800 now in München, and the friezes at Breedon.[180]

  The Carolingian revival of the ivory carving tradition was not just a recreation of late Antique styles; it evolved and adapted to reflect developments in other media,

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[176] For the background to the culture of emulation and invention in Carolingian art in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, see Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 217–33; Henderson, G., 1994: 258–73 and Schutz, 2004: 145–6.

[177] Longhurst and Morey, 1928: 64–74; Morey, 1929: 411–29; Goldschmidt, 1969: ills. 13 and 14; Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 232–3; Lasko, 1972: 27–8; Cutler, 1998: 51–5, figs. 15 and 16; Schutz, 2004: 283–6, figs. 21 and 22; Mitchell, 2007: 268.

[178] Morey, 1929: 416.

[179] Cramp, 1977: 218. A closely comparable carving to the Lorsch Gospel ivories is the St. Michael ivory in Leipzig, thought to be a product of the same school, which is based on a fifth-century consular diptych in the name of Severus – an eastern late Antique ivory carving (Goldschmidt, 1969: ill. 11a; Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 229, fig. 212). The Leipzig ivory and the Lorsch Gospel covers are products of Charlemagne's Palace School (Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 354–5). Schutz included in this group an eleventh-century ivory copy of an angel, now in Darmstadt (Schutz, 2004: 282–3, fig. 20.)

[180] Jewell, 1982: 125–7, 145, fig. 95; Jewell, 1986: 101.

particularly the art of illuminated manuscripts, and the exchange of ideas and artistic styles of areas outside the empire.[181] Ivories of the Palace School such as the Dagulf Psalter covers, closely dated to 795; a book cover now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, c. 800, and an early ninth-century panel now in Florence argued to depict Charlemagne victorious over the barbarians, record the evolution of the Carolingian style (Ills. 4.99, 4.100 and 4.101).[182] In particular, the increasingly flowing style of drapery, creating what Volbach termed 'almost Manneristic masses of folds', and the dominance of ornamental motifs, such as stylised acanthus border patterns, illustrate the close relationship between ivory carving and contemporary manuscript art of the Palace School.[183] The influence on Carolingian ivory carving of external relationships is seen in the late eighth-century Genoels-Elderen diptych, which has been described as both a product of Northumbria, and more recently, of the School at Echternach under a 'strong Insular influence' (Ill. 4.102).[184] One of the panels depicts Christ trampling the beasts, flanked by two angels, and the other depicts the Annunciation and the Visitation. Both panels are edged with borders of continuous ornamental patterning, and it is this aspect of the ivories that finds parallel in Mercian sculpture. Both Jewell and Neuman de Vegvar identified the diagonal key pattern of the Christ panel border as being akin to that used on sections of the broad frieze at Breedon.[185] Whilst Jewell saw this connection as evidence that the Mercian sculptors borrowed such motifs from continental ivories, as Neuman de Vegvar highlighted, these motifs were participants in a 'Pan-European insular style-group', having been assimilated into and often transformed by the Carolingian artistic milieu since their introduction with the Anglo-Saxon missions of the eighth century.[186] The evidence would therefore suggest that where there are similarities in style and content between Mercian sculpture and contemporary continental ivory carving, these are as a result of shared sources of

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[181] For the motivations behind the deliberate appropriation of certain early Christian and Byzantine motifs and iconographies in Carolingian ivories, see Lewis, 1980: 71–93.

[182] Goldschmidt, 1969: ills. 3, 4, 5 and 10; Hubert *et al.*, 1970: figs. 207 and 208; Lasko, 1972: ill. 27; Caillet, 2005: fig. 104; Mitchell, 2007: 268–71.

[183] Volbach in Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 229. Compare, for example, the faithful imitation of late Antique carving apparent in the crowded scenes and stiff postures of the figures in the Dagulf Psalter, with the fluid drapery and animate figure of Christ in the Bodleian ivory a generation later (Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 207; Caillet, 2005: fig. 104). For the relationship between sculptors and painters in the Court Schools in the mid-ninth century, see Vandersall, 1976: 201–10.

[184] Goldschmidt, 1969: ills. 1 and 2; Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 220–2; Beckwith, 1972: no. 3; Jewell, 1982: 172; Neuman de Vegvar, 1990: 9–15, figs. 1 and 2.

[185] Jewell, 1982: 172–4; Jewell, 1986: 103; Neuman de Vegvar, 1990: 10.

[186] Neuman de Vegvar, 1990: 12, n.12. Similar key patterns can be found within an Insular context, on the mid-eighth century cross-shaft fragment at Aberlady in East Lothian and the early eighth-century Gospels of St. Chad in Lichfield Cathedral library (Jewell, 1986: 103, pl. XLVIIIc; Neuman de Vegvar, 1990: 10, figs. 4 and 5).

inspiration and types of model. The revival of ivory carving on the Continent and the popularity of late Antique models may well have reinforced the development of high-relief carving seen in the Breedon friezes, and it might be that the style of Breedon frieze sculpture was indeed a 'scaling-up' of miniature models, as Jewell has argued, but the limited number of stylistic parallels, particularly with the more developed Carolingian style of the early ninth century, suggests that contemporary continental ivory models were not as influential in Mercia as those of late Antiquity.[187]

Non-sculptural models

In 2001 Jewell stated that 'most of the contemporary parallels for the ornament of the Breedon friezes in Carolingian art on the Continent are found in manuscripts'.[188] Besides the extant collection of carved ivories, very little remains of the Carolingian sculptural tradition and the largest body of artistic material with which the sculpture of Mercia might be compared today survives in non-sculptural form and comprises illuminated manuscripts, frescoes, mosaics and metalwork.[189] A bronze equestrian statue, thought to represent Charlemagne, provides an intriguing exception (Ill. 4.103).[190] This statue, possibly modelled on a similar bronze sculpture of Theoderic that Charlemagne brought back from Italy, might be compared to the Repton Rider for its appropriation of secular imperial iconography.[191] As with ivory carving, and the equestrian statue of Charlemagne, Carolingian manuscript art displays what Henderson called a 'duty and interest in accurately reproducing important pictorial exemplars' of late Antiquity.[192] Thus, many of the stylistic parallels between Carolingian manuscript art and Mercian sculpture that Jewell and others have identified were inherited from fifth- to sixth-century art forms.[193] Motifs such as the unusual *pelta* ornament seen in the borders of the Godescalc Gospel lectionary, c. 781–783 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1203, fol. 3r), the Dagulf Psalter, c. 783–795 (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS. 1861, fol. 25r) and the Corbie Psalter, c. 800 (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. 18, fol. 1v), which is closely paralleled in a frieze fragment at Fletton and echoes a panel of broad frieze at Breedon, undoubtedly

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[187] Jewell, 1982: 209, 244.

[188] Jewell, 2001: 249.

[189] For the background to illuminated manuscript production during the Carolingian period, see Mütherich and Gaehde, 1977: 7–11 and McKitterick, 1983: 141–64, 200–27; McKitterick, 2005: 151–66.

[190] Gaborit-Chopin, 1999: ills. 1 and 2.

[191] Bullough, 1991: 61–6; Lasko, 1972: 18. For the iconography of architecture and materials such as bronze in the Carolingian Court, see Diebold, 2003: 141–53, especially 151 n. 30.

[192] Henderson, G., 1994: 253.

[193] Rosenbaum, 1956: 81; Cramp, 1977: 194, 206, 207; Jewell, 1982: 175–7; Henderson, G., 1994: 249–53, 271; Jewell, 2001: 249.

derive from early Christian sources (Ills. 4.104–4.106).[194] Early precursors of *pelta* ornament can be seen on a fifth-century panel at S. Agnese in Rome and an early fifth-century wall painting in a tomb at Thessaloniki (Ill. 4.107).[195] The two sections of *pelta* at Fletton, each uniquely juxtaposed with the gesturing bust of an angel, find their closest contemporary parallel in the early ninth-century Lorsch Gospels (Bucharest, Nationalbibliothek, Filiale Alba Iulia, Biblioteca Batthyáneum, MS. R. II. I, pag. 36), where sections of *pelta* and other ornament alternate with individual busts of angels and roundels depicting the Evangelist symbols to frame the seated figure of Christ in Majesty (Ill. 4.108).[196] The figures clambering amongst the Breedon vine-scroll, and the small robed figure gripping the interlacing tails of two beasts on a fragment of the frieze at Fletton, most likely derive from late Antique *putti*, but also find parallels on the Continent in the ornamental columns of the Canon Tables in the Harley Gospels (London, British Library, Harley MS. 2788, fol. 11v) and the Soissons Gospels (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8850, fol. 7v) both produced c. 800 (Ill. 4.109).[197]

The range and quality of antique artworks available to the Franks during the Carolingian period is attested by the *Gesta Pontificum Autissiodorensium*, a ninth-century account of the bishops of Auxerre which lists Byzantine and Roman silver vessels given by Bishop Desiderius (603–21/3) to the city's cathedral and the church of St. Germain.[198] The influence of sixth-century Byzantine metalwork designs, visible in the paired birds within tree-scrolls and the peacocks in the Breedon broad frieze (Ills. 4.53 and 4.65), also finds parallel in Charlemagne's Court School manuscripts: in the Harley Gospels (BL, Harley MS. 2788, fol. 109r) and Godescalc Gospel lectionary mentioned above (BN, MS nouv. acq. lat. 1203, fol. 3v), and in the Trier Gospels (Trier, Cathedral Treasury, MS. 61, fol. 10a), all early ninth-century in date.[199] In the same way, the short curled tendrils enclosing berry bunches with round scooped leaves seen at Breedon, understood by Cramp to derive from Byzantine metalwork, such as the ninth-century bronze doors of St. Sophia in Istanbul, are also paralleled in continental manuscript art, in the late eighth-, early ninth-century Coronation Gospels (Vienna,

[194] Mütherich and Gaehde, 1977: pl. 1; Jewell, 1982: 175–7; Mütherich, 1999: pl. 9; Caillet, 2005: fig. 105; Lafitte and Denoël, 2007: 128–30, no. 22.

[195] Jewell, 1986: pl. 31a; Mackie, 1995b: 162–4; Jewell, 2001: 249; Cormack and Vassilaki, 2009: pl. 9.2.

[196] Mütherich, 1999: pl. 25.

[197] Hinks, 1935: pl. XXIII; Rosenbaum, 1955: 1–15, pls. 1a and c; Jewell, 1982: 195, 206; Schutz, 2004: pl. 8c.

[198] Davis-Weyer, 1986: 66–9; Henderson, G., 1994: 249.

[199] Jewell, 1982: 181–2, 203, 204; Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 71; Cramp, 1977: 206; Mütherich and Gaehde, 1977: pl. 2.

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Treasury, inv. SKXIII/18, fol. 76v).[200] Scholars such as Elizabeth Rosenbaum and Hugo Buchthal have provided convincing evidence for the influence of Byzantine models, notably Ravennate mosaics, in Carolingian manuscript art, and it is perhaps not surprising that it is the figural style of these manuscripts, with known eastern connections, that can best be compared with the Mercian figural style.[201] Both Cramp and Jewell compared the Mercian drapery style, particularly of the Fletton frieze busts and the Breedon Virgin, to that seen in the Corbie Psalter, c. 800 (BM, MS. 18, fol. 138v).[202]

However, many of the stylistic parallels that exist between Mercian sculpture and Carolingian manuscripts are in details thought to have Insular origins, or which were adopted from Anglo-Saxon copies of late Antique manuscripts.[203] The hound-like creatures with interlacing tails that perch in the arched border of the Canon Table in the Harley Gospels (BL, Harley MS. 2788, fol. 11v), and the sections of interlace that accompany them, betray the influence of Insular illuminated manuscripts.[204] These hounds, also to be found in the Psalm initials of the Corbie Psalter (BM, MS. 18) and another late eighth-, early ninth-century Psalter of Charlemagne, now in Paris (BN, lat. 13159, fol. 13r), are comparable to the Breedon hounds with their long necks and bodies, and have their antecedents in Southumbrian manuscripts of the eighth century, such as the Stockholm Codex Aureus (Stockholm, Royal Library, MS A.135, fol. 11r).[205] The animal-headed terminal seen on the Cropthorne cross-head is also seen on the Continent in the Harley Gospels (BL, Harley MS. 2788, fol. 109r), but finds precedent on the opening page of St. Matthew's Gospel in the eighth-century Northumbrian St. Petersburg Gospels (St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, MS Cod. F.v.I.8, fol. 18r), as well as in contemporary Southumbrian manuscript illumination including the Lichfield Gospels (Lichfield, Cathedral Library, MS. 1, pg. 5) and the Tiberius Bede (London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius, MS. C.II, fol. 5v).[206]

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[200] Dalton, 1961: fig. 391; Cramp, 1977: 195, 106; Schutz, 2004: pl. 12b.

[201] Rosenbaum, 1956: 81–90; Buchthal, 1961: 127–39; Hubert *et al.*, 1969: 195; Lasko, 1972: 32; Mackie, 1995b: 164.

[202] Cramp, 1977: 210; Jewell, 1982: 233; Jewell, 2001: 254; Lafitte and Denoël, 2007: 128–30, no. 22.

[203] Henderson, G., 1994: 253; Parkes, 2007: 87–8.

[204] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 69.

[205] Kendrick, T., 1938: pl. LXVI; Cramp, 1977: 207; Wilson, 1984: fig. 103; Stiegemann and Wemhoff, 1999: no. XI.19; Gameson, 2001–2; Holcomb, 2009: 36–8.

[206] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 71; Wilson, 1984: figs. 99, 110 and 111; Brown, 2001: 280–1. A similar appropriation of Insular motifs occurred in continental metalwork, as typified by the late eighth-century Tassilo Chalice at Kremsmünster and the cover of the Lindau Gospels, c. 800 (Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 209–10, 213, figs. 191 and 192; Wamers 1993: 35–44).

As with the sculptural models provided by contemporary ivory carvings, the small-scale parallels for Mercian sculpture seen in continental manuscripts betray shared late Antique roots. When considering the stylistic relationship between Mercian sculpture and larger-scale non-sculptural models on the Continent, notably mosaics and frescoes, it is not surprising that here too, parallels point to the inspiration of late Antiquity. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the programme of restoration and embellishment that Rome enjoyed under papal patronage and Carolingian support in the late eighth and early ninth centuries reflected the concern for recreating the early Christian prestige of the city. And monumental commissions in Rome such as the mosaic schemes in the churches of S. Maria in Domnica and S. Prassede, and the frescoes of S. Clemente and S. Maria Antiqua were echoed across the Carolingian Empire at sites such as St. Germigny des Prés, Auxerre, San Vincenzo al Volturno, Castelseprio, Malles and Müstair.[207] The figural panels of Mercia, and in particular the narrative carving at Wirksworth and Breedon, may well reflect an awareness of narrative schemes in fresco and mosaic, as discussed in the following chapter (pp. 161–4). The peculiar arrangement of the Wirksworth lid, whereby the carving is divided into two continuous bands of narrative scenes without vertical demarcation echoes the parallel registers of ninth-century fresco at S. Maria foris portas at Castelseprio near Milan, which are now thought to follow a comparable Marian theme (Ill. 4.110).[208] And, the arrangement of apostles in rows commonly seen in Mercian sepulchral sculpture finds contemporary parallel in the murals at Malles, in the South Tyrol of Italy on the border with Switzerland and Austria.[209] In the church of St. Benedict at Malles, the murals preserved on the east wall include niched full-length depictions of robed figures, above which survive the fragmentary remains of a continuous arcade containing the busts of nimbed saints, and possibly angels, which are reminiscent of the ornamental frieze and individual figure panels at Fletton (Ill. 4.111).[210] The architectural emphasis in the composition of the paintings at Malles, and at nearby Müstair, together with the classicizing style of the figures' drapery, points to the influence of late Antique and

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[207] King, 1929: 357–75; Weitzmann, 1951; Osbourne, 1981: 299–310; Mauck, 1987: 813–28; Mitchell, 1993: 77–111; Schutz, 2004: 333–6; Thunø, 2005: 265–89; Mitchell, 2007: 278–82; Lucey, 2007: 139–58.

[208] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 16, 27. The date of the unique frescoes at Castelseprio has been debated, but recent scientific analysis has suggested a date in the early ninth century (Chatzidakis and Grabar, 1965: 36, figs. 112, 113; Carver, 1986–7: 312–29; Leveto-Jabr, 1987: 17–18; Leveto, 1990: 394–413; Osbourne, 1992: 309–10).

[209] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 19–23; Schutz, 2004: 336–8.

[210] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 19; Schutz, 2004: pls. 31a–d.

contemporary Roman design.[211] Malles and Müstair occupy strategic positions within the mountain passes connecting pilgrimage routes from the central Carolingian territories to and from northern Italy, and it is therefore not surprising that they benefited from royal patronage: St. Johann in Müstair is thought to have been founded by Charlemagne himself.[212]

In the same way that pilgrimage routes may well have facilitated Mercian contact with ninth-century monumental painted schemes preserved in the alpine passes, the draw of Rome and the relics of saints held in her newly embellished churches would have provided exposure to large-scale contemporary mosaic reworking of early Christian imagery.[213] Thus, the only contemporary monumental example of *pelta* ornament with which the examples at Breedon and Fletton in Mercia might be compared, survives in the mosaics of the San Zeno funerary chapel, built by Pope Paschal I at S. Prassede.[214] Modelled on late Antique mausoleums, such as that of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, the mosaic decoration of the San Zeno chapel draws on early Christian and classical sources, and includes on the underside surface of the entrance archway a continuous carpet of *pelta* ornament – a unique occurrence in Rome, and indeed in any medium other than illuminated manuscripts during the Carolingian period (Ill. 4.112).[215] Another peculiar point of comparison between Mercian sculpture and ninth-century Roman mosaics is found in the style of flared hem seen on the figures of the apostle arcade panels at Breedon and the processing apostles on the upper border of the apsidal mosaic at S. Maria in Domnica (Ills. 3.44, 4.113–4.115).[216] As Jewell noted, the fluttering hems and the linear style of drapery in both instances, emphasises the directional movement of the apostles as they process.[217] An adaptation of this style can also be seen at Peterborough, in the panel depicting two helmeted figures either side of a palm tree (Ill. 4.87). Here, the delineated front and rear hems of the tunics, as noted by Mitchell, create a sense of volume, while the angled feet of the figures and the curling front hem captures the sense of movement seen at Breedon in the apostle panels.[218] Late Antique precursors for this detail in the style of drapery can be found in mosaic, for

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[211] van Dijk, 2001: 311.
[212] Bullough, 1991: 63; Schutz, 2004: 334.
[213] See, for example, discussion of the liturgical relationship between the Paschalian mosaic scheme at S. Prassede, with its Constantinian affectations, and the contemporaneous translation of numerous relics to the church (Mauck, 1987: 813–28).
[214] Mackie, 1995b: fig. 1.
[215] Mackie, 1995b: 162.
[216] Jewell, 1982: 291; Thunø, 2005: fig. 2.
[217] Jewell, 1982: 291.
[218] Mitchell, 2010: 263. Mitchell has also drawn comparisons with this drapery detailing and continental wall painting, notably the mid-eighth century depiction of the angel addressing Zachariah at S. Sofia in Benevento (Mitchell, 1999: pl. 4; Mitchell, forthcoming).

example in the mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, where the figure of St. Lawrence is shown with a fluttering robe (Ill. 4.116).[219] This is also a characteristic of some contemporary ivory carving, as can be seen in the leftmost figures on both of the Lorsch Gospel covers, similarly echoing early Christian models, such as the Barberini ivory, in which the angels of the upper border have lively, billowing robe-hems.[220]

Part II

Insular influences and parallels: continuity and innovation

The Northumbrian tradition: shared models and motivations

In addition to the stylistic connections with contemporary artwork on the Continent, and the likelihood that Mercian sculptors were very much aware of the Carolingian revival of late Antique art styles, the development of Mercian sculpture occurred against the backdrop of an accomplished and rich tradition of monumental stone carving in Anglo-Saxon England. And, as mentioned in earlier sections of this chapter, the popularity of a number of motifs commonly seen in Mercian sculpture might be attributed to their established place within the earlier Northumbrian tradition (see Map 4.D for the Northumbrian sites mentioned in this chapter). This is certainly the case for the association of vine-scroll ornament with cross-sculpture, seen in Mercia in the crosses of the Derbyshire Peak and at isolated sites in the south and west: at Sandbach, Rugby (cat. no. 56), Wroxeter, Acton Beauchamp, Cropthorne and Gloucester (cat. no. 38). In Northumbria, this association is epitomised by the high crosses of the eighth century, where the fusion of Insular traditions, in the form of the monument, and 'Roman' motif, in the adaptation of Mediterranean inhabited vine-scroll, created a truly iconographical monument celebrating the rise of the cult of the Cross.[221] Brøndsted and Kitzinger first demonstrated the eastern, early Christian origin of the vine-scroll ornament employed on the cross-sculpture of Northumbria at sites such as Bewcastle, Ruthwell and Hexham.[222] Through its application on a monumental standing cross the vine-scroll motif, in both its inhabited and non-inhabited form, became a symbolic construct

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[219] Chatzidakis and Grabar, 1965: ill. 7.
[220] Goldschmidt, 1969: ill. 13; Cutler, 1998: pl. 51.
[221] For the background to the development of the high cross in Northumbria, see McEntire, 1986; Bailey and Cramp, 1988: 19–23; Bailey, 1996b: 42–57; Henig, 2004: 18–24. For the early Christian sources in the style and iconography at Sandbach, see Hawkes, 2002a: 85–93 and Hawkes, 2003b: 279.
[222] Brøndsted, 1924: 31–5; Kitzinger, 1936: 61–71; Cramp, 1976: 266–9; Cramp, 1986a: 135–6; Bailey, 1996b: 52–4.

reinforcing the combined iconographies of life and salvation.[223] The vine, often depicted with its fruit on which animals and birds feed, illustrates a passage in St. John's Gospel in which Christ described himself as 'the True Vine', with the fruit and inhabitants representing his Church and the Eucharist.[224] Within the vertical fields of the cross-shaft the vine can also symbolise the Tree of Life, as referred to in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, as well as signifying the association of the cross of the crucifixion with a tree – a connection reiterated at Ruthwell with the inclusion of the Old English poem *The Dream of the Rood* inscribed in runes on the cross (Ill. 4.117).[225]

It is against this backdrop that the Mercian examples of vine-scroll on cross-sculpture should be viewed. With no established tradition of standing crosses on the Continent, the inspiration for the form of the monuments that survive in a fragmentary state across Mercia can be attributed to the continuing Northumbrian tradition of cross-sculpture, even if the style of their ornament cannot.[226] Curiously, elements of style in vine- and plant-scroll that do find close parallels in Northumbrian cross-sculpture are found in the architectural sculpture of Mercia. Jewell observed that the leaf-whorls enclosing small leaves, flowers and berry bunches in the friezes at Breedon could also be found at Ruthwell and Easby, and that the medallion vine-scroll at Breedon, ultimately derived from fifth- to sixth-century Coptic or Syrian architecture, was borrowed from Northumbrian crosses, such as those at Otley and Easby (Ills. 4.118 and 4.120).[227] The much worn cross-shaft at Lypiatt in Gloucestershire (cat. no. 45, Ill. 5.20) bears a more striking resemblance to Northumbrian cross-sculpture, particularly the ninth-century cross-shaft at Collingham in western Yorkshire, preserving similarly round-headed niches on each face, within which individual full-length robed figures can still be discerned.[228] And, within the body of extant Mercian architectural sculpture there are references to the Northumbrian tradition of architectural sculpture. The inhabited plant-scrolls of the broad friezes at Breedon echo fragments of frieze found at Jarrow, which contain familiar fleshy plant stems, berry bunch and composite leaf

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[223] Hawkes, 2002a: 91; Hawkes, 2003b: 287.
[224] John, 15: 1–5; Hawkes, 2002a: 90–3; Hawkes, 2003b: 275.
[225] Ephesians, 3: 17–19; O'Reilly, 1992: 170–80; Ó Carragáin, 1999: 195–201; Hawkes, 2003b: 277–8; Kendal, 2006: 129–44.
[226] Bailey, 1996b: 45.
[227] Jewell, 1982: 60, 99; Lang, 2001: ills. 198, 199 and 211; Coatsworth, 2008: ills, 566 and 567.
[228] Baddeley, 1929: 103–7; Annonymous, 1933: 9–10; Portway Dobson, 1933: 265–6; Heighway, 1987: 98; Bailey and Cramp, 1988: ill. 90; Bryant, 1990: 33–52; Coatsworth, 2008: ills. 166–9. The positioning of the Lypiatt cross-shaft, originally thought to be at a nearby crossroads of two ancient roads on the boundary of the Bisley parish, also echoes the location of the Bewcastle and Ruthwell crosses at border gathering places (Baddeley, 1929: 103–4; Bailey and Cramp, 1988: 10, 19; Bryant, 1990: 44–6).

terminals and small figures working amongst the vines.[229] Contemporary parallels for Mercian architectural sculpture can also be found in Northumbria: at Rothwell in Yorkshire fragments of a late eighth-, early ninth-century frieze with a running arcade design incorporating animal, vegetal and abstract ornament might be compared with the frieze fragments at Fletton (Ill. 4.119). Although of a less refined composition and carving style, the Rothwell frieze includes a simplistic bush-scroll reminiscent of that at Fletton (Ill. 4.121).[230]

In the midst of the hostilities between Mercia and Northumbria during the seventh century (see Chapter One, p. 28), Penda laid the foundations for a cooperative relationship that ensured a continuing connection between the two kingdoms well into the ninth century. One of Penda's daughters, Cyneburh, was married to king Oswiu of Northumbria's son, Alhfrith, and his son Peada married one of Oswiu's daughters, Alhflæd.[231] Following Peada's marriage to Alhflæd, one of the conditions of which was his conversion to Christianity, Peada returned to Mercia with four Northumbrian priests.[232] In the later seventh century the Northumbrian Chad was, according to Bede, appointed by Archbishop Theodore as bishop of Mercia and Lindsey, with his seat at Lichfield.[233] In Eddius' account of the *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, the Mercian king Wulfhere invited the Northumbrian bishop Wilfrid into Mercia on several occasions, and gave the seat at Lichfield to him, whereupon he chose Chad to fill the post.[234] During the eighth century the territory of Lindsey passed back and forth between Mercian and Northumbrian hands, and in the late eighth century Offa secured good relations with Northumbria through the marriage of his daughter Ælfflæd to Æthelred the Northumbrian king.[235] Even into the late ninth century, Mercia remained a refuge for exiles from the Northumbrian court.[236] Against the backdrop of this continuing dialogue between the two kingdoms, the potential for mutual awareness of artistic developments in sculpture is both probable and likely.

In addition to reflecting a familiarity with established and contemporary Northumbrian decorative styles, elements of Mercian figural sculpture also demonstrate an awareness of contemporary iconographical concerns north of the Humber. As explored in detail in the following chapter (p. 168), the Mercian interest in apostle

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[229] Cramp, 1984: ill. 525; Wilson, 1984: fig. 50.
[230] Coatsworth, 2006: 28, pl. 9a; Coatsworth, 2008: 242–4, ills. 678–82.
[231] *HE* iii. 21; Stafford, 1985: 98; Gelling, 1992: 94.
[232] Stafford, 1985: 98; Gelling, 1992: 94.
[233] *HE* iv. 3; Gelling, 1992: 96.
[234] *Life of Wilfrid*, XV; Plunkett, 1984: 30; Gelling, 1992: 96.
[235] Stenton, 1971: 224; Whitelock, 1979: 269, 272; Stafford, 1985: 97; Keynes, 2005: 10.
[236] Stafford, 1985: 107.

imagery parallels activity in Northumbria, where groups of apostles were a particularly popular motif on standing crosses.[237] Similarly, the emphasis on Marian imagery and iconography seen across Mercia in the sculpture at Wirksworth, Eyam, Lichfield, Breedon, Peterborough, Fletton (and Sandbach) conforms to the widespread rise of the Marian cult in Anglo-Saxon England in the late eighth century and its inclusion on sculpture elsewhere, for example at Dewsbury and Hovingham in Yorkshire (Ill. 4.122). The Virgin had long held the position of chief intercessor between God and Man due to her role as Handmaiden of the Lord during the Incarnation.[238] But towards the end of the eighth century, Charlemagne's adoption of the Roman liturgy, which included four Marian feasts – the Nativity of the Virgin, the Annunciation, the Purification and the Assumption – resulted in the widespread rise of the Marian cult in the Christian West.[239] On the Continent, this manifested itself in the monumental commissions in Rome: the frescoes of S. Maria Antiqua and S. Clemente, and the mosaics of S. Prassede and S. Maria in Domnica where the Virgin is crowned as *Maria Regina*.[240] Mitchell argued that it was the Virgin's elevation in Rome to the principal protector of royalty and the secular elite that appealed to the patrons of sculpture at royally endowed Mercian sites such as Breedon.[241] And at Breedon this is further emphasised by the, perhaps later but almost certainly Anglo-Saxon, dedication of the church to St. Mary and St. Hardulf.[242]

The impact of Mercian metalwork and manuscripts

Mercian metalwork

The place that stone sculpture held within the Mercian artistic sphere as a means of expressing royal or secular and/or religious elite status is no better demonstrated than through the links its decorative style shares with contemporary high status

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[237] See discussion in the following chapter, p. 168, but notable examples are the fragments of cross-sculpture at Easby, Masham, Otley, Dewsbury and Collingham (Collingwood, 1927: 41, figs. 13 and 52; Lang, 1999: 271; Lang, 2000: 109–19; Lang, 2001: ills. 195, 196, 597–600; Henderson, G., 2007b: 482–3; Coatsworth, 2008: ills. 166–9, 196, 197, 558 and 564).

[238] Luke, 1:38. In 431 the Council of Ephesus declared the Virgin *Theotokos*, Mother of God (Lawrence, 1925: 151). The influence of devotional Marian themes in the early eighth century is represented by the fragmentary remains of mosaics in Pope John VII's oratory in Old St. Peter's in Rome (Nordhagen, 1990d; Deshman, 2010: 222–8). The influence of the oratory mosaics is discernable in the monumental murals of 824–42 surviving in the crypt of Santa Maria in Insula at San Vincenzo al Volturno (Mitchell, 1993: 75–114; Deshman, 2010: 228–9).

[239] Leveto, 1990: 406; Hawkes, 1997: 125; Mitchell, 2010: 265–7. Of the many new introductions to the Roman liturgy made by Pope Sergius I (687–701) at the turn of the eighth century, the formal liturgical observation of the feast of the Annunciation gave further prominence to the role of the Virgin (Ó Carragáin, 1978: 132–3; Mitchell, 2010: 266).

[240] Lawrence, 1925: 152–4; Deshman, 2010: 223.

[241] Mitchell, 2010: 266.

[242] Cramp, 1977: 210; Dornier, 1977: 160–2; Jewell, 1982: 238.

metalwork.[243] When viewed within the context of contemporary Anglo-Saxon small-scale artistic production, it is clear that Mercian sculpture benefited from a cross-fertilisation of ideas apparent in the shared 'style vocabulary' of not only Mercian metalwork, but also ivory carving and illuminated manuscript production (see Map 4.E for the Mercian metalwork and manuscript sites mentioned in this chapter).[244] Plunkett described this cross-fertilisation as a 'pooling of arts of various media', in which insular and 'foreign' elements were amalgamated into a cohesive Mercian style.[245] And so, despite the limitations of quantity and independent dating, the corpus of eighth-century southern metalwork shows a convincingly close relationship to Mercian sculpture, not only in the types of zoomorphic motifs it employs, but also in its geographical distribution.[246] The distinct types of animal style that Webster argued characterised eighth-century 'Southumbrian' metalwork are consistently represented within the corpus of Mercian sculpture, on both architectural carving and standing monuments. The bipeds with wings and tapering bodies that descend into interlace seen on the metalwork of the east Midlands from Bottesford (Leics.), Brandon (Suffolk), Kenninghall (Norfolk) and Witham (Lincs.) find comparable parallels in the architectural sculpture at Breedon and Fletton, on the roof of the Peterborough cenotaph and the cross-shaft fragment at Wroxeter, and on a peculiar worn monument in the nave at Castor, described by Mitchell as a 'bulbous object' (Ill. 4.123).[247] The blunt-nosed heraldic bipeds that dominate the metalwork of the east Midlands and East Anglia, such

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[243] For an overview of metalwork produced south of the Humber in the eighth and early ninth centuries and the associated problems of dating its stylistic development, see Brøndsted, 1924; Smith, 1924: 233–54; Bakka, 1963: 1–65; Wilson, 1964: 5–21; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 220–39 and Webster, 2001b: 263. The relationship between sculpture and metalwork has long been recognised outside Mercia, for example on the Bewcastle cross, where a panel on the north face is thought to recreate a *millefiori* effect (Bailey and Cramp, 1988: ill. 105; Hawkes, 2002a: 145).

[244] This cross-fertilisation is argued for particularly well in Bailey, 2000: 43–51 and Farr, 2000: 53–61. Leslie Webster coined the phrase 'style vocabulary' in her discussion of the development of the ninth-century Trewhiddle metalwork style, which she demonstrated drew on the interactive style of eighth-century Mercian metalwork (Webster, 2001a: 44). For the stylistic links between Mercian and Irish metalwork, see Ryan, 1991: 117–26.

[245] Plunkett, 1984: 49.

[246] Plunkett, 1984: 21, 22, 35–44; Webster, 2001a: 60, fig. 9; Webster, 2001b: 269, 273, Map 10.

[247] Wilson, 1964: 132–4, pl. XVIII; Jewell, 1986: pls. 47a, 51a and b, 53c; Webster, 2001a: 48, fig. 3; Mitchell, 2010: 264. The monument at Castor is a curious object, much worn and bearing no apparent relation in form to any other extant Mercian sculpture. Its lower portion, which retains panels of zoomorphic design, is rectangular in cross-section with a plain plinth below. The upper portion of the monument, which has lost its ornament, is separated from the base by a scooped and moulded border, above which the monument mushrooms into a wide, rounded shape (Allen, 1887–8: 410; Irvine, 1889: 180, pl. 1j; Smith, 1924: fig. 12; Clapham, 1930: 124; Plunkett, 1984: 16; Henderson, 1997: 223–4). Whilst the monument was undoubtedly load-bearing, it is unclear whether it was part of a cross, cenotaph or font. Now-lost fragments of what were thought to be Saxon crosses originally from Castor might have been part of the same monument (Irvine, 1889: 179). The bulbous shape of the Castor monument might be compared with an early font preserved at South Hayling in Hampshire and I am grateful to Derek Craig for drawing my attention to it (Larkby, 1902: fig. 9).

as the eighth-century brooches from Leicester, Pentney (Norfolk) and Brandon, are also found in later ninth-century sculpture throughout Mercian territory on the cross-shafts at Breedon, Gloucester, Bedford and on the sepulchral slab at Derby (Ill. 4.124).[248] As well as forming a common component of Mercian sculpture, these distinctive zoomorphic forms can also be seen in contemporary ivory carving, most famously on the Larling plaque from Norfolk and the Gandersheim casket (Ills. 4.125, 4.127 and 4.128).[249]

Close stylistic links also exist between foliate designs on metalwork and sculpture. Plunkett noted the similarities between the details of the stems and leaves on one of the Edenham roundels and the Pentney brooches from Norfolk.[250] Both the Ormside Bowl and the Rupertus Cross, now generally believed to be of eighth-century Southumbrian provenance or design, have long been compared to Mercian sculpture for their shared style of plant-scroll ornament, which is characterised by looping smooth tendrils and leafy offshoots inhabited by birds and beasts (Ills. 4.126 and 4.129).[251] Similar inhabited plant forms can be found in Mercian sculpture, in the mirror-image bush-scrolls flanked by birds and beasts ornamenting the broad frieze at Breedon, and in Derbyshire on the cross-shaft fragment at Bradbourne, where the irregular looping tendrils of the plant-scroll are a derivative of the Ormside-style (Ill. 4.131). Of these shared decorative motifs, the most striking is arguably the animal-headed terminal, which is common within eighth-century metalwork and is thought to derive from Italo-Byzantine sources.[252] It can be seen on the metal mounts of the Gandersheim casket, on the Rupertus cross and commonly occurs on dress-fittings from East Anglia and the east Midlands, such as a brooch from north Lincolnshire.[253] As well as being adopted in contemporary manuscript art, as discussed below, the animal-headed terminal was also employed on Mercian sculpture: on the North cross at Sandbach, and most prominently on the cross-head at Cropthorne where it completes a uniquely aniconic design comprising plant-scrolls and animals and birds (Ills. 4.71 and 4. 130).[254] Such deliberate inclusion of purely decorative motifs within the ornamental scheme of stone monuments was undoubtedly a conscious attempt to imitate and indeed appropriate the prestige of

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[248] Cramp, 1977: 230, figs. 62f, i, j and k; Bailey, 1996b: 18, fig. 8; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 228–31, 242; Heighway and Bryant, 1999: 154–5, fig. 4.10; Webster, 2001a: 45–7.

[249] Plunkett, 1984: 44, 84; Wilson, 1984: 87; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 177–9; Bailey, 2000: 43–52; Webster, 2000: 63–71; Webster, 2001a: 48–52.

[250] Plunkett, 1984: 84; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 229–31; Everson and Stocker, 1999: ill. 168.

[251] Cramp, 1977: 206; Jewell, 1982: 133–40; Wilson, 1984: 64, 67; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 170–3; Webster, 2001a: 45, 48 and 58.

[252] *op. cit.*, 58.

[253] Jewell, 1982: 125; Webster, 2001a: 58, fig. 8b; Webster, 2001b: fig. 18.3.

[254] Hawkes, 2001: 232; Hawkes, 2002a: 87, fig. 2.28; Webster, 2001a: 58; Webster, 2001b: 267.

high status metalwork.[255] In the western Midlands, at Acton Beauchamp, Cropthorne and Wroxeter (and later at sites such as Gloucester) parallels between the form of animal motifs seen on sculpture and the emergent Trewhiddle-style of metalwork are particularly convincing.[256] The textured appearance of the animals' bodies on the cross-sculpture in the western Midlands, and the contrast created between the flat background and the heraldic pose of the animals within the confines of their framed spaces suggests imitation of the silver and niello metalwork seen in the Trewhiddle hoard, and the Æthelwulf and Æthelswith rings (Ill. 4.132).[257] Elsewhere, it has been demonstrated that not only were metallic skeumorphs such as pellets and bosses included in the sculpted design, but that metal fittings may well also have been attached to the monuments to enhance their bejewelled appearance.[258] In the context of standing crosses, Hawkes has argued that this degree of embellishment not only calls to mind smaller gem-encrusted liturgical metal crosses, such as the Rupertus cross, but is reminiscent of the *crux gemmata* of the Apocalypse – a sign of Christ's second coming and a popular motif throughout the Christian West from the fifth century (see Chapter Three, p. 72).[259]

'Tiberius Group' manuscripts

As mentioned above in relation to parallels with continental manuscripts, elements of the Mercian sculptural style also reflect contemporary tastes in Anglo-Saxon manuscript art, notably those produced south of the River Humber and which form the 'Tiberius Group'.[260] This group takes its name from the Tiberius Bede, produced in Canterbury, c. 820 (BL, Cotton Tiberius. C.II), and contains manuscripts produced at centres in Mercia, Wessex and Kent from the second quarter of the eighth century onwards.[261] Brown has demonstrated that the manuscripts in this group are at once both characterised by 'a taste for exotic ornament' and distinguished by their use of lacertine display script derived from earlier Southumbrian manuscripts such as the Vespasian Psalter (BL, Cotton Vespasian, A.I) and the Stockholm Codex Aureus (Stockholm,

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[255] Bailey, 1996b: 121; Hawkes, 2001: 236. See, for example, discussion of the imitation of metalwork styles in the lozenge shapes, bosses and pellets on the crosses at Sandbach, as well as the overall design of the monuments (Hawkes, 2001: 236–8; Hawkes, 2002a: 145–7). For an alternative interpretation of crosses with only plant ornament as harvest aids in the landscape, see Neuman de Vegvar, 2007: 415–26.

[256] Cramp, 1977: 225, 230; Webster, 2001a: 44.

[257] Wilson, 1964; Wilson, 1984: 15, 60, 94, 96, pl. 116–18; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 268–9.

[258] Bailey, 1988: 2; Bailey, 1996b: 7–8; Hawkes, 2001: 238.

[259] Hawkes, 2002a: 41, 147.

[260] Kendrick, T., 1938: 165–7; Alexander, 1978: 55–60, 84–5; Brown, 1996: 168–72; Brown, 2001: 280–1.

[261] Brown, 1996: 168–72; Brown, 2001: 279; Brown, 2007c: 52.

Royal Library, MS. A.135).[262] In keeping with the synthetic style of Mercian art, and indeed that of the broader 'Southumbrian' region in the early ninth century, the manuscripts of the Tiberius Group drew on Insular, Carolingian and early Christian models, and share stylistic details with a range of artistic media.[263] The animal-headed terminals seen on sculpture at Cropthorne and Sandbach are a popular motif in the Tiberius Group manuscripts and can be seen in the Barberini Gospels, argued to have been produced at Peterborough, c. 800 (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Barberini lat. 570, fol. 5Ir); the Tiberius Bede (BL, Cotton Tiberius. C.II, fol. 5v); the Royal Prayerbook, probably made in western Mercia (BL, Royal, MS 2.A.xx, fol. 17r); the Book of Nunnaminster, thought to have been made by and for a woman also in western Mercia (BL, Harley, MS 2965, fol. 16v) and the Book of Cerne (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ll.I.10, fol. 43r) (Ills. 4.133–4.137).[264] Similar animal-headed terminals appear in the Lichfield Gospels, thought to have been produced in Mercia under Northumbrian influence in the second quarter of the eighth century (Lichfield, Cathedral Library, MS I, p. 5).[265] The characteristically elongated bodies and limbs of the animals found on Mercian sculpture, most notably at Breedon, Wroxeter, Newent and on the Peterborough Cenotaph, and which might be compared with the Trewhiddle-style metalwork animal motifs, can also be found in the manuscripts of the Tiberius Group. In the Tiberius Bede, long-necked quadrupeds frolic in and amongst the major and minor initials (BL, Cotton Tiberius C.II, fol. 5v) and in the Royal Bible, produced in Canterbury, c. 820–40, similar creatures occupy the decorative panelled columns of the Canon Table (BL, Royal, MS I.E.VI, fol. 4r).[266] Similar creatures also inhabit the late eighth-century Cutbercht Gospels, which are thought to have been produced on the Continent under Insular influence (Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 1224, fol. 71v).[267] The contorted, interlacing and often confronted pairing of animals and birds seen in the border panels of the Canon Tables in the Royal Bible (BL, Royal, MS I.E.VI, fol. 4r) and the Barberini Gospels (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. lat. 570, fol. IIV) might also be compared to the stylised compartmentalisation seen in sculpture on the roof of the Peterborough Cenotaph and the frieze fragments at Breedon.[268] This type of compartmentalisation in manuscript art also occurs in the Codex Bigotianus, where

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[262] Wright, 1967; Gameson, 2001–2; Brown, 2007c: 53.

[263] Jewell, 1982: 124; Brown, 1996: 73–9, 115–21, 176. For evidence that Southumbrian manuscripts were also influenced in their codicology by continental techniques, see Brown, 1991: 57–62.

[264] Brown, 1996: 115; Brown, 2001: 280; Brown, 2007b: 52–3, pls. 45–8, 51; Hawkes, 2001: 232.

[265] Hawkes, 2001: 232; Brown, 2007b: 52, pl. 31.

[266] Cramp, 1977: 207; Jewell, 1982: 185; Brown, 1996: 116; Brown, 2007b: pl. 52.

[267] von Daum Tholl, 1995: 17–38; Farr, 2000: 57; Brown, 2007b: 12, pl. 15.

[268] Brown, 1996: fig. 36; Brown, 2007b: pl. 52.

some of the initials contain square compartments filled with individual heraldic animals and birds whose tails descend into interlace (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 298, fol. 2 and MS lat. 281, fol. 137).[269] Cramp and Jewell noted the similarities between the Breedon peacocks and the long-tailed birds in the Barberini Gospels, (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. lat. 570, fol. IIV).[270] And the plump birds of the Acton Beauchamp and Cropthorne cross-sculpture find parallel in the Book of Cerne, whose birds have similarly curving, pointed wings and wide tails (MS Ll.I.10, fols. 22r and 32r) (Ill. 4.138).[271]

Decorative elements within contemporary Southumbrian manuscript illumination also provide interesting parallels with Mercian sculpture. The preference in Mercian sculpture for architectural framing devices is echoed in manuscript art: most closely in the Book of Cerne, where the Evangelist miniatures can be compared with the Angel and Virgin panels at Breedon, the apostle arcade at Castor and the Peterborough Cenotaph. Cramp and Brown have shown that these monuments offer the best parallel for the rounded arches and variety of capitals that frame the Evangelist symbols in the Book of Cerne (MS Ll.I.10, fols. 21v, 2v, 12v and 31v).[272] The cupped capitals and stepped bases on the arch of the Angel panel at Breedon are mirrored in the Matthew miniature in Cerne, and the foliate offshoots between the arcading on the Breedon Apostle panel and the fragment at Castor can similarly be compared with the Mark miniature in Cerne (MS Ll.I.10, fols. 2v and 12v) (Ills. 4.139 and 4.140).[273] The arched Matthew miniature also provides a parallel for the use of the trumpet-spiral and *pelta*-derivative motifs in an architectural setting (in the arch spandrels), seen in the frieze fragments at Fletton and Breedon, as well as the panel fragments at South Kyme (MS Ll.I.10, fols. 2v) (Ill. 143).[274] An additional, contemporary example of the trumpet-spiral in a Mercian manuscript is to be found in the Lichfield Gospels, where it forms a prominent decorative feature on the Chi-rho page (Lichfield, Cathedral Library, MS I, p. 5) (Ill. 4.141).[275] The unusual devouring serpent on the Repton cross-shaft, which has no parallel in the corpus of Mercian sculpture, has been compared by Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle to a design element in the central column of the Canon Table in the Barberini Gospels (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. lat. 570, fol. Ir) (Ills.

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[269] Alexander, 1978: ills. 166 and 168; Jewell, 1982: 252; Brown, 2001: 284; Jewell, 2001: 249.
[270] Cramp, 1977: 206; Jewell, 1982: 182; Brown, 2007c: 98.
[271] Brown, 1996: 119, pls. Ib and IVb.
[272] Cramp, 1977: 211; Brown, 1996: 80, pls. 1a, 2a, 3a and 4a.
[273] Cramp, 1977: 211; Brown, 1996: 80, pls. 2a and 3a.
[274] Cramp, 1977: 211; Brown, 1996: 81, pl. 2a.
[275] Brown, 2007b: pl. 31.

4.35 and 4.142).[276] In the Canon Table design, a large male head at the top of the central column has its beard bitten by two confronted bird-like creatures whose bodies descend into interlace below them.[277]

The figural style of Mercian sculpture is similarly reflected in contemporary manuscript art by members of the Tiberius Group. Plunkett noted the similarities between the long fingers of the Mercian carved figures, such as the Breedon Virgin, and those of the figures in the Royal Bible (BL, Royal, MS I.E.VI, fol. 43r) and Book of Cerne (MS Ll.I.10, fols. 21v, 2v, 12v and 31v).[278] And the pose, drapery style and hand gestures of the Cerne Evangelist portrait busts, which Brown has shown is unusual in contemporary manuscript art, are markedly similar to the Breedon Virgin.[279] The 'youthful' appearance of the Evangelists in the Book of Cerne is understood to have its origins in the artistic styles of late Antiquity and can be detected in the Christ of the Genoels-Elderen ivory diptych as well as a number of Mercian monuments including that at Whitchurch, Hampshire, and the Lechmere Stone, Worcestershire (cat. nos. 42 and 66) (Ill. 4.144).[280] The Lechmere Stone, thought to be a grave marker, bears the full-length robed figure of Christ, distinguished by his crossed nimbus, who stands front-facing holding a book in his left hand and gesturing to it with his right.[281] He appears beardless with a thick crop of curling hair and large pierced eyes. The monument at Whitchurch is comparable in both form and ornament, being a round-headed monument bearing the, albeit half-length, figure of Christ, which Brown described as the Cerne 'youthful type', holding a book.[282] The evidence for the close interrelationship between manuscripts and sculpture, and with other art forms such as textiles, ivories and metalwork, is indicative not only of a shared visual style but also a common underlying interest in sharing the prestige of these objects through imitation. The difficulty, as Henderson has recently discussed, is in determining the direction of influence between different art forms, and how the transmission of motifs, particularly those of exotic origin, occurred.[283]

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[276] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 277.
[277] Brown, 1996: fig. 36.
[278] Plunkett, 1984: 47; Brown, 1996: pls. 1a, 2a, 3a and 4a.
[279] Cramp, 1977: 210–11; Brown, 1996: 73–7, 103–9, pls. pls. 1a, 2a, 3a and 4a.
[280] Baldwin Brown, 1931: 226–8; Wilson, 1984: 108, pls. 132–3; Neuman de Vegvar, 1990: figs. 1 and 2; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 245, pl. 210; Brown, 1996: 76–7, 104.
[281] Kendrick, T., 1938: 186–7, pl. LXXXI.
[282] Tweddle et al., 1995: 271–3, ills. 482, 485–9. The monument also bears a memorial inscription to Fridburga, which supports its supposed function as a grave marker. On the reverse of the monument there is an incised bush-scroll motif, which Wilson has compared with early ninth-century metalwork (Wilson, 1984: 108).
[283] Henderson, 2007a: 17–18.

Part III

The impact of networks and modes of exchange

Internal exchange

The concluding sections of this chapter discuss the relationship between the creation of a Mercian 'style' of sculpture and the kingdom's internal and external networks of exchange. These networks of exchange provided both the stimulus for the adoption and adaptation of non-Insular motifs, and the means by which motifs were accessed and transmitted. Within the kingdom of Mercia, the evidence for an internal network, or indeed a series of internal networks operating within a hierarchy of production and use, is demonstrated by consistencies in style and sources of motifs. Consistencies in style have long been noted and have been used to group Mercian sculpture into 'schools'.[284] When viewed in tandem with the types of models that were being drawn on and the motivations behind the exchange networks that underpinned them, these stylistic schools or groupings illustrate the impact of non-Insular motifs in different regions of the kingdom. Within what Plunkett called the 'seminal monastic school' of Breedon and Peterborough, equivalent to Cramp's Group 1, the relationship between the sites is reflected in their shared style of sculpture and the popularity of stone from the Barnack quarries which were, at least by the eleventh century, under the control of Peterborough abbey.[285] Evidence from written sources describes a monastic colony centred on Peterborough and extending across the eastern and central Midlands to include Breedon and possibly Repton.[286] Blair has suggested that this network of sites, which he interpreted as a federation comparable to Bishop Wilfrid's 'Empire' in Northumbria, would have been hierarchically arranged with an allegiance to its head at Peterborough.[287] As discussed above and in the following chapter, the popularity of arcaded apostle iconography links the Peterborough Cenotaph to the panel fragments at Castor and Flettton and to four of the panels at Breedon. In addition, the style of carving seen in the drapery, pose and character of the figures at these sites and in the bust-figures on the Fletton frieze fragments points to a shared model or centre of

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[284] Clapham, 1928; Kendrick, T., 1938; Cramp, 1977; Jewell, 1982; and Plunkett, 1984.
[285] Clapham, 1930: 76; Kendrick, T., 1938: 175–8; Jope, 1964: 100; Cramp, 1977: 192; Plunkett, 1984: 15; Alexander, 1998: 115.
[286] Mellows, 1949: 160; Stenton, 1970: 185; Rumble, 1977: 169–71; Dornier, 1977: 157–60; Bailey 1980b: 11; Stafford, 1985: 182.
[287] Blair, 2005: 83.

production.[288] The models for Mercian arcaded figure sculpture were almost certainly provided by late Antique sarcophagi and ivory panel carving. And within the Peterborough monastic group, the influence of late Antique styles is reaffirmed in the monumental panels at Breedon depicting the Miracle at Cana and the blessing angel and many of the motifs in the inhabited vine-scroll of the broad frieze. There is, however, no definitive evidence to suggest that artistic styles emanated from Peterborough, or that its monastic dependants were absorbing and adapting such styles. Indeed, even if the frieze fragments at Fletton were originally from Peterborough, as suggested by Irvine and Allen, the range and quality of carving represented by these, the cenotaph and the figural panels at the two sites does not account for the variety and range of sculpture at Breedon.[289] In line with Cramp's argument for the primacy of architectural sculpture in the development of sculptural style, Breedon is a more likely candidate for the central artistic hub from which styles disseminated across the Peterborough colony.[290] This is supported by the range of monuments and the unusual quantity of experimental designs incorporating eastern motifs, many of which are peculiar to the sculpture at Breedon. There is also reason to suppose that its central location within the heartland of Mercia made Breedon a convenient focus for royal patronage – patronage which supported the Peterborough colony as a whole, as demonstrated by the royal foundation of many of its dependent monasteries (as well as Peterborough itself) and their associated saints' cults (see the following chapter for exploration of this theme).

The breadth of style and the varied appropriation of non-Insular motifs seen across the wider Mercian kingdom suggest that there was not a consistent dependence on such central places. As a body of sculpture, the Mercian material pulls in the same overall stylistic direction, but with distinct regional variation suggesting that territories outside the Mercian heartland and the dominant Peterborough colony either had independent access to artistic models or were governed by local and regional artistic agendas. So, for example, the cross-sculpture of the western Midlands exhibits a reliance on contemporary metalwork of predominantly Anglo-Saxon design that likely reflects either a limited exposure to other models, or a conscious desire to emulate that medium over any other. The outcome was the development of the dominant west Mercian animal style and the near absence of figural ornament. Notable exceptions, at Rugby, Lypiatt and Newent, are intriguing outliers but nonetheless conform to the general Mercian sculptural idiom in their figural style. And particularly in their use of

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[288] Cramp, 1977: 210, 218; Plunkett, 1984: 18–19; Mitchell, 2010: 264–5.
[289] Allen, 1887–88: 417; Irvine, 1891–3: 156.
[290] Cramp, 1977: 192, 194.

niched or arcaded figures, the cross-sculpture at all three sites shows an allegiance to and awareness of the sculpture of the Mercian heartland, though not necessarily direct access to the same sources. Thus, the limited use of motifs derived from eastern sources might suggest that exotic high-status portable models, such as silks and metalwork were not penetrating into the territories outside the central Mercian exchange network centred on Breedon. However, mechanisms for the transmission of such models to sites in the outer Mercian territories were in place. A number of monastic foundations in the west, such as the priory at Wenlock in Shropshire, were established by and no doubt remained under the control of members of the Mercian royal family (see Chapter One, pp. 38).[291] Similarly, charter evidence recording the foundation of smaller minsters, such as that at Acton Beauchamp, refer to royal involvement.[292] Cropthorne is known to have been a sizeable royal *vill* on the itinerary of the Mercian kings, and was visited on at least two occasions: in 780 and 814.[293] These ecclesiastical sites were therefore part of a network maintaining royal interest in regions outside the Mercian heartland, and one which would have facilitated the circulation of artistic models and sculptural trends.

The idea that regions within the wider kingdom of Mercia retained a degree of artistic independence from the heartland despite, or perhaps due to, being part of a hierarchy of exchange networks, is further suggested by the crosses of the Derbyshire Peak. As discussed above, these monuments are characterised by their shared stylistic individuality, which appears to be a reaction to both the Northumbrian and Mercian traditions. In form and ornament the monuments broadly conform to existing sculptural traditions, demonstrating an awareness of the dominance of late Antique motifs – in the use of niched figure-busts and vine-scroll ornament and their application to standing crosses. However, in detail the Derbyshire crosses are quite distinct from the sculpture of the Mercian heartland or the western Midlands, suggesting that the region had its own agenda and independent access to models. It is also suggests, as with the western Midlands, that the northern Mercian territories were sufficiently isolated, politically or physically, so as to allow them to develop their own regional 'style' of sculpture. The creation of such a regional style could then have produced the unique monument at Wirksworth. The western Midlands were physically divided from the Mercian heartland by the great Forest of Arden, which might almost certainly account for the paucity of extant early medieval sculpture in Warwickshire. The Derbyshire Peak was similarly

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[291] Gelling, 1989: 192–3.
[292] Birch, 1885: no. 134; Blair, 2005: 102.
[293] Birch, 1885: no. 235; Sawyer, 1968: no. 118; Hill, 1981: ill. 145; Thorn and Thorn, 1982: 2; Finberg, 1972: no. 227; Hart, 1977: 58; Hooke, 1985: 88; Hooke, 1990: 30.

detached, being physically separated by distance from the Mercian heartland and the communication network of the rivers in the Trent Basin.[294] Whilst Sidebottom was right in stating that there is no evidence for a monastic central workshop behind the production of the Peak crosses, the stylistic and iconographical homogeneity of the monuments does suggest that, contrary to Sidebottom's argument, a network existed between the sites.[295] Given the particular iconography of the monuments, their function, and the range of non-Insular models that they are likely to have drawn on, it seems unlikely that the Peak crosses could have been produced without the benefit of an ecclesiastical network, or that they were intended as estate markers unconnected to churches as has been proposed.[296] The construction of burial barrows and the reuse of prehistoric ones along the Roman road between Buxton and Derby in the seventh century implies what Ozanne called a 'continued or revived' interest in that route; and the economic importance of the area for the mining of lead and silver would have ensured open communication routes between the region and the Mercian heartland.[297] The potential for direct communication certainly existed between Wirksworth, which is known from Domesday to have had three lead mines, and the royal monastery at Repton, which owned land there.[298]

External exchange: people, objects and ideas

Within Mercia, the mechanisms for internal exchange appear to have been dominated by monastic networks under the influence of royal activity. Such networks would have facilitated the circulation of Insular manuscripts, metalwork and other portable objects, whose artistic influence can be found throughout the corpus of Mercian sculpture. Undoubtedly, once non-Insular models entered this system of distribution they could potentially achieve the same degree of distribution, and the close imitation of non-sculptural models and techniques would suggest that actual objects were available to Mercian artists. These objects of inspiration, explored above, were predominantly high-status goods – textiles, ivories and metalwork – either of early eastern origin or

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[294] The place-name evidence would also suggest that the Peak was further isolated from the lowlands by belts of dense woodland (Cameron, 1959: xlii; Ozanne, 1962–3: 36; Loveluck, 1995: 84–98). For the role of transportation by water in the medieval period, see Blair, 2007.
[295] Sidebottom, 1994: 20, 142.
[296] *op. cit.*, 155.
[297] Darby and Maxwell, 1962; Ozanne, 1962–3: 35–6, fig. 7; Thomas, 1971: 158; Morgan, 1978. For discussion of roads in England during the pre-Conquest and Norman periods and the evidence that settlements on them offered services to travellers, see Stenton, 1936: 1–21 and Gelling and Cole, 2000: 65, 93–4.
[298] Stenton, 1905: 330–1; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 234–5; Roffe, 1986: 19; Rollason, 1996: 8.

contemporary manufacture produced to recreate the prestige of the late Antique West. The Carolingians' reliance on gift economy and the established tradition of diplomatic and religious communication between the Continent and Anglo-Saxon England provided the ideal mechanism by which such objects found their way to religious and secular central places in Mercia.[299] The degree to which Mercian sculptors were drawing on exotic prestige portable items of both late Antique and contemporary manufacture, particularly textiles, which had specifically royal associations, demonstrates the pivotal position that Mercian secular elite consumption played in the development of the kingdom's sculptural style. Churches with ships and sailors at their disposal were utilised by both ecclesiastical and secular travellers so that even landlocked churches, such as Breedon-on-the-Hill, would have had access to the seaways and the northern Frankish ports.[300] Surviving Mercian royal charters outline the tolls levied on trading ships in London and elsewhere in the kingdom and the privileges granted to religious communities in which the kings had an interest.[301] Written sources indicate that the Church took an active interest in commercial activity because, as Kelly stated, 'early medieval religious communities were enthusiastic consumers of luxury goods'.[302] But, monastic institutions are also believed to have played an important role in the distribution and exchange of commodities inland, acting as local or regional community trading centres.[303] And a mid ninth-century charter exempting Breedon from hospitality duties towards royal visitors, makes it clear that the monastery was obliged to continue welcoming foreign envoys.[304] This trading activity fits into the broader European model of trade expansion and the development of what Haslam described as the 'Carolingian partially commercialised system'.[305] As outlined in Chapter One (45–8), communication regarding trade and exchange between Carolingian Europe and

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[299] Moreland and van de Noort, 1992: 326, 328; Curta, 2006: 671–99.
[300] Edmonds, 2009: 131–2.
[301] Kelly, 1992: 4–17; Blair, 2005: 257. See, for example, the charters relating to the Kentish monastic foundation at Minster in Thanet, which came into the possession of the Mercian king Coenwulf (796–821), who made his daughter abbess there (Sawyer, 1968: no. 86; Kelly, 1992: 5–10; Blair, 2005: 258). For the western routes of maritime trade during this period, see Wooding, 1996: 93–104. For the archaeology of the early medieval port of London, see Milne and Goodburn, 1990: 629–36 and Cowie, 2001: 194–209.
[302] Kelly, 1992: 13–14; Blair, 2005: 256, 258.
[303] Blinkhorn, 1999: 4–23; Ulmschneider, 2000: 95–9; Blair, 2005: 260–1.
[304] Sawyer, 1968: no. 197; Blair, 2005: 132.
[305] Metcalf, 1967: 344–57; Haslam, 1987: 76; Vince, 2001: 183–93. For discussion of the development of early medieval trade routes, see Adelson, 1960: 271–87; Hill and Cowie, 2001 and Pestell and Ulmschneider, 2003..

Anglo-Saxon Mercia is well documented, and the interest of the secular elite in this process is epitomised by the exchange concerning Charlemagne's 'black stones'.[306]

Portable objects from the Continent and further afield are also likely to have found their way back to Mercia in the hands of travelling clerics, and Laing has recently suggested this was a mechanism by which eastern Mediterranean models were made available to Celtic artists and patrons in the eighth and ninth centuries.[307] During the controversy surrounding Lichfield's loss of the metropolitan see, c. 797–803, the Mercian king Coenwulf sent clerics from across Mercia to Rome to plead his case with the pope.[308] These delegates, often accompanied by noblemen, joined the various pilgrims, royalty and travellers that had already gravitated towards Rome as a hub for spiritual and political ideology (see Chapter One, pp. 41–8).[309] Within the eternal city itself, and en route, Mercian travellers were exposed to the monumental and small scale artistic legacy of late Antique and Lombard Italy, as well as more recent Carolingian developments. The stylistic, albeit limited, parallels between Mercian and Lombard sculpture are testament to the engagement of Mercian patrons or artists with the material at sites they encountered. There is no evidence to confirm, however, that continental craftsmen were brought into Mercia to recreate designs – the appropriation of continental sculptural motifs is far too limited, even at Breedon where the evidence for non-Insular models is abundant.[310] At centres such as Breedon extensive decorative friezes employing exotic motifs associated with royal prestige and sculptural ornament adopted from royally endowed Lombard monasteries would not have failed to impress visiting foreign envoys. The friezes were highly visible reminders that Mercian monasteries and their royal patrons were legitimate participants in prestige gift exchange with the courts of the East and West, and that they were aware of the language of monumentality pursued in Lombard/Carolingian Italy. Similarly, stylistic and iconographical details recognisably associated with late Antique centres, such as St. Andrew's Ravennate spiky hair and the prominence given to the Roman iconographies of the Apostles and the Virgin, were badges representing the alignment of Mercian sites with contemporary centres of importance and their classicising aspirations. When viewed against the range of non-Insular sources that were evidently available to the

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[306] Levison, 1946: 111; Hodges, 1982: 124; Peacock, 1997: 709–15; Story, 2002: 188–96. For an interesting discussion of the Carolingian use of black marble, notably in relation to Alcuin's epitaph for Pope Hadrian I (d. 795) in St. Peter's in the Vatican, see Story *et al.*, 2005: 157–90.
[307] Laing, 2010: 100–4.
[308] Story, 2002: 199–200.
[309] Bailey, 1996b: 54; Nelson, 2002: 16, 20.
[310] Jewell, 1982: 69.

Mercian artists, and from which they consciously picked and chose, the dominance of late Antique artistic models of both eastern and western origin is striking. It cannot be doubted that as Cramp proposed, the Mercians made independent use of similar models available to continental artists.[311] In line with established Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards developing sculptural traditions that reflect a kingdom's identity or, more accurately, its character, the Mercian sculptors were unrivalled in their creation of a sculptural idiom that represented both their individuality and their desire to be perceived as worthy players on the European field.

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[311] Cramp, 2006a: 4.

Chapter Five

The Role of Sculpture in Ecclesiastical Power and Cult in Mercia

Introduction

Mercian sculptors and patrons intentionally reflected the access they had to contemporary, politically and symbolically-loaded iconographies. The manner in which they consciously selected and adapted those iconographies to suit their needs is indicative of a complex process of model circulation and consumption. Within the corpus of extant Mercian stone sculpture there is a unique group of monuments that demonstrates this complexity in a specific context of function. The group of monuments, as presented in Chapter Two (p. 53), contains fragments of decorated panels, coped lids and sarcophagi that together comprise the corpus of Mercian funerary sculpture. These monuments have yet to be discussed as a group in their own right, but when done so, provide an invaluable insight into a specifically Mercian form of monumentality.[1] Through an analysis of the form and ornament of the sculpture, the sites at which they are found, and the available historical and archaeological evidence for the motivations behind their creation, an examination is conducted of the role that commemorating the dead played in maintaining Mercian authority. The nature of this authority and the extent to which it reflects both secular and ecclesiastical power is discussed. This makes it possible to assess the impact of the close relationship that endured between Mercian royal houses and the Church. In particular, it is suggested that authority exercised by the Mercian ruling elite through the religious mechanisms of cult and veneration is preserved in the form and distribution of funerary monuments.

This unique group of monuments is distributed over ten sites in Mercia (Map. 5.A) and contains two complete monuments and the fragments of at least six others. Broadly, these monuments fall into two categories. The first are those that can be identified as sarcophagi designed to hold the corporeal remains of the dead, what Rollason termed reliquary coffins.[2] The second are those tomb structures which were not intended to be the primary container for the body but instead acted as an above-ground marker for the grave or an external shrine-cover for a sarcophagus or other container holding parts of the venerated dead. These will be referred to in this chapter as

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[1] But, see Cramp, 1986b: 103 for an early recognition of the importance of this group of monuments. Funerary monuments are not restricted to Mercia and two important and rare examples of Pictish carved sarcophagi can be found at Govan and St. Andrews (Spearman, 1994; Foster, 1998).
[2] Rollason, 1989: 44–50.

cenotaphs. From the extant Mercian material, the remains of the two surviving examples of sarcophagi are found at Derby (cat. no. 31) and Wirksworth (cat. no. 68) in Derbyshire. Within this small sample there is a distinct range of design and form that differentiates them from the cenotaphs and which illustrates the personal element to be expected with this type of monument created for the primary interment of an individual. The artistic programme of these monuments and the extent to which it is possible to associate any of them with individual figures is discussed. Of the surviving fragments of cenotaphs, there is evidence for a degree of conformity in design. With the exception of the solid monument at Peterborough and the fragments at South Kyme in Lincolnshire (cat. no. 62), these monuments are all represented by quadrilateral panels with figural carving. As is discussed below, these panels are likely to have formed box-like superstructures designed to stand inside churches, overlying graves, shrines or relics. The Peterborough monument, whilst of a different construction, will be shown to conform to the broad artistic programme employed on these monuments and, together with the fragments from South Kyme, demonstrates the close artistic affinity these superstructures shared with their smaller portable counterparts in reliquaries.

The criteria for identifying the remains of sarcophagi and cenotaphs are as follows[1]:

Sarcophagi

i) Identified from the partial or complete survival of hollowed stone sub-rectangular containers or their coped lids, carved from solid blocks of stone (Wirksworth, Derby).

ii) These stone objects were of sufficient length to be considered appropriate to the entombment of a whole or nearly whole body.

iii) Discovered during the excavation of a grave and identified as a sarcophagus (Derby).

Cenotaphs

i) Single or multiple complete quadrilateral panels that comprised box-shrines, or shrine covers (Breedon, Castor, Fletton, Lichfield).

ii) These panels contain comparable content and layout: full-length standing figures, restricted by but not engaging with architectural framing (in this

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[1] For the importance of form-analysis in the anthropology of art, see Morphy and Perkins, 2006: 323–5.

respect, both the Marian and Angel panels at Breedon, and the apostle frieze-work at Fletton are not included here).

iii)   Fragments of quadrilateral panels with preserved edging of non-uniformed dimensions but not consistent with frieze-work (South Kyme).

iv)   Panels discovered during excavation (and therefore not wall-mounted) from which the original construction can be deduced (Lichfield).

v)   Monuments bearing close stylistic affinities to the form of reliquaries or existing cenotaphs (Peterborough, Bakewell).

The design and use of these monuments is discussed within the context of the contemporary and flourishing tradition of relic veneration and saint cults in the Christian West during the late eighth and early ninth centuries.[2] The evidence for the origins and development of saints' cults in Mercia is outlined, together with the particular types of saints that can be recognised in the documentary sources. From this it is possible to demonstrate how the veneration of Mercian figures as saints emerged in the territories under Mercian control as a result of the contemporary political climate and how they were promoted for secular and ecclesiastical gain. In this respect, the cult of saints in Mercia is shown to have been an underestimated mechanism for the establishment and maintenance of Mercian over-lordship. The location of sites with funerary sculpture and those associated with commemorating the Mercian elite are shown to broadly equate with centres of ecclesiastical importance. This distribution is discussed in relation to the known centres of secular authority and strategic military importance to demonstrate that ecclesiastical power operated in tangent to secular authority. This ecclesiastical power would have acted as a tool for rooting Mercian control and dynastic legacy in the landscape and for defining the sphere of Mercian influence, in a similar way to coinage and monastic land privileges. Of particular relevance is the Mercian royal mausoleum preserved at Repton, which is examined within this context and in the light of continental and Insular traditions of crypt-building and their significance for the promotion of venerating the dead.

The degree to which Mercian funerary monuments were an appropriation and adaptation of existing traditions is discussed. The potential sources of influence for the design and use of the monuments is explored, taking particular note of contemporary activities on the Continent in relation to the veneration of cult figures. Pilgrimage to

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[2] For the importance of relic circulation as a social mechanism during the medieval period, see Geary, 1986: 169–94.

holy sites abroad and the transmission of relics in distinctive containers offered opportunities of exposure to a variety of artistic programmes associated with venerating the dead. Many of these programmes derived from late Antique sources, as the previous chapter established, and these are explored further below with a view to understanding the choice of motifs peculiar to the corpus of Mercian funerary monuments. The choice of motifs, their iconography and their relation to the original function and position of the monuments is considered. This shows that as well as choosing from a repertoire of existing forms and designs associated with commemoration and veneration, the Mercian artists manipulated existing traditions to develop a unique brand of memorial not seen elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon England or the Carolingian continent at that time. In conclusion, this is shown to reflect a particular need in Mercia during the late eighth and early ninth centuries for a monumental expression of legitimacy that was rooted in the Church.

Mercian saints

Mercian funerary sculpture should be understood as the product of but one mechanism employed by the ruling elite to move towards institutionalised over-lordship. This mechanism was the subtle manipulation of the long-established tradition of venerating the holy dead, and the belief that even after life, the power of a saint endured in the corporeal remains to aid intercession with God or provide healing or punishment.[3] A number of important studies have shown that specific types of saints began to emerge in Mercia during the eighth and ninth centuries, and many of the sites that they were associated with have been located.[4] However, the possible correlation between the newly emerging types of saints and developments in Mercian monumental expression, and the wider implications for our understanding of what Mercian over-lordship entailed have yet to be examined. This is the focus of the first part of this chapter. Despite the range and distinctive quality of the material evidence for the development of Mercian cult activity available in the form of sculpture and architecture, the cult of saints in Mercia has not been fully appreciated for the vehicle of artistic innovation that it was. This is also addressed in this chapter.

In his re-evaluation of the 'Mercian supremacy', Simon Keynes highlighted the need to 'look at the nature as well as the extent of Mercian power: at the mechanics as

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[3] Brown, P., 1981: 2–4; Biddle, 1986: 3.
[4] Rollason, 1978, 1983 and 1989; Butler, 1986; Cubitt, 2000 and 2002; Blair, 2002a and b; Blair, 2005: 141–8.

well as the dynamics of the Mercian regime'.[5] In particular, Keynes drew attention to the continued focus on documentary evidence and numismatics and the lack of integration with other sources of evidence such as sculpture.[6] However, even in recent archaeological discussions of the mechanisms by which Mercian rulers were able to sustain control over much of southern England during their period of supremacy, the preferred assertion that the exercise of over-lordship rested primarily on military strength leaves room for little else, such as the influence of the cult of saints.[7] And yet, in contrast to the largely inconclusive archaeological evidence for military obligations and activities testified to in the documentary sources, the physical evidence for the cult of saints not only complements but adds a new perspective to what is already known from the surviving documents on the subject.[8]

These documents are predominantly in the form of liturgical calendars and lists of saints' resting places, none of which pre-dates the eleventh century, but with which it is possible to map the distribution of Anglo-Saxon saints' cults (Map. 5.B).[9] A vast number of sites associated with saints' cults were located in the kingdom of Mercia, and Blair has demonstrated that many of these cults had their origins in the eighth and ninth centuries.[10] It has also been recognised that these saints were often of royal and dynastic affiliation and that their origins had strong political overtones.[11] Unlike the kingdoms of Northumbria, East Anglia and Kent, Mercia appears to have lacked early royal cults, possibly as a result of the kingdom's relatively late conversion to Christianity.[12] The earliest Mercian saints are dominated by the offspring of Penda, who died in 655 and was himself pagan (see Chapter One, p. 24); and include his son Æthelred, his daughters Cyneburg and Cyneswith and some of his grandchildren including Werburg.[13] It is not insignificant that it was under Penda's rule that many of the territories that made up the kingdom of greater Mercia were assimilated. The establishment of Penda's offspring as cult figures emphasised his pivotal position on the threshold of Mercia becoming a Christian kingdom and would have reinforced his dynasty within the memorial

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[5] Keynes, 2005: 12.

[6] *op. cit.*, 20.

[7] Keynes, 1995: 36; Bassett, 2007: 55.

[8] See Bassett, 2007 for a discussion of the archaeological evidence supporting the politically-motivated programme of fortification that is thought to have taken place by the ninth century at sites such as Hereford, Tamworth and Winchcombe.

[9] For a full discussion of these and later sources and the problems associated with their interpretation, see Blair, 2002a: 463–7.

[10] Blair, 2002a: fig. 13.1.

[11] Thacker, 1985: 1, 14.

[12] *op. cit.*, 1.

[13] This list also includes Penda's probable offspring: his supposed daughters Edith and Eadburg and his supposed grandchildren Rumwold, Rufinus, Osyth and Mildberg.

mechanisms of the Church, through which territorial control was consolidated and legitimised.[14] This corroboration between Church and State appears to have occurred on a local level, with most of the Mercian saints retaining only regional associations – their veneration confined to particular monasteries with whose foundation they were linked. This may well have been particularly apparent in Mercia whose subkingdoms retained a degree of individual identity throughout their subservience, an identity reflected in the burial evidence presented in Chapter One (pp. 34–7 and Appendix II). Thus, Penda's daughters Cyneburg and Cyneswith were installed as abbesses at a double monastery they founded at Castor, Northamptonshire, in c. 670, and were both buried there at their deaths.[15]

As has been recognised by Blair and Yorke, these Mercian princesses or noblewomen who became saints would have played a particularly important role in the formation of a Mercian dynasty through their symbolic embodiment of 'the blessed line' which, by being promoted in monastic communities, would be seen to have God's support.[16] As discussed (Chapter One, pp. 36–7), the emergence and recognition of high status females within Mercian society is evident in the burial record. In this respect, the strategic anchoring of female members of the royal line in Mercian monasteries across the kingdom can be seen to echo the long established Frankish tradition.[17] Indeed, known family links between the seventh-century abbesses at Ely and the Frankish monastery at Faremoûtier-en-Brie highlight how the transmission of such models of royal commemoration was facilitated.[18] The impact of these enduring communication routes on the monumental expression of commemoration is outlined and discussed below, particularly in relation to the possibility that Anglo-Saxon shrines were the focus of popular veneration, as they have been argued to have been at a number of sites on the Continent.[19]

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[14] An unusual expression of this territorial control can be seen in the seemingly peculiar late seventh-century establishment of a site for the cult of the Northumbrian king Oswald within Mercia at Bardney in Lincolnshire. The cult was founded in Bardney by Oswald's niece Osthryth who had married Penda's son Æthelred, himself later abbot there but, as Thacker has convincingly argued, the shrine was ultimately to Mercian over-lordship of the region which had long been fought over with Northumbria (Thacker, 1985: 2; Bede, *HE*, iii. 11; Stafford, 1985: 98; Stafford, 2001: 35–6). It would have served as a permanent and poignant reminder to the death of Oswald at the hands of Penda in 642 at the Battle of Maserfield (Bede, *HE*, iii. 9).

[15] Blair, 2002b: 523. Similarly, Mildburg, a possible grandaughter of Penda, was venerated at Much Wenlock in Shropshire, where she had founded a monastery in the seventh century (Stenton, 1971: 46–7; Finberg, 1972: 197–216; Gelling, 1992: 82–3).

[16] Yorke, 2005: 43; Blair, 2002a: 461; Blair, 2005: 84–5.

[17] Blair, 2002a: 461.

[18] Thacker, 2002a: 58.

[19] Jacobsen, 1997: 1140; Thacker, 2002a: 70.

The installation of royal family members as heads of monastic communities, themselves often royal foundations and royally endowed, was not only beneficial for the establishment of a dynasty, by ensuring the family member was an integral part of the local community, landscape and memory, but also provided a model of ideal behaviour. This would have had the potential to encourage good behaviour amongst the populace and acted as a reminder to the local community of the benefits of a law-abiding and God-fearing life.[20] During the consolidation of Mercian power and the legitimising of Penda's family's rule, such an image would have been appropriate to uphold in the federation-territories of Mercia. This concept was developed in the eighth century when it is possible to trace the emergence of a group of murdered Mercian kings and princes, all of whom were consequently venerated in Mercia with a shrine at the place of their martyrdom or burial, and often a number of dedications at additional churches.[21] The veneration of murdered royal saints has been recognised as peculiar to Anglo-Saxon England, and in Mercia it was an important element in the development of a Mercian identity through the promotion of cults.[22] Why this group of saints gained prominence in Anglo-Saxon England remains a debated issue. Blair and Chaney saw a potential link back to the heroic past and the significance of violent deaths, but Rollason argued against pagan origins and the concept of sacral kingship, instead proposing a link to the condemnation of royal murder made by papal legates in a canon of 786.[23] In this respect, the act of making a martyr of the murdered royal figure can be seen as a propaganda exercise that simultaneously emphasised the guilt of the perpetrator and promoted the sanctity of the victim and by inference, the victim's family.[24] The adoption and development of this tradition in Mercia can also be understood as a tool to limit civil strife by providing the populace with models of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. For Cubitt, the devotion to martyred and murdered royal saints was not a

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[20] Rollason, 1983: 16.

[21] These martyred Mercian saints include Wystan, Kenelm and Alkmund to whom respectively four, seven and six churches are dedicated in Mercia. The potential problems associated with church dedications, including dating, are discussed by Butler (1986: 48). If it is accepted that dedications to murdered royal saints were unlikely to have been established later than a generation after their death, as Butler stated, these dedications form an informative group. Two earlier exceptions to this group from the seventh century are Wulflæd and Rufinus, supposed sons of king Wulfhere, both of whom were venerated at Stone in Staffordshire (Thacker, 1985: 6; Rollason, 1983: 11).

[22] Rollason, 1983: 14.

[23] Chaney, 1970: 251; Rollason, 1983: 17; Blair 2002a: 460; 2005: 143. At least one of the councils held by the papal legates is known to have taken place at Mercian courts, possibly instigated by Offa as part of the political programme that led to the elevation of Lichfield to an archiepiscopal see the following year, as will be discussed further below and has been outlined in Chapter One, pp. 32–3 (Rollason 1983: 17; Cubitt, 1995: 154).

[24] Certainly, the tradition had long been in operation in Anglo-Saxon England, particularly in Northumbria, starting with the cult of the murdered kings Oswald and Oswine (Bede, *HE*, iii. 14, 24).

propagandist tool of the elite, but a movement born of lay and popular revulsion at the crime, the legacy of which is often preserved in the saint's hagiography.[25] However, the surviving sculpture relating to the veneration of saints does not bear witness to any potential lay origins for their cults, having been found and presumably crafted within the learned and artistic milieu of monastic communities and almost certainly therefore reflecting the patronage of the elite.

By 716 Penda's dynasty had come to an end after a period of instability and turbulence that saw two kings leave the throne to enter religious life, and one die from insanity.[26] With the arrival to the throne of Æthelbald in 716 there was a revived promotion of Mercian kingship and the royal line. Æthelbald is known to have promoted the cult of the princely hermit Guthlac who had been a monk at Repton but retired to Crowland, on the eastern periphery of Mercian territory.[27] Following his death in 716, Æthelbald enriched his shrine with 'wonderful structures and ornamentations' in thanks for the saint's prophecy that Æthelbald would become king.[28] Æthelbald's successor Offa came to the throne in 757 after driving into exile his rival claimant Beornred, whose connection to the Mercian royal line is obscure.[29] The ninth century saw a succession of short reigns by claimants from different branches of the Mercian line whose connection to it were obscure and often doubtful. It is within this context that the emergence of murdered and martyred Mercian saints cults arose and must, therefore, be considered.[30] The desire to legitimise rule during the turbulent years of the early ninth century is epitomised by the cult of St. Wigstan, the grandson of king Wiglaf who met his death at the hands of his kinsman and rival to the throne Beorhtfrith in

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[25] Cubitt, 2000: 60. In particular, Cubitt drew attention to the community focus of the vengeance miracles in the hagiography of the Mercian prince Kenelm, who was murdered in 821 and buried at Winchcombe, where his life was written in the eleventh century (Cubitt, 2000: 67–71; Levison, 1946: 249–59; Love, 1996: 49–89), and to the veneration at Hereford of the eighth-century East Anglian king Æthelberht who had been killed by Offa in 794 (Cubitt, 2000: 75–6; Rollason, 1978: 61–93; Thacker, 1985: 16–18).
[26] Thacker, 1985: 14; Stenton, 1971: 203.
[27] Felix, c. 27–8; Higham, 2005: 87.
[28] Felix, c. 51; Thacker, 1985: 5–6, Rollason, 1989: 114; Blair, 2002b: 537. There was a dedication to Guthlac at Hereford by at least the later tenth century. This has been seen by Thacker as a reflection of Guthlac's association with hostility to the British which would make him an appropriate saint for eighth-century Hereford, on the border with Wales (1985: 5–6). According to Felix's *Life*, during a dream Guthlac successfully thwarted an attack by a 'British host', by reciting psalms (Felix, c. 34).
[29] Stenton, 1971: 206. Offa also ensured the succession to the throne of his son Ecgfrith by killing any rival claimants, a decision that eventually crippled the Mercian dynasty when Ecgfrith died without an heir (Hart, 1977: 54). This was not lost on Alcuin, who saw Offa's actions as the ruin of his kingdom (Whitelock, 1979: no. 202).
[30] These were: Ceowulf I, a descendant of Pybba, Penda's father, expelled in 823; Beornwulf, whose origin is unknown and who was killed in battle by Ecgberht king of Wessex in 825; Ludeca who reigned for two years until 827 and Wiglaf who was expelled from Mercia in 829 after the defeat by Wessex, but recovered the kingdom in 830 (Fryde, *et al.*, 1986: 17).

840.[31] Wigstan was buried in the mausoleum at Repton, as his grandfather had been before him, where he could be promoted by both the Church and his family as a cult figure for the sanctity of kingship. For Nelson, the promotion of such royal saints by the Church was a necessary endeavour at times of political weakness, with the aim of bringing stability by limiting royal assassinations.[32]

The origins of cult monuments

The veneration of a saint required a focus, usually the body or parts of it, and at sites where veneration was promoted this focus was often reinforced with a monument. The remains of the ornamented stone tomb-structures and shrines that survive from late eighth- and early ninth-century Mercia are testament to this tradition and to the development of monumental funerary display associated with the cult of saints across the early medieval West. As outlined in Chapter Three (pp. 66–7), the ancient tombs of Christian martyrs in Rome were a focal point for pilgrims from the fourth century, and were included in the design of new basilicas, whereby main altars marked the location of the saints' resting place.[33] The tombs were either in the altar, inaccessible or only accessible through small doors, or they lay directly below the main altar and could be accessed by subterranean passages.[34] The lasting popularity of these arrangements and an opposition to relic relocation ensured that Anglo-Saxon pilgrims to Rome in the seventh century would still have encountered largely invisible tombs, in or beneath altars.[35] This enduring Roman tradition of subterranean access to saints' tombs influenced church building in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria during the seventh century. Indeed, links with Frankish Gaul and its innovations in cult funerary monuments, which had begun to occur there from the late fifth century, appear to have had limited influence in Northumbria.[36] Of these Gallic innovations, the two most important and influential for the understanding of later Mercian developments in cult activity were the

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[31] Thacker, 1985: 12; Rollason, 1981: 7–10.

[32] Nelson, 1973: 40; Rollason, 1981: 14.

[33] Thacker, 2000: 249.

[34] Jacobsen, 1997: 1127; Thacker, 2000: 249.

[35] Thacker, 2002a: 62; Krautheimer, 1980: 82. For a discussion of Roman opposition to the removal and translation of corporeal relics, see Thacker, 2000: 250 and Smith, 2000: 317–39. That there was still a degree of superstition surrounding the translation of saints' relics, even in areas that were not opposed to it, see Gregory of Tours, *Glory of the Martyrs*, 64.

[36] The impact of Wilfrid's journeys to Rome in the seventh century can be seen in his monastic foundations at Hexham and Ripon, both of which were designed with subterranean crypts for the veneration of saints (Crook, 2002: 208; Levison, 1946: 33–6). Gallic influence did reach southern England in the sixth century at Canterbury, where a church dedicated to St. Martin, the celebrated bishop of Tours, served King Æthelberht of Kent's Merovingian wife Bertha (Thacker, 2000: 257; Levison, 1946: 34; Bede, *HE* iii. 4).

act of translation and, by the seventh century, the positioning of adorned free-standing shrines and tomb-structures above ground in churches, in a visible position as the focus for large scale ceremonies.[37] Translations such as that of Bishop Gregory of Langres (d. 540) into a newly built apse at the church of St. John in Dijon acted as official inaugurations of cults, with tombs as the foci for veneration.[38] From as early as the late fifth century there are instances of translation described by Gregory of Tours, in which the position of a new tomb is marked by a specific monument. In the 470s Bishop Euphronius of Autun (472–475) gave a large block of stone to the memorial church at Tours to mark the new position of St. Martin's tomb.[39] This was still standing in the sixth century, covered with a *palla*, and early in the seventh century the monument was adorned with gold and gems at the request of the Frankish king Dagobert (629–634).[40] Similarly, the late fifth-century tomb for the recently translated remains of Bishop Dionysius in Paris was marked by a *tugurium*, a 'small house' with a gabled roof, the prominent front face of which was lavishly adorned in the seventh century by King Dagobert.[41] Similar translations continued to occur in Gaul during the seventh century, and are thought to have provided the model and inspiration for the popularity of the tradition in Mercia.[42] As in Mercia two generations later, the promotion of cults in Gaul through monumental display appears to have been politically motivated and highly localised, albeit largely through episcopal activity rather than direct secular or royal intervention.[43] The transmission of Gallic innovations into England was likely facilitated by the number of Anglo-Saxon princesses who entered the monastic life abroad and enjoyed close relationships with their siblings in English monasteries.[44]

The earliest detailed account of a translation in southern England is that of Æthelthryth (d. 679) who had been abbess at Ely and whose remains in 695 were

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[37] For the earliest translations in the West implemented by Bishop Ambrose of Milan in the late fourth century, see Chapter Three and Thacker, 2002b: 11–12.

[38] Thacker, 2002a: 55.

[39] Jacobsen, 1997: 1108.

[40] *op. cit.*, 1109.

[41] *op. cit.*, 1110. Gregory of Tours described how a soldier slipped from the gabled roof of this monument to his death (*Glory of the Martyrs*, 71).

[42] There are three exceptional instances of translation in Northumbria during the seventh century: St. Cuthbert in 698 (Bede *HE*, iv. 30), St. Aidan in 664 (Bede, *HE*, iii. 17) and St. Cedd (Bede, *HE*, iii. 22), discussed in Thacker, 2002a: 46–8.

[43] Nelson, 1995: 389; Crook, 2002: 198. The Merovingian kings are known to have established churches in commemoration of their particular branch of the family, some of which were very lavish, though of an earlier date: the two highly furnished sixth-century graves under Cologne cathedral and those under St. Denis in Paris, dating from the sixth and early seventh century (James, 1992: 247–53; Périn, 1992: 255–64; Werner, 1964: 201–16). The seventh-century activities of King Dagobert in connection to the embellishment of saints' tombs have been outlined above.

[44] Bede, *HE*, iii. 8. See Thacker, 2002a: 58–9 for a discussion of the links between the seventh-century English abbesses of Francia and their royal connections.

translated by her successor Seaxburh to a new sepulchre in the abbey church.[45] Of interest in this account is Seaxburh's order that blocks of stone be sought with which to make a suitable coffin – but a beautiful white marble coffin complete with a lid that had been found outside the walls of the Roman fort of *Grantchester* (modern Cambridge) was used instead.[46] Evidence that extant Roman sarcophagi were appropriated for use as sepulchres for Anglo-Saxon saints shows that there was a desire to have aesthetically prestigious monuments as a focus for veneration within churches. This was certainly the case in Merovingian Gaul where such monuments are often described in the written sources as being richly adorned with precious metals and jewels.[47] It was a similar desire for conspicuous monumental commemoration that saw the development of the ornamented stone cenotaphs and sarcophagi produced in Mercia during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. As will be shown, the form of the monuments that make up this Mercian corpus appears, at least partly, to draw on the Merovingian style of substantial, architectural structures often described in the primary sources as 'little houses'.[48]

Whilst the Mercian tradition of sepulchral display had its origins in earlier Merovingian practices, its flourishing in the late eighth and early ninth centuries was not part of a more widespread contemporary revival of monumental stone sepulchres. There are few contemporary examples outside Anglo-Saxon England with which the Mercian tradition might be compared.[49] The closest parallels are to be found in the dukedoms of Lombard Italy, but even these examples are most similar to the Mercian material in their politically motivated origins rather than their artistic style, as is explored later in this chapter. Thus, the commemorative stone monument commissioned by King Ratchis of Friuli at Cividale, c. 737–744, for his father Duke Pemmo is not a

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[45] Bede, *HE*, iv. 19; Thacker, 2002a: 45. An earlier possible translation in Mercia, alluded to by Bede, is that of Bishop Chad at Lichfield who died in 672 and was initially buried close to the church of St. Mary but later moved to the new episcopal church of St. Peter and into a wooden coffin in the shape of a house with apertures for pilgrims to access the holy dust contained therein (*HE*, iv. 3). The significance of this, particularly in relation to the sculpture found at Lichfield, is discussed further below.

[46] In addition, recovered Roman coffins from Westminster and Wharram Percy betray reuse in the Medieval and Viking periods (Lang, 1991: 222–3, ills. 882–4; Tweddle, Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1995: 230–1, ills. 355–7; Eaton, 2000: 78, fig. 35; Stocker, 2007: 271–87, 293–4).

[47] Crook, 2002: 198, 202.

[48] Crook, 2002: 201, 203. See for example the sarcophagi in the crypt of St. Paul's Abbey at Jouarre, particularly the house-shaped monument for Bishop Agilbert (Grabar, A., 1980: 23). The degree to which the form of the Mercian monuments also reflects contemporary fashions for reliquary shrines and enduring late Antique styles is discussed below.

[49] Within the British Isles, two notable examples outside Mercia are the early ninth-century panel at Hovingham (Yorkshire), thought to be from a box-shrine (see Hawkes, 1993: 354–60) and the eighth-century St. Andrews sarcophagus in Scotland. The latter has been shown to bear no direct technical or artistic affinity to contemporary funerary sculpture on the Continent. For an evaluation of the evidence see discussions by James, 1998 and Henderson, I., 1994.

tomb-structure but an altar and is part of a long tradition in Italy of marking saints' graves with altars (Ills. 3.29–3.32).[50] The few surviving fragments of Lombard sarcophagi that remain, for example at Civitá Castellana in Lazio and Gussago in Brescia, betray a different artistic agenda to the Mercian material and cannot be seen to conform to a common repertoire of motifs or a specific political or artistic programme (Ills. 5.1 and 5.2).[51] As discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 79) they do, however, share a preference for late Antique styles, whereby figures and animals lack any structural arrangement and appear to float in the scene.[52]

Prior to the Carolingian annexation in 774, the Lombard dukes were concerned with establishing family cult centres at royal monastic foundations, as outlined in Chapter Three (pp. 74–5). The nunnery at San Salvatore in Brescia was founded by Desiderius and Ansa, with their eldest daughter as abbess, shortly before Desiderius' elevation to the throne in 757.[53] Nelson's description of foundations such as San Salvatore as being 'centres of prayer and commemoration' for their founding dynasty and for the future stability of the Lombard kingdom can be seen to mirror the activity of contemporary Mercian kings.[54] Documented connections between Mercia and Italy presented in Chapter One (pp. 45–8), such as that of Offa's granddaughter Eadburh who retired to be an abbess in an Italian nunnery in 802, illustrate the potential avenues of political ideas-exchange between the two areas.[55] However, as is apparent in the sculpture and sites discussed below, whilst the motivation behind commemoration and dynastic promotion might have been similar, the form and style of monuments produced in Mercia developed independently from the Lombard sculptural tradition, reflecting different artistic and iconographic concerns.[56] The following sections explore how the development of Mercian monuments corresponds with what is understood about the veneration of saints in the kingdom, and to what extent it was innovative in its approach to artistic content and social function.

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[50] Tagliaferri, 1981: 203–9, pls. LXXXI–XCVII; Jacobsen, 1997: 1127.
[51] Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966: pl. LXIV; Serra, 1974: pl. XXXI.
[52] See for example, a fourth-century sarcophagi from Toulouse showing a rustic scene (Duval *et al.*, 1991: 276).
[53] Nelson, 1998: 173–4; Yorke, 2005: 45.
[54] Nelson, 1998: 174.
[55] Keynes, 1997: 115; Yorke, 2005: 45. Brescia also lay on one of the major routes that would have been followed by Anglo-Saxons visitors to Rome, as discussed in Chapter One (pp. 45–8).
[56] In particular, the limited Lombard tradition of figural carving in stone appears not to have continued after the Carolingian take-over in 774. This has prompted scholars to re-evaluate the importance of stone sculpture in relation to other media now lost, including stucco (see discussion below) (Henderson, I., 1994: 87; Harbison, 1992: 328–9).

Mercian monuments

Sarcophagi

The sarcophagi of Mercia are represented by the remains of two surviving examples – at Wirksworth and Derby in Derbyshire. The underlying distinction between these two monuments and those that make up the group of cenotaphs discussed in Part Two below, is the notion that they were designed with the primary function of containing a corpse, as a reliquary coffin. This is not only evident from their shape but is supported by the contexts in which they were found. Both monuments are skilfully decorated, suggesting that they were intended to be seen and to provide a focus for veneration. They are unique in the body of Mercian sepulchral material: in terms of form and ornament, the sarcophagus from Derby is the only complete example of its type from within the kingdom and is distinguished by its complete lack of figural ornament; and the Wirksworth slab has no direct parallel in Mercia, with much of its iconography providing the earliest known representation of its kind in Western art. However, the monuments at these two sites point to an important and strategic group of Mercian saints venerated in the northern territories of the kingdom.[57] Despite the limited surviving sculptural representation of this northern group of cult sites, they are stylistically distinct from the remains of the cenotaphs in central and eastern Mercia.

The slab at Wirksworth was discovered in the early decades of the nineteenth century and has since received much scholarly attention, most notably by art historians who have highlighted the artistic and iconographical peculiarities of its style and composition (Ill. 4.26).[58] Although thought to be missing the left-most section, the slab is decorated with a sequence of biblical scenes and religious motifs that suggest the monument was designed according to a specific iconographic programme, one that had a female focus and one which might reflect on the individual it commemorated.[59] Despite some conflicting interpretations regarding some of the scenes, particularly those that are incomplete such as the first scene of the lower register, the iconography of the

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[57] Including Wystan at Repton, Derbyshire; Werburg at Hanbury, and Wulflæd and Rufinus at Stone, both in Staffordshire.

[58] Kurth, 1945; Radford, 1961: 209; Cockerton, 1962; Harbison, 1987b; Hawkes, 1995b. During nineteenth-century repairs to the church of St. Mary the Virgin in Wirksworth, the slab was found beneath the paving in front of the altar, inverted above a stone-built grave containing an inhumation (Rawlins, 1821: 402). The slab was first published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Rawlins, 1821: 401–2) and has been included in most accounts of Mercian sculpture since. For a comprehensive overview, see Rollason, 1996: 35–48.

[59] The slab is coped and divided into two horizontal registers by a raised ridge but otherwise lacks any form of architectural framing or compartmentalisation, so that individual scenes within the crowded arrangement are identified solely by the positioning of the figures within them.

slab has been reconstructed.[60] Jane Hawkes has shown that of the eight scenes represented on the slab only one – that of the *Majestas Agni* or Symbolic Crucifixion – is thought to reflect possible direct eighth-century western artistic influences in its combination of elements.[61] Rather, in line with the findings of the previous chapter, the scenes generally show a reliance on early Eastern artistic models, not only for the choice of subject, but also the figural style of carving.[62] Sixth-century prototypes from the eastern Mediterranean and the Syro-Palestinian provinces have been identified, and are dominated by portable artworks such as illuminated manuscripts, metalwork and reliquaries that are likely to have been circulating in the West as models in artistic centres from the seventh to the early ninth century.[63] So, for example, comparison can be made between the details of the Wirksworth scene showing Christ washing the Disciples' feet, and those in the late sixth-century Rossano Gospel (Rossano, Calabria, Museo del Arcievescovado, MS 50, f. 3r), both of which are thought to have been influenced by early Eastern prototypes (Ill. 5.3).[64] Eastern influences can also be discerned in the scenes on the Wirksworth slab depicting Christ's descent into Hell and the Ascension. Both can be compared, stylistically, to metalwork from the East, such as a silver and niello reliquary from Byzantium or Syria, dated to c. 700, which provides a model for the image of coffins containing half-length figures as seen in Christ's descent into Hell;[65] and a sixth-century plate from Syria showing the distinctive feature whereby the angels grip the edge of the mandorla surrounding Christ during the Ascension, as they do on the Wirksworth slab, a feature otherwise limited to sixth-century contexts (Ill. 5.4).[66] In addition to early Eastern prototypes, the influence of late Antique and

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[60] See, for example, Cockerton, 1962: 11; Harbison, 1987b: 36, 38; Bailey, 1988: 12 and Hawkes, 1995b: 256. The scenes on the slab have been indentified as follows: left to right, the first complete scene of the upper register is Christ washing the disciples' feet (Routh, 1937: 41; Kurth, 1945: 117; Cockerton, 1962: 8–9; Bailey, 1988: 12; Hawkes, 1995b: 247–9). This is followed by a Symbolic Crucifixion with a lamb enthroned before a Cross flanked by the evangelists (Routh, 1937: 41; Kurth, 1945: 117–18; Cockerton, 1962: 9; Coatsworth, 1979: 58; Hawkes, 1995b: 249–52). The next scene is the burial procession of the Virgin (Routh, 1937: 41–2; Kurth, 1945: 118; Cockerton, 1962: 9–10; Bailey, 1988: 12–13; Hawkes, 1995b: 252–5). On the lower register, the first surviving scene is now thought to represent Christ's Descent into Hell (Cockerton, 1962: 11–12; Hawkes, 1995b: 255–6). The second scene depicts the Ascension of Christ into Heaven (Routh, 1937: 41; Kurth, 1945: 118; Cockerton, 1962: 12–13; Raw, 1967: 392; Hawkes, 1995b: 257–9). Following this is a scene showing the Annunciation (Routh, 1937: 41; Kurth, 1945: 117; Cockerton, 1962: 12–13; Bailey, 1988: 12; Hawkes, 1995b: 259–60). The last scene on the lower register is thought to depict the presentation of the Christ Child in the Temple (Kurth, 1945: 117; Hawkes, 1995b: 260–1).

[61] Hawkes, 1995b: 249–52.

[62] *op. cit.*, 261–2.

[63] *op. cit.*

[64] Schiller, 1972, pls. 69, 119; Hawkes, 1995b: 248. The positions of the figures, the posture of Christ and details such as the inclusion of a towel around Christ's waist are thought to betray early Eastern models for the scene (Hawkes, 1995b: 248).

[65] Schiller, 1971a, pl. 101; Hawkes, 1995b: 256.

[66] Schiller, 1972: pl., 322; Hawkes, 1995b: 257.

Italo-Byzantine art can be seen on the Wirksworth slab scenes depicting the Symbolic Crucifixion, the Annunciation and the Presentation of Christ. Parallels for the style and arrangement of these scenes have been identified in fifth- and sixth-century mosaics in Rome, in the apses of SS. Cosmas and Damian, S. Maria Maggiore, and in sixth-century Byzantine carved ivories, such as a diptych from Milan and the throne of Maximian in Ravenna (Ill. 3.13).[67]

Stylistic analysis of the scenes on the Wirksworth slab suggests an unusual appropriation and interpretation of early models. This interpretation appears to have occurred independently of contemporary iconographic developments on the Continent, and is quite distinct from the style of the other surviving Mercian sepulchral sculpture which, as will be shown, is more architectural in its design.[68] In this respect, the crowded arrangement of the Wirksworth slab, with its lack of architectural partitioning, is more closely comparable to late Antique sarcophagi, such as the fourth-century monuments in Arles or those in the Terme Museum and the Lateran in Rome (Ills. 5.5 and 5.6).[69] The few Lombard sarcophagi that appear to have continued this style into the early ninth century employ neither the formal grouping within registers seen on the Wirksworth slab, nor the complexity of iconography.[70] In conjunction with the unique use and adaptation of early iconography, the arrangement of the imagery at Wirksworth into two continuous registers should be understood as part of the original design and intended meaning of the monument. The combination of scenes on the slab reflects specific iconographic references, notably Christ's redemption of mankind and the rewards of humility, both of which ultimately point to the Resurrection.[71] This would have been emphasised when the slab was in its original complete state, as the central motifs would have been the Symbolic Crucifixion above the Ascension.[72] In addition, Hawkes argued that prominence was placed on the individual virtues of the Virgin in the selection and arrangement of the motifs on the slab; the virtues of humility and

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[67] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 120; Schiller, 1971a: pl. 71; 1971b: pls. 230, 594; Hawkes 1995b: 250, 260.

[68] The St. Andrews sarcophagus, of comparable date, is another notable example which appears to lack evidence of direct continental iconographical or technical influence. See James, 1998: 240–9 for a full discussion.

[69] Coburn Soper, 1937: figs. 1, 4–6; Duval *et al.*, 1991: 274.

[70] As previously mentioned, examples of early ninth-century sarcophagi include the fragments at Gussago near Brescia and Civitá Castellana in the diocese of Lazio (Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966: fig. 212; Serra, 1974: fig. 55).

[71] Hawkes, 1995b: 271–4.

[72] *op. cit.*, 273–4.

obedience that may reflect on the individual originally associated with the slab, and the potential audience of the monument.[73]

The condition of the carving suggests that the slab was originally positioned within a church and its discovery near an interment positioned at the eastern end of the church near the altar, supports the idea that the slab was commissioned to commemorate a person of importance.[74] The arrangement of the slab's imagery into two registers, one above the other, implies not only that the slab was designed to be viewed from one angle, arguably above, but that it was intended to be considered as a whole.[75] This arrangement can be contrasted with the steeply pitched roof of the Peterborough cenotaph, which can only be viewed on all sides if the viewer moves around the monument. The arrangement of the Wirksworth slab suggests that it was possibly positioned at floor level in the church, inviting viewers to kneel before it where, in contemplating the imagery on the monument, they would be reminded of their own duty to a life of humility, and the example of the honoured deceased. There is no supportive documentary evidence that might identify the individual commemorated at Wirksworth, but the recognition of the female focus in the slab's iconography might point to a community of women, or a double monastery at Wirksworth in the late eighth or early ninth centuries.[76] The earliest documentary source relating to Wirksworth is a charter from 835, recording its economic importance as a centre for lead mining. Abbess Cynewara granted land there to Hunbert in exchange for an annual amount of lead for Christ Church in Canterbury.[77]

In contrast to Wirksworth, Derby, where the second sarcophagus is located, is known from the written records to have been a site for the cult of Alkmund, a Northumbrian prince who died c. 800.[78] The broadly rectangular sarcophagus, just over

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[73] *op. cit.* In particular, attention has been drawn to the Dormition scene on the slab, which is the earliest known representation in the West and alludes to a developed degree of devotion to the Virgin (Hawkes, 1995b: 253, Clayton, 1990: 157). This interest in representing the Virgin as an individual, rather than the Mother of God (*Theotokos*), is a popular theme in the ornament of Mercian sculpture, as discussed in the previous chapter. For an overview of the cult of the Virgin in Mercia, see Clayton, 1990: pp. 151–7.

[74] Kurth, 1945: 114–15; Rollason, 1989: 44; Hawkes, 1995b: 273; Crook, 2002: 198; Blair, 2005: 165. In the late seventh century St. Cuthbert was buried in a stone coffin beneath the church at Lindisfarne. It is likely that his grave was marked, quite possibly by an ornately carved slab (Bede, *HE*, iv. 29).

[75] Kurth, 1945: 114.

[76] Hawkes, 1995b: 274. Cockerton, believing the slab to be of much earlier manufacture, speculated that the slab marked the grave of an early missionary, possibly that of Betti one of the four priests who accompanied Peada back to Mercia after his conversion in the early seventh century (Cockerton, 1962: 17–19; Bede, *HE*, iii. 21).

[77] Sawyer, 1968: no. 1624. Wirksworth had a church at least by the time of the Domesday Book, which records the presence of a church and a priest, in addition to three lead mines (Morgan, 1978: 272c).

[78] Blair, 2002b: 511. Numerous pieces of pre-conquest stone sculpture have been recovered from the church of St. Alkmund: at least seven were discovered during the demolition of the medieval building in 1843, and a number, including the sarcophagus, were uncovered during excavations in 1967–8 (Radford,

two meters in length, was found in the south-east corner of the nave with its upper edge level with the twelfth-century surface of the church pavement.[79] Each side of the sarcophagus, and the fragment of its lid that survives, is decorated with regular geometric interlace, framed by bands of further interlace that run up the chamfered corners and along the outermost edges of the lid (Ill. 5.7). There is no figural imagery on the surviving surfaces of the sarcophagus, distinguishing it from other Mercian sepulchral sculpture. The highly ornate nature of the design implies that the sarcophagus was intended to be on display and, as Radford noted, the dressed, flat bottom surface of the monument suggests it originally stood on the pavement in the church.[80] Although St. Alkmund is known to have died c. 800 fighting alongside a Hwiccan king at the Battle of Kempsford, annals incorporated into the twelfth-century *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham, record his initial burial at Lilleshall in Staffordshire before translation to Derby.[81] Whilst the lack of figural iconography on the sarcophagus might support a royal, secular martyr as opposed to a religious figure, the ornament is so dissimilar to that found in the repertoire of Mercian sepulchral sculpture that it is unlikely to be contemporary with St. Alkmund's death.[82] If the sarcophagus is associated that saint's cult, it likely reflects a translation date sometime in the second half of the ninth century.[83]

1976: 26–7, 44). In 1937, Routh included in his survey of the pre-Conquest carved stones of Derbyshire five of the fragments found in the nineteenth century. Three of these are in the Derby Museum and the other two are mounted in the fabric of the Victorian porch (Routh, 1937: 23–7).

[79] Radford, 1976: 45.

[80] *op. cit*. If it had stood directly above the position it was found in, the sarcophagus would have been located in the traditional position at the east end of the nave near the altar, as a visible focus for veneration. Subsequent to its presumed deliberate burial sometime before the twelfth century, the sarcophagus appears to have retained its importance as venerated object, for a burial was discovered adjacent to it, suggesting it had been placed in the honoured position, *ad limina sancti* (Radford, 1976: 35; Biddle, 1986: 7–8).

[81] Radford, 1976: 55.

[82] The form and ornament on the Derby sarcophagus can mostly closely be compared to that of the late ninth-, early tenth-century sarcophagus at Govan which bears figural scenes in addition to abstract designs (Spearman, 1994: 38, fig. 14).

[83] Biddle has proposed that the sarcophagus might in fact have contained the body of the ealdorman Æthelwulf of Berkshire, who was buried at Derby in 871 (Biddle, 1986: 7). The other fragments of sculpture found at the church display a Scandinavian influence in their style, possibly as a result of the incursions into the region in the later part of the ninth century. See for example Routh, 1937: pl. XI A and B. The two fragments mounted in the porch wall are of unknown date but are of a different style to the rest of the material from the church. Routh proposed a date of the eleventh century for these pieces (Routh, 1937: 25–7, pl. XIII A and B). By late in 873, the invading Scandinavian army had established a base at Repton, after twelve months occupation of Torksey in Lindsey, further along the River Trent (Whitelock, 1965: 48; Stenton, 1971: 251). It is likely that the church at Derby was already well established before it was furnished with the standing crosses, of which only fragments now survive, and the elaborate sarcophagus for the remains of a saint whose cult needed a new, monumental focus. Radford inferred from the archaeological evidence that the origins of the church were in the period before 800 (1976: 34–5).

Both the slab at Wirksworth and the sarcophagus at Derby point to a tradition of ornate sculptural commemoration and a revival of classicising styles in the northern territories of Mercia during the late eighth and ninth centuries. At Wirksworth, the slab almost certainly covered a grave, providing a permanent visual reminder to the onlooker of the virtues to which they should aspire. The complex iconography of the slab would have invited engagement with the venerated dead and been recognised as a focus for contemplation. In contrast, the sarcophagus at Derby did not require a complex programme of imagery, with the size and form of the monument itself, standing within the east end of the church, creating a large physical focus. The monolithic style of construction apparent in both sarcophagi distinguishes them from the second group of sepulchral stone monuments.

Cenotaphs and shrines

As outlined above in the overview of tomb-shrine development in the West (pp. 157–60), the Mercian cenotaphs and shrines should be understood as the product of a long history of commemorative monuments, and a reflection of contemporary interest in relics and reliquaries. The Mercian cenotaphs and shrines are distinguished from the sarcophagi of the previous section through their form and ornament, which point to a unique visual approach to commemoration. The carved sarcophagi demonstrate a focus on the body through their evocative coffin shape. In contrast, the cenotaphs are more architectural in design, complementing the repertoire of contemporary portable reliquaries, acting as monuments to the symbolic nature of sanctity and veneration – the form of which did not require a complete corpse.

The remains of panelled shrines and house-shaped cenotaphs provide evidence for a style of Mercian sepulchral sculpture that extended to key cult sites in the Mercian heartland and periphery landscapes. This style includes two key elements. First, a preference for architecturally framed figures that reflect existing Anglo-Saxon artistic traditions and the appropriation of late Antique funerary models together with contemporary continental derivatives found in carved ivories and sarcophagi. The second element is the focused use of highly ornate non-figural decorative designs which testify to the role of these monuments as aggrandised imitations of high-status portable objects, including reliquaries, which were circulating on the Continent during the late eighth and early ninth centuries. These elements combined to create a series of

authoritative monuments with potential political undertones, which not only shed light on the propagandist dimension to funerary sculpture, but also reiterate the inherent link between the Mercian Church and contemporary secular royal authority.

The cenotaph panels

The discovery in 2003 of the Lichfield Angel provided significant new evidence to support the existence of panelled cenotaphs that were not designed as sarcophagi but as box-shrines.[84] The Lichfield panel preserves no sign of a base, suggesting the original monument would have acted as a cover to whatever sacred remains were housed within.[85] Despite differing opinions amongst some scholars as to the original function of the panels, it is argued here that those surviving at Castor, Fletton, Peterborough, Breedon and South Kyme are the remains of similar box-shrines or cenotaphs. This opinion was shared by Cramp and Bailey.[86] However, in 1999 Lang suggested that the arcaded panels mounted in the interior walls of the church at Breedon were unlikely to have formed part of a shrine.[87] More recently, Mitchell has also implied that the panels at Breedon, Castor and Fletton were architectural in function, an argument which is critiqued here.[88] Indeed, it will be shown that at these three sites the very particular and consistent form and range of motifs used on the panels points to their original function as funerary monuments. Apart from the fragments at South Kyme, which are incomplete and dominated by geometric and interlace ornament, the panels at all of the sites discussed here share a common single motif; that of full-length figures contained by, but not engaging with, architectural arcading. Breedon, Castor, Fletton and Peterborough each have panels which are comparable for their arrangement of these full-length figures within the individual niches of a continuous arcade.

At Breedon, three of these panels survive, all now re-set into the fabric of the church's interior; two in the southern end of the east wall, both containing three figures (Ills. 4.113 and 4.114), and one, depicting two figures, re-set in the eastern end of the

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[84] Cramp, 2006a: 4; Hawkes in Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 64.

[85] Hawkes in Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 64.

[86] Cramp, 1977: 211, 218; Bailey, 1980b: 19. Sidebottom described the three panels at Breedon merely as 'fragments of a free-standing monument', but agreed that they were part of a wider distribution of monuments (Sidebottom, 2000: 214).

[87] Lang, 1999: 281. This argument, mirroring Jewell's earlier assertion that the panels were connected with an altar (1982: 288), was partly based on the iconography of the panels, which is re-assessed below (pp. 174–5). Clapham had earlier suggested the figure panels at Breedon had formed the reredos of an altar, and suggested a similar purpose for the panels at Castor and Fletton (Clapham, 1930: 74).

[88] Mitchell, 2010 and forthcoming.

wall of the south aisle (Ill. 4.115).[89] These three arcaded panels have received little attention in their own right, frequently constituting only a minor part in discussions of the sculptural collection as a whole, and often over-shadowed by a focus on the extensive lengths of extant frieze and the other carved panels that survive at the site.[90] Consequently, the important contribution these panels offer to our understanding of the artistic and iconographical influences on Mercian funerary monuments has been largely overlooked. After the cenotaph at Peterborough, the three panels at Breedon represent the most complete survival of one or more box shrines at a single site in Mercia, and provide supportive evidence for the existence of a peculiarly Mercian fashion for the dominance of apostolic figural ornament on monumental cult sculpture.

Stylistically the three panels are very similar to each other, but quite distinct from the other carved panels at Breedon that depict full-length figures, as explored in the previous chapter. In each of the three shrine panels the robed, nimbed figures are shown in semi-profile with feet alighting to convey movement in the same direction across the panel. Thus, in the two larger panels, the figures are seen to be processing right, and in the third panel, the figures are processing left. The long bulky robes worn by all the figures are consistent in style so that the front hem is raised on each figure to show the feet, and on each a fold of drapery is looped over one arm. Each figure carries either a book or scroll and has shoulder-length hair and drilled eyes. One of the panels, however (Ill. 4.114), shows two variations in detail. As Cramp observed, additional shorter hems denote over-garments on the two leftmost figures, and the figure on the right appears to be bald with a distinctly forked beard.[91] Otherwise, all three panels are remarkably similar. Certainly, the arcading employed on each is of the same design, with stepped bases, ornate, fringed columns and shallow arches springing from decorative capitals.

Apostle arcades

Whilst not dispersed across the whole of England, the depiction of groups of apostles on Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture was by no means confined to Mercia and can be seen in

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[89] Clapham's 1928 account of the sculpture at Breedon shows that at that time the panels were mounted outside: two on the east face of the south porch, and one on the external east wall (Clapham, 1928: pl. XXXIX, figs. 1 and 2).

[90] Most notable is the comparatively minor role played by these apostle panels in Jewell's masterly appraisal of the Breedon sculpture in his doctoral thesis of 1982. Indeed, in the rare instances where discussion of the Breedon sculpture has focused on a single piece or small group of pieces, the apostle panels invariably lose out to the frieze-work and other fragments. See for example, Jewell, 1986: 95–115; Parsons, 1976–7: 40–3; Bailey, 1988.

[91] Cramp, 1977: 218.

the sculpture of Northumbria, for example on the cross-shafts at Easby, Masham, Otley, Dewsbury and Collingham.[92] Where groups of apostles are depicted on Northumbrian cross-shafts, they are often framed within arched niches; most commonly as busts or three-quarter length figures, in clusters, as at Easby, or individually, as at Otley. Where full-length apostles are shown within arcading, such as on the early ninth-century round cross-shaft at Masham, they are but one component in an iconographical programme that often incorporates other biblical figures and scenes relevant to the function, and intended audience, of the monument.[93] The other noticeable distinction between the Northumbrian representations of full-length apostles in arcading and those from Mercia is one of form and arrangement. In the examples from Northumbria, the apostles are confined to cross-shafts and are largely shown standing in pairs.[94] This distinction is key in understanding the different relationship apostle iconography had to the cross-shafts in Northumbria compared to the sepulchral monuments in Mercia. The pairing of apostle figures on Northumbrian sculpture, and their juxtaposition with other figures and scenes, is illustrative of their supporting role within the overarching iconography of the monuments. What the panels at Breedon demonstrate, through the sole use of apostle figures and their arrangement in individual niches of the arcade is an emphasis on the iconography of the apostles themselves.[95] As with the Northumbrian sculpture, this is inherently linked to the function and audience of the monument, and at Breedon this points to the use of the panels within a funerary context, as is outlined below.

Representations of the apostles with Christ were widespread in Western art from the fourth century onwards, undergoing a notable revival during the late eighth century under Pope Leo III (798–99), as discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 83–7).[96] However, the

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[92] Collingwood, 1927: 41, figs. 13 and 52; Lang, 1999: 271; Lang, 2000: 109–19; Lang, 2001: ills. 195, 196, 597–600; Henderson, G., 2007b: 482–3; Coatsworth, 2008: ills. 166–9, 196, 197, 558 and 564.

[93] At Masham, the upper register of the column depicts the twelve apostles and Christ enthroned. The lower registers depict scenes from the Old Testament which, Hawkes has argued, emphasised the specific iconographical message of the whole monument: the institution of the Church founded on Christ, his teachings and his redemption (Hawkes, 2002: 341–3). See also Lang, 1999 for a similar line of argument discussing the link between the role of apostles and the iconography of cross-shafts.

[94] The exception to this is the early ninth-century panel at Hovingham discussed below. For a full discussion of the iconography of this monument, see Hawkes, 1993: 354–60. These distinctions are evidence with which to challenge Kendrick's assumption that Mercian sculpture, and indeed any sculpture outside Northumbria, was a direct product of that kingdom's tradition (Kendrick, 1938: 169, 205).

[95] Indeed, the arrangement of the Breedon Apostles into groups of three might indicate a numerical emphasis, also apparent in a composition by Bede, in which he described the Apostles as Christ's 'four times three cohort', and can be seen in sculptural representations of the Apostles on the west face of the Moone Cross in Co. Kildare and on the Easby Cross in north Yorkshire (Henderson, G., 2007b: 481–2, fig. 39; Lapidge, 1993: 2–3).

[96] Henderson: G., 2007b: 473–94; Hawkes, 2002b: 345; Krautheimer, 1980: 124, 128; Noble, 1984: 323–4. Monumental compositions with Christ flanked by his disciples are first seen in evidence from the end of the fourth century, although they can be found on sarcophagi from as early as the middle to late fourth

placing of apostles in arcading does not appear to have been a common arrangement at the time it was used on the panels at Breedon, the panel fragment at Castor and the cenotaph at Peterborough in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. As presented in Chapter Four (pp. 130–1), the motif can occasionally be found in painted schemes from this period, most notably in the Assembly Hall at the monastic site of S. Vincenzo al Volturno in central Italy.[97] Of particular interest, however, is the adaptation of the motif for use on several contemporary portable reliquaries. The Engers reliquary has on one side half-length figures of Christ between two angels and the Virgin between the Apostles Peter and Paul, all within arcading, and a ninth-century embossed silver reliquary from Cividale shows Christ and the Virgin flanked by Peter and Paul, again in individual arcading (Ill. 5.8).[98] Whilst these contemporary examples demonstrate that apostle arcades were not confined to Mercian sculpture, it is worth noting that the use of full-length figures, a consistent component of Mercian shrine-panels, was extremely limited.

Indeed, as highlighted in the previous chapter (p. 96–7), the inspiration for the Breedon panels appears to have come from earlier models provided by late Antique columnar sarcophagi such as the late fourth-century marble sarcophagus of bishop Liberius III (d. 387) re-used as an altar in the church of S. Francesco, Ravenna (Ill. 5.9), and a fifth-century example from Narbonne on which the apostles are each standing in the niche of a continuous arcade.[99] Whilst it is not possible to ascertain which particular sarcophagi were seen by early medieval craftsman, Roman and late Antique sarcophagi were known and available to the Anglo-Saxons, as has been stated above in relation to the account of Æthelthryth's translation. Similarly, there is evidence that such sarcophagi were utilised on the Continent for the bodies of Charlemagne, buried at Aachen, and Louis the Pious, buried at Metz.[100] Certain stylistic details of the Breedon panels also point to late Antique artistic sources. In the previous chapter (p. 131), the lozenge and *pelta* ornament on the columns of the arcading were shown to derive from late Antique models, such as the panels on the sixth-century throne of Maximian in

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century (Teasdale Smith, 1970: 167–8). One early monumental example that might have provided a model for Anglo-Saxon artists is the *fastigium* gifted to the basilica of St. John of the Lateran in the later fourth century, which included five feet high figures of the twelve apostles in beaten silver (Teasdale Smith, 1970: 149–75; Hawkes, 2006: 104–14; Mitchell, forthcoming).

[97] Mitchell, forthcoming; Hodges, 1995: fig. 3.16, pl. 3.8. Another example (see Chapter Four, pp. 130) is the painted scene of the Last Judgement on the west wall of the church of St. Johann at Müstair in Switzerland although, as Mitchell pointed out, the twelve Apostles are seated (Mitchell, forthcoming; Hubert, Porcher and Volbach, 1970, fig. 23). There do not seem to be any parallels in manuscript art (Lang, 1999: 271).

[98] Hubert, Porcher and Volbach, 1970, figs. 193 and 315; Lasko, 1972: pl. 8.

[99] Christern-Briesenick *et al.*, 2003: no. 389, pl. 95. 5; Lawrence, 1932: 171.

[100] Steigemann and Wemhoff, 1999: nos. X.41 and X.42.

Ravenna.[101] Similarly, the shallow, crescent-shaped arches, which also appear on the Cividale casket mentioned above, appear to derive from late Antique styles, such as the silver fourth-century Projecta's casket from Rome, now in the British Museum (Ill. 5.10).[102] Mercian patrons and sculptors were drawing on a familiarity with late Antique funerary objects, whereby sarcophagi provided the precedent for the arrangement of full-length apostles in arcading, with certain details echoing small-scale and probably more accessible models in the form of portable reliquaries.

In line with the findings of the previous chapter, elements on the Breedon panels demonstrate a stylistic affinity with other contemporary artworks, particularly non-plastic art. This shows that the sculptors were not merely imitating late Antique models, but rather adapting them for use within the current artistic milieu and to suit their needs. Kendrick first drew attention to the parallels between the heart-shaped capitals on the arcading of the Breedon panels and decoration in the Book of Cerne – parallels that the previous chapter has explored (pp. 140–1).[103] Similarities between the Breedon panels and this ninth-century Mercian manuscript also extend to the drapery, which Jewell described as an 'uncompromisingly linear system of drapery fold'.[104] It was undoubtedly such parallels that led Kendrick to conclude that 'the Midland sculptural style followed manuscript style'.[105]

However, as might be expected from the conclusions of the previous chapter, additional stylistic details point to an appropriation of contemporary artistic ideas from outside the Mercian orbit. The peculiarly flared hems of the Breedon apostles, emphasising their directional movement, are not seen elsewhere in Mercian figure carving but have been compared to those of the apostles in the ninth-century mosaic at S. Maria in Domnica in Rome (see Chapter Three, p. 85).[106] This connection with Italy has been strengthened by the observation that both the rendition of the lower hem of the figures' drapery and the drilled eyes of the figures on the Mercian panels are

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[101] Jewell, 1982: 289; Beckwith, 1970: pl. 94. Whilst it is uncommon in Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture, the lozenge and *pelta* decoration on the arcading of the Breedon panels is paralleled in contemporary manuscript art, including the Cuthbert Gospels (Paris Bibl. Nat. Cod. Lat. 1224, f. 18a), the Ada Gospels (Trier, Staatsbib. Cod. 22, f. 6b, 7a) and the Soissons Gospels (Paris, Bib. Nat. MS Lat. 8850, f. 123b) (Cramp, 1977: 218; Jewell, 1982: 289). A related form of lozenge and *pelta* ornament can also be seen decorating the outer border of the mid ninth-century Strickland brooch (Jewell, 1982: 290; Wilson, 1984: fig. 115).
[102] Jewell, 1982: 294; Hubert, Porcher and Volbach, 1970, fig. 39.
[103] Kendrick, T., 1938: 175, pl. 68.2; Cramp, 1977: 218; Jewell, 1982: 289; Brown, 1996.
[104] Jewell, 1982: 291.
[105] Kendrick, T., 1938: 168.
[106] Jewell, 1982: 291; Mitchell, forthcoming. A similar effect can be seen on the drapery of saints Peter and Paul in the early ninth-century mosaic of the S. Zeno chapel in S. Prassede (Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: fig. 201).

characteristic of eighth- and ninth-century Italian sculpture.[107] Whilst it seems unlikely that the Mercian artists would only borrow certain stylistic elements from an otherwise quite distinct Italian repertoire, such details can also be found on portable carved objects, such as the ivory diptych of David and Gregory the Great in the treasury at Monza (Ill. 5.11).[108] These types of objects, which were more accessible as artistic models due to their portable nature, represent a likely source for any adopted Italian motifs in the Mercian panels.

The fragmentary remains of another apostle arcade at Breedon can be seen mounted in the south wall of the nave (Ill. 5.12). Whilst there are a number of key stylistic differences between the figure in this panel and those on the other three, notably the lack of rounded arcading, the square flat column and the very stylised drapery, this piece is most likely a survivor from another free-standing box-shrine in the same general idiom.[109] The figure is nimbed, wearing robes and carries a covered book in his left hand whilst gesturing left towards the column of the trabeated arch with his right hand. This particular pose is not paralleled in other Mercian apostle panels, and is rare in contemporary figural art, where apostles carrying books in their left hand usually gesture to them with their right hand.[110] A close parallel for the pose is seen on a fifth-century sarcophagus from Arles, where a figure, without a halo, gestures to a cross on his left.[111] Figures in this pose are usually gesturing to draw the onlooker's eye towards another scene of importance. This can be seen on the front of the golden altar, c. 840, in the church of S. Ambrose in Milan, where an apostle carrying a book gestures down towards the panel below which depicts Christ in Majesty.[112] This composition suggests that the fragmentary Breedon panel might have had an upper register, but as the figure's face is not raised in the same direction, it is more likely that the figure was the last in a row which extended to the right, and that he is gesturing to the central figure of Christ.[113] This would be in keeping with the arrangement on the Peterborough cenotaph, discussed below (pp. 181–4), where Christ and the Virgin are the central figures in the

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[107] Mitchell compared these details on the Mercian panels with the mid-eighth century angel addressing Zachariah in the church of S. Sofia in Benevento (Mitchell, forthcoming; Rotili, 1986: pl. XLIV), the altar of Ratchis at Cividale, mentioned above, and a small ivory head of a saint from the monastery of S. Vincenzo al Volturno (Mitchell, 1992: 66–76; Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: 366, fig. 233).

[108] Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: fig. 241.

[109] An opinion shared by Cramp (1977: 210).

[110] The use of trabeated architecture in this way is also rare, with no apparent parallel in contemporary artworks.

[111] Coburn Soper, 1937: fig. 55.

[112] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: fig. 221.

[113] An alternative interpretation, put forward by Cramp, is that the figure's hand is raised in blessing (1977: 210). Whilst the hand is raised unusually high, above shoulder height, precedent for such a blessing might be sought in the blessing hand of the Breedon Angel, discussed in the previous chapter, p. 106.

arcade. The remains of the architectural design suggest there was space to the left of the column for a similar nimbed figure, possibly another apostle. In detail, this fragment appears to differ markedly from the other three panels at Breedon – unlike the arcading in the other panels, the architecture in this fragment is quite stark, lacking any embellishment. In contrast, the figure itself is delicately designed with none of the heaviness seen in the plain drapery of the other figures. The robes are stylised with striations that emphasise the way in which the garments are worn, with a sash across the body, and add a depth to the carving and shape to the figure.

The style of figure-carving finds close parallel in a fragment of apostle arcading mounted in the east wall of the north aisle of St. Kyneburg's church at Castor in Northamptonshire (Ill. 4.10).[114] The panel is in remarkable condition and shows one complete figure, and part of a second standing beneath a running arcade of rounded arches. The figure is bearded with drilled eyes and, as at Breedon, he is nimbed and wearing striated drapery crossing his body over a plain tunic that falls to his feet, through which the shape of his bent legs can be seen, echoing the style of the three complete Breedon panels. His feet are shown alighting; conveying a general sense of movement towards the right, and it is clear from the portion of the second figure in the next niche that it was positioned in a similar way, in the act of processing to the right. The complete figure carries a book in his left hand, here intricately decorated with what Henderson calls four 'triquetra', and motions across his body towards it and the direction of travel with his right hand.[115] In the style of its arcading, this fragment is like neither the crescent-shaped ornate style of the three complete Breedon panels or the plain trabeated form in the Breedon fragment. Although demonstrably within the same tradition as the Breedon panels, the Castor arcade exhibits a closer reliance on the style of late Antique columnar sarcophagi. In particular, the slender round-shafted columns and the foliate shoots in the springing of the arches have direct parallels in those earlier monuments and are closer in character to those on the Peterborough cenotaph.[116] The inclusion of foliate elements in these two schemes adds another dimension to the iconography of the apostle arcades on funerary monuments, as discussed below. These

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[114] The panel, which is only carved on one side, was found at the beginning of the twentieth century beneath the chancel pavement. At that time it was thought to have formed part of a tomb or a reredos (anon., 1942: 421).

[115] Henderson, 1997: 223.

[116] The slender columns can be seen on a fifth-century sarcophagus from Marseille (Christern-Briesenick *et al.*, 2003: no. 300, pl. 77.1) and one now in the Vatican (Deichmann, 1967: no. 55, pl. 18). Foliate springs can be seen on the previously mentioned sarcophagus from Narbonne (Christern-Briesenick *et al.*, 2003: no. 389, pl. 95.5).

are undoubtedly derived from late Antique tree sarcophagi such as the fifth-century example from Arles (Ill. 5.13) and one now in the Vatican in Rome.[117]

The iconography of apostle arcades

In Lang's argument for an alternative function for the Mercian arcaded panels, he debated whether apostles were a suitable theme for the iconography of a shrine.[118] Even without the precedent set by the late Antique sarcophagi, there is overwhelming evidence within the range of contemporary artworks associated with the cult of saints to dispute this. The popularity of apostles in the corpus of Mercian stone sculpture, and in particular within arrangements so closely paralleling that on the Peterborough cenotaph, supports their important iconographical role in Mercian memorial monuments.[119] The Peterborough cenotaph (see below, pp. 181–3) is the most explicit example, and one which best demonstrates the Mercian preference for apostle iconography on cult monuments. However, the association of the apostles with cult objects was not peculiar to Mercia, as discussed above (pp. 168–70). Their use on portable reliquaries on the Continent during the late eighth and early ninth centuries, such as the previously mentioned Engers reliquary, confirms this. And an earlier example is provided by the late seventh-century wooden coffin of St. Cuthbert, on which the twelve apostles are incised (Ill. 5.14).[120] This understanding need not conflict with Lang's reading of the apostles' pedagogic role in the iconography of Mercian monuments, but it does question his supposition that the panels at Breedon were emphasising the apostles' connection with Baptism and were thus part of a wall decoration associated with a font.[121]

The placing of the apostles within arcading, and particularly within foliate arcading, emphasises their traditional role in Christian iconography as living pillars of the Church, as described in St. Paul's letter to the Galatians and explained in Bede's commentary on the Temple of Solomon.[122] To the onlooker, the rows of apostles within a blossoming arcade on a shrine would have acted as a reminder of those 'who are strong in faith and work and elevated to heavenly things by contemplation'.[123] The onlooker would be encouraged to remember the sanctity of the deceased, and consider their own elevation through contemplation and dedication to Christ's teaching.

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[117] Coburn Soper, 1937: fig. 45; Lawrence, 1932: figs. 19 and 20; Deichmann, 1967: no. 60, pl. 19.
[118] Lang, 1999: 281.
[119] A conclusion also reached, independently, by Mitchell (forthcoming).
[120] Cronyn and Horie, 1989: fig. 19.
[121] Lang, 1999: 281.
[122] Galatians, 2: 9; Bede, *On the Temple*, 18.4; Lang, 1999: 280; Mitchell, forthcoming.
[123] Bede, *On the Temple*, 18.4. This iconography would have been reinforced by the fact that the 'living pillars' on the panel were carved in stone, an argument developed by Lang in relation to the apostles on the stone crosses or 'pillars' of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria (Lang, 1999: 272).

Similarly, the depiction of apostles signified their role as intercessors and the path to join the commune of saints that awaited the faithful through prayer.[124] Another layer of symbolism is provided by an additional interpretation of the arcaded figures as representing the souls that St. John saw under the altar in Revelations.[125] If the altar in this passage is understood to be the altar in God's Heavenly Temple, the arcaded apostles on the Mercian shrines would have provided a reminder to the onlooker of the promise of the Heavenly Kingdom, to which the deceased had been admitted and which awaits the pious.[126]

Panelled shrines without arcading

Apostle arcading was a favoured motif for Mercian panelled shrines, but fragmentary evidence from a number of other sites points to the diversity in form and content that existed in this group of monuments. At Fletton, near Peterborough, there are two panels mounted in the south wall of the chancel of St. Margaret's church that fit within the style of carving seen in the above shrine panels, and which are probably from a similar form of monument.[127] These panels are distinguished from the other examples by their depiction of a full-length robed figure under the arch of a distinct niche, which shows no evidence of once forming an arcade. In this respect, it is argued that the panels are not fragments from a larger single panel, but are the remains of a composite monument in which a number of similar panels sat in sequence to form a box-shrine.[128] One of the panels at Fletton depicts an apostle (Ill. 4.12), the other an angel (Ill. 4.11), and both are comparable in style to the figures discussed thus far, sharing a number of characteristic details. Both bear halos, have drilled eyes and are fully robed with a fold of drapery

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[124] Hahn, 1997: 1079–81.

[125] Revelation, 6: 9.

[126] Furthermore, the Book of Revelation also describes the New Jerusalem as laid out in a square, with twelve gates – three on each side – each guarded by an angel (21: 12–16). The arcading on the shrines might also have been designed to imitate the architectural style of many early stone altars which included arched openings and columns. See for example the late Antique altar in the church of S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna (Ill. 5.11) and the Carolingian hollow altar, formerly the high altar, in the crypt of Regensburg cathedral (Schutz, 2004: Fig. 1). Indeed, the painted wooden panel, 'The Mass of St. Giles' of c. 1500 now in the National Gallery (NG 4681), depicts the lost altarpiece presented to the Abbey church of St. Denis by Charles the Bald (823–877), and suggests that arcaded saints were an appropriate element for the decoration of altarpieces (Hinkle, 1965: pl. 20c; Heer, 1975: plate facing p. 74).

[127] Until c. 1900 these panels were mounted outside, as were the various fragments of a frieze (discussed in the previous chapter, pp. 120–1), now re-set into the interior east end wall above the altar (Pevsner, 1968: 246; Taylor, 1983).

[128] Both panels lack evidence for the architectural detailing, notably column bases or impost blocks, visible in the arcaded Apostle panels discussed above.

over one arm.[129] The apostle carries a scroll in his right hand, which is raised up away from his body in a similar position to that of the apostle on the panel fragment at Breedon, and is angled towards the left. The angel can be identified by the stylised wings with recognisable feather patterning that can be seen behind the figure. He is shown moving to the right, with his left hand gesturing in this direction, again held up and away from the body at shoulder height. In his right hand he carries a long slender staffed ending in a tri-lobed terminal. This foliate detail is comparable to that on the staff carried by the Breedon Angel (see Chapter Four, p. 181), although the two figures are otherwise quite different in style. The pose of the Fletton angel bears a closer similarity to that of the angel on the recently discovered shrine panel from Lichfield (Chapter Four, p. 105).[130] The inscription above the arched niche appears to identify the Fletton angel as St. Michael, making it unlikely that the panel at Fletton formed part of an Annunciation scene, as it is thought to have done at Lichfield.[131] Angels can appear in a funerary context without being part of an Annunciation scene. On St. Cuthbert's coffin a series of Archangels, at least one of which is carrying a foliate-terminal staff, are depicted on a side panel.[132] Without any indication of what other panels might have supported the apostle and the angel, it is impossible to reconstruct the original iconographic scheme at Fletton.

The arrangement whereby a number of small individual panels are combined in a single scheme to form part of a larger monument is hard to parallel in the corpus of early medieval stone sculpture and it is therefore probable that the Fletton panels were originally one panel and at some point split.[133] However, if the panels at Fletton were

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[129] The figures are shown in the action of alighting with bent knees and feet pointing to convey movement. The drapery is less stylised than that seen at both Castor and Breedon, although the linear style and the detailing of the front and back hems is discernible, creating a much more naturalistic sense of the figures' bodies and clothing.

[130] Rodwell, *et al.*, 2008: fig. 7, p. 69. Both are alighting and moving towards the right and each carries his staff over his right shoulder, though the Fletton angel holds the staff in his right hand and is gesturing with his left hand, and the Lichfield holds the staff with his left hand whilst giving a blessing with his right. Even allowing for weathering, the Fletton angel's drapery is depicted in a much simpler fashion, without the stylised folds of the Lichfield angel's robes.

[131] Okasha concluded that the style of the script offered tentative support for an eighth-century date for the inscription (1983: 92).

[132] Cronyn and Horie, 1989: fig. 20. Angels can be seen elsewhere in the Mercian corpus of sculpture, particularly in the group of crosses in Derbyshire where they are frequently included in the iconographic scenes on the cross-heads. For a recent appraisal see Hawkes, 2007: 431–47.

[133] Professor Rosemary Cramp was kind enough to show the author a photograph of the Fletton apostle panel taken (by Mr Don Macreath the archaeologist at Peterborough) before the sculpture was mounted inside the church. The thickness of the panel and its visibly planed sides, which are no longer visible, might support Professor Cramp's understanding (*pers comm.*) that the Fletton panels were in fact devotional icons comparable to the niched fresco figures at Mals, as discussed in the previous chapter (pp. 120–1). Mitchell has also suggested that the two Fletton panels were not part of a monument and that they would have been mounted in the interior walls, possibly either side of a window, in imitation of similar painted arrangements found in early Italian churches (Mitchell, forthcoming). However, the limited

combined in their current size to form a composite panel, their model would have been from within the tradition of ivory carving.[134] The most notable example is the above mentioned Episcopal throne of Maximian in Ravenna, on which a number of panels depicting full-length figures are juxtaposed to form a sequence – including on the front, the figure of St. John the Baptist between four Evangelists.[135] As the previous chapter demonstrated, models for individually-framed figures can be found in late Antique and contemporary carved ivory panels.[136] Similar arrangements occur in late Antique metalwork, such as the two late sixth- early seventh-century silver book covers from Antioch, now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, which each show a saint standing beneath a single arch (Ill. 5.15).[137]

The use of framing devices for individual figures, either as part of a continuous arcade, as at Breedon and Castor, or as a series of separate niche-panels, as at Fletton, is common on the panels of the Mercian box-shrines. The remains of a shrine panel from Lichfield have highlighted that the use of full-length figures in this context were not always dependent on such architectural devices (Ill. 4.25). As has been mentioned (pp. 105), the three conjoining panel fragments discovered in 2003 beneath the nave of Lichfield cathedral are dominated by the figure of an alighting angel. The shape of the fragments suggests they formed the left half of an end panel from what Hawkes called a 'gabled box shrine'.[138] As no other identifiable end panels survive from the corpus of Mercian funerary sculpture, it is impossible to ascertain whether or not all Mercian box-shrines had similarly gabled roofs. The evidence from Wirksworth, together with the coped cenotaph at Peterborough and the remains of another at Bakewell (see below, p. 184), demonstrate a certain preference for this form.

The nimbed and winged angel, which is the only subject on the surviving half of the panel, fills the space, with a leafy stem rising from the bottom corner. The surviving edges have plain and flat moulding, which frames the scene. The pose of the alighting

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parallels that can be made between the style of the Mercian figure representation and contemporary Italian monumental art, together with the frequency with which arcaded figures appear in the funerary sculpture of Mercia would suggest otherwise. For discussion of the evidence for the construction of composite shrines in an Insular context, see Thomas, 1998: 84–96, fig. 16.

[134] Plunkett observed that the 'tiptoe stance' of the Castor and Fletton figures was an interpretation of ivory models where the feet were shown in perspective on a sloping floor (1998: 210).

[135] Capps, 1927: fig. 18; Beckwith, 1970: 52–3, pl. 94. The standing posture of the Evangelists on the throne is thought to derive from an early Eastern Christian, and specifically Egyptian origin and use (Morey, 1941: 48). See discussion in the previous chapter, p. 61.

[136] As the previous chapter showed, the influence of late Antique styles can also be seen in contemporary continental ivory carving, notably the early ninth-century panel from Leipzig and the Lorsch Gospel covers (Hubert *et al.*, 1970: figs. 210–12). There is a close similarity between the pose of the scroll-carrying angel flanking Christ on the left of the Gospel cover and that of the Fletton apostle.

[137] Beckwith, 1970: figs. 48 and 49.

[138] Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 65, fig. 9.

angel – his right hand gesturing in blessing and carrying a floriate rod – might suggest that the Lichfield Angel was part of a larger Annunciation scene.[139] The particular details of the pose adopted by the Lichfield Angel, together with its figural style, appear to point to early Christian iconographic types as opposed to contemporary continental models. Hawkes demonstrated the stylistic parallels in the fifth-century mosaics at S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, where one of the angels in the Annunciation scene has a foot shown in profile, as at Lichfield, and is similarly depicted in the act of communication without extending an arm in that direction.[140] However, the alighting pose of the Lichfield Angel can be found in contemporary artworks such as the late eighth-century Genoels-Elderen Diptych, produced on the Continent under Anglo-Saxon influence, and the early ninth-century ivory from the Palace School of Charlemagne, now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, which is a copy of a western early Christian prototype (see the previous chapter, p. 126).[141]

Deposited in a shallow pit, the Lichfield Angel is remarkable for its degree of preservation, which includes surviving original painted decoration. Careful and detailed analysis of the polychromy by Emily Howe has revealed that the white paint of the priming layer was used as a means of highlighting the figure, by covering the background spaces and in picking out details such as borders of the drapery.[142] The other colours used were red, yellow and black, and these were employed to accentuate the symbolism of the scene. Hawkes argued that the colouration was imitative of gold and silver, which in the context of the Annunciation scene would have evoked the divine quality and the heavenly nature of the angel, God's messenger.[143] This reference to the Divine, and specifically to the divine nature of Christ, whose birth the angel is communicating, is reinforced by the angel's staff. Unlike the staffs carried by the angels at Breedon, Fletton and Hovingham, the terminal on the Lichfield staff is clearly foliate, and has been interpreted as representing not only the Paradisal garden of Heaven but also the Rod of Jesse, the prophecy of Christ's human nature in Isaiah.[144] This reading extends to explain the inclusion of the leafy stem that seems to spring from beneath the angel's right foot. The Annunciation was a familiar motif in Anglo-Saxon sculpture and can be seen in a contemporary funerary context on the Hovingham panel and the Wirksworth sarcophagus lid, as well as the Lichfield panel. As Hawkes outlined in her

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[139] *op. cit.*, 75.
[140] *op. cit.*, 77.
[141] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 354, figs. 201, 207; Neuman de Vegvar, 1990: 8–24; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 78.
[142] Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 63.
[143] *op. cit.*, 79.
[144] Isaiah 11:1; Hawkes, 1993; Cramp, 2006; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 80.

analysis of the iconography of the Lichfield Angel 'the promise of eternal life and the general resurrection at the end of time made possible by Christ's incarnation and sacrifice on the cross, and foretold by the angel at the Annunciation', are themes suitable to any funerary context.[145]

South Kyme

There is evidence, however, that not all Mercian funerary monuments carried such explicit iconographic themes in their ornament. In the church of St. Mary and All Saints in South Kyme, Lincolnshire, there are six panel fragments mounted in the east end of the north wall (Ill. 4.143).[146] From the range of motifs seen in the fragments and from the survival on one of a subdividing section of moulding, it is possible to infer that the original panel or panels were designed with a grid formation of square or rectangular compartments bounded by moulding and containing discreet and varied ornament.[147] Whilst it had been argued that these fragments were the remains of a low chancel screen, the fine detailing and delicate nature of the carving together with the lack of comparable evidence for such a screen in Anglo-Saxon England, supports the argument that the fragments once formed a panelled shrine.[148] As Brown and Jewell have remarked, the arrangement of the ornament on the South Kyme panel(s) into prominently framed grid-like compartments might reflect a familiarity with the style of early Italian screened chancel enclosures, *cancelli*.[149] The remains of such enclosure panels may be seen across northern Italy, notably at Aquileia (Ills. 3.37 and 3.38) and in Rome, where the influence of late Antique styles can be detected (see Chapter Three, p.

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[145] Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 79.

[146] The fragments were discovered in the late nineteenth century, reused in the fabric of the fourteenth-century monastic church (Everson and Stocker, 1999: 248). The six fragments are small, with the largest measuring only 40cm in length and 16cm in width, and carved in low relief, retaining varying lengths of a similar type of border moulding, which acts as a framing device for the ornament on each fragment. There is no indication that the fragments bore human representations; instead one piece carries a mass of abstract trumpet spirals (Everson and Stocker, 1999: ill. 343), another dense key patterning (*ibid*: ill. 341) and the remaining four bear interlacing, two with foliate elements (*ibid*: ills. 340 and 342) and three with parts of animal forms (*ibid*: ills. 340, 342 and 345). The surviving border mouldings point to the fragments originally forming part of a square or rectangular panel or panels, and from the style of each section of moulding, Everson and Stocker have shown that the panels are unlikely to have numbered more than three (1999: 249).

[147] Everson and Stocker, 1999: 249.

[148] Baldwin Brown, 1937: 181–2; Clapham, 1946: 171; Hawkes, C., 1946: 92; Pevsner and Harris, 1964: 665; Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 365–6; Taylor, 1974: 297; Stocker, 1993: 112; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 249–50. There is no indication of how the South Kyme fragments, now mounted in the wall, were originally arranged. But see discussion above relating to the panels at Fletton (pp. 120–1), and Thomas, 1998, fig. 16, for evidence of composite shrine construction. Comparison might be made with the panel fragments at Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, which do appear to have been architectural in design (Baldwin Brown, 1937: 178).

[149] Baldwin Brown, 1937: 181; Jewell, 2001: 250–1.

81).[150] Besides sharing a fondness for the compartmentalisation of motifs, these monuments are quite different from the South Kyme fragments. The range of motifs seen at South Kyme is not matched in the corpus of Italian enclosure panels, and from Everson and Stocker's estimated maximum length of 1.5m for the original panel(s), the scale of the South Kyme is not comparable with Italian *cancelli*.[151]

The overall impression of the original South Kyme monument is of a small-scale, highly ornate and stylistically distinct composite stone shrine. The South Kyme fragments share a close stylistic affinity with two late eighth-, early ninth-century house-shaped reliquary objects: the small Gandersheim bone casket (Ills. 4.1127 and 4.128) and the Peterborough stone cenotaph (see below, pp. 181–4).[152] The decorative arrangement of animal and abstract ornament into distinct square and rectangular fields on both these objects provides a valuable analogue for the South Kyme fragments and points to how the original monument might have appeared. Though individual elements of design on the South Kyme fragments place them firmly within the Mercian artistic style (see the previous chapter, p. 140), the juxtaposition of such a range of motifs in this way on cult objects is particularly striking.[153] Bailey highlighted the combination of trumpet spirals and zoomorphic ornament seen at South Kyme, which is rare in the corpus of Anglo-Saxon sculpture but can be found on the reverse panel of the Gandersheim casket.[154] The style of the beasts on the South Kyme fragments demonstrates a familiarity with Anglo-Saxon metal-working traditions, particularly the localised group that includes the Witham pins.[155] But in terms of the relationship between form and function, it is the arrangement of ornament on the Gandersheim casket which points to the type of symbolic programme that might have been employed on the South Kyme shrine. In her analysis of the iconography of the casket, Neuman de Vegvar deconstructed its ornament to show that the combination of three elements (the

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[150] Pani Ermini, 1974: pl. XI, 32; Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. 68, 275.

[151] Everson and Stocker, 1999: 249.

[152] Beckwith, 1972: 18–19; Beckwith, 1974: no. 2; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 177. Despite evidence that the Gandersheim casket was reworked and might not preserve its original shape, analysis by Pape of the casket's panels and metal fittings demonstrates that its construction was influenced by architectural designs (Pape, 2000).

[153] Everson and Stocker discussed the use of similar key patterning and interlace in the panels at Breedon and Fletton, and on the pedestal at Castor, but emphasised that the treatment of the inhabiting beasts sets them apart stylistically (1999: 250). For a full discussion of the stylistic links between the Gandersheim casket and Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture see Bailey, 2000: 43–52.

[154] Bailey, 2000: 49. Comparison of the casket with Anglo-Saxon manuscripts has shown that motifs such as the trumpet spirals, the plant ornament and the animals in interlace are also seen in combination in the late eighth-, early ninth-century manuscripts in the Tiberius Group, as discussed in the previous chapter, pp. 138–41 (Farr, 2000: 56–7).

[155] Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 227–8; Plunkett, 1998: 211; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 251; Webster, 2000: 65.

inhabited vine; paired griffins flanking a plant; and foxes ensnared in a vine) would support its function as a reliquary.[156] The range of motifs represented by the extant fragments of the South Kyme monument points to an equally complex and intricate visual rhetoric.

The South Kyme fragments have their closest stylistic parallels in the highly ornate and prestigious workmanship of a portable bone casket. In addition, they reflect the widespread tradition of decorative detail that embellished Anglo-Saxon metalwork and illuminated manuscripts at this time.[157] The combined effect of these parallels and sources of inspiration gives the impression that the South Kyme monument was designed and adorned to enhance its role as a precious container deserving, as Hahn described, 'of conspicuous honour and veneration'.[158] The conscious imitation of prestigious objects in metal and ivory would have created in the South Kyme shrine a fitting representation of the value of the remains inside.[159] Despite a rejection of the runic inscription on the Gandersheim casket attributing it to Ely,[160] it can be placed alongside the fragments at South Kyme as supporting evidence of a developed plastic-art tradition of symbolically and materially rich funerary objects in the area of eastern Mercia during this period.

The Peterborough cenotaph

The Peterborough cenotaph stands apart from the other fragmentary remains of Mercian panelled shrines. The monument is a small, solid house-shaped block, approximately one metre in length, carved on both long faces and each side of the steeply-pitched roof (Ills. 4.9 and 5.16).[161] The lack of carving on the two end faces has prompted scholars to

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[156] Neuman de Vegvar, 2000: 36. For the iconography of these elements, see: for griffins, Ryan, 1997: 1008; for foxes, Matter, 1990: 203–5; for vine-scroll, see Hawkes, 2003b: 263–86. There is still some debate about whether the casket originally functioned as a reliquary or a chrismal (see Wilson, 1984: 64–7; Beckwith, 1972: 18–19; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 177–9; Wamers, 2000: 73–82; Webster, 2000: 63–71).

[157] This interest in the luxury of decorative arts was shared by the artists and patrons of the Continent, and it is perhaps no coincidence that the South Kyme fragments share a stylistic affinity with manuscripts that have the closest continental influences in their style (Farr, 2000: 61).

[158] Hahn, 2005: 239.

[159] The fragments of the Lichfield shrine that still bear their original colouring are testament to the desire to imitate the splendour of manuscripts, textiles and metalwork. For other known examples of such paintwork, notably at Deerhurst, see Gem *et al*., 2008: 109–64 and Cather *et al*., 1990. Evidence for the adaptation of metalworking techniques for the enhancement of stone sculpture has been discussed in relation to sculpture at other sites, including Sandbach and Whithorn (Bailey, 1996a; Hawkes, 2001).

[160] Page, R., 1991: 17; Wilson, 1984: 65.

[161] Early drawings of the monument appear in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries at the end of the nineteenth century (Irvine, 1891–3: figs. 1–3). It now stands in the east end of Peterborough cathedral (Allen, 1887–8: 416–21; Brøndsted, 1924: 50, 59, fig. 43; Clapham, 1930: 76; Kendrick, T., 1938: 169–

suggest that the cenotaph once formed part of a larger, more complex monument, although there is little comparative evidence in support of this.[162] The cenotaph is much worn as a result of standing outside in the Abbey cemetery, at least during the seventeenth century when its presence there was recorded by Gunton in his *History of the Church of Peterborough*.[163] It was probably during this time that the round holes that mark the two long faces of the monument were cut to act as candleholders during the masses that took place to commemorate the massacre of eighty four monks there by the Vikings in 870.[164]

The two long faces of the cenotaph are filled with continuous arcading forming six discreet round-arched niches, each of which contains a front-facing full-length figure. Both sides of the pitched roof are divided into four equal-sized fields, bordered by plain moulding, each containing paired figural ornament.[165] The carving of the roof and the long faces is separated by a continuous band of moulding which gives the impression of the monument comprising two separate elements. The style of the ornament on the Peterborough cenotaph can be closely compared with that on other pieces of Mercian funerary sculpture.[166] The panels of ornament on the roof of the monument each show symmetrical paired birds or beasts, all addorsed with their lower bodies descending into interlacing patterns, except for one panel on the 'front' surface, which appears to show a pair of front-facing birds perching in vine-scroll.[167] This arrangement of creatures into pairs has analogues within the corpus of Mercian sculptural material, albeit largely in architectural form, in the friezes at Breedon, Fletton and the pedestal at Castor.[168] The design of the Peterborough monument parallels the lid and side panels of the Gandersheim casket, and its shape echoes house-shaped reliquaries that survive in other media.[169] Stone house-shaped monuments with steeply

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78; Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 493–4; Pevsner, 1968: 318; Cramp, 1977: 210, fig. 57c; Wilson, 1984: 84, fig. 93; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 239; Bailey, 1996b, fig. 5).

[162] Baldwin Brown, 1937: 288; Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 494. Mitchell (forthcoming) has argued that two apostles are carved at each end, but there is little visible evidence for this on examination of the monument.

[163] Gunton, 1686: 7–9, 242–3; Radford, 1955: 58.

[164] Ingulf, 48; Radford, 1955: 58. It was undoubtedly from this tradition that the monument's enduring connection with Abbot Hædda arose, and the reason for the numerals 870, which can be seen inscribed on one end of the cenotaph in the early drawings of the monument (Irvine, 1891–3: fig. 3).

[165] Mitchell (forthcoming) described the monument as only having three panels of ornament on the surfaces of the roof, but there are in fact four.

[166] Clapham, 1930: 76; Kendrick, T., 1938: 169–78; Cramp, 1977: 210; Plunkett, 1998: 208.

[167] Plunkett, 1998: fig. 65e.

[168] The fragment of a whale bone plaque from Larling may also be mentioned as providing further evidence for the transmission of such motifs through small, portable carvings (Wilson, 1984: fig. 97).

[169] Notable examples are the reliquaries from Engers (Hubert, Porcher and Volbach, 1970, fig. 193; Lasko, 1972: pl. 8), Mortain (Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 175–6) and the reliquary of Bishop Altheus in Sion (*ibid.*: fig. 197).

pitched roofs existed within different regions of Merovingian France, with examples dating from the sixth to eighth centuries distributed in the Bordeaux area, but they are larger than the Peterborough cenotaph and not comparable in style due to their lack of ornament.[170] The rarity of cenotaphs in Anglo-Saxon England makes it unlikely that monuments like that at Peterborough were modelled on the Merovingian fashion; and from the stylistic relationship with other Mercian sculptural fragments and prestigious portable reliquaries, it can be assumed that the Peterborough cenotaph was a distinctly Mercian innovation.[171]

The figural ornamentation on the long faces of the cenotaph conforms to the general idiom of Mercian apostle-arcades discussed above. The style of arcading at Peterborough is particularly comparable to that on the panel fragment at Castor – displaying slender columns with bulbous imposts, from which twinned-leaf shoots sprout. The figures themselves are of the Castor and Fletton type, with clear round halos, long stylised robes, and each carries a book or other object in one hand whilst gesturing with the other.[172] From the surviving detail it is possible to distinguish and identify some of the six figures in the series on the front of the cenotaph. Christ is identified to the right of the central column by his cruciform halo; flanked on the right by a beardless St. Peter with a key and a book and on the left by the Virgin holding a lily and a bearded St. Paul carrying a book.[173] The apostles either side of this grouping, and both Sts. Peter and Paul appear to turn in towards Christ and the Virgin who face forwards. The series of figures on the reverse face includes two bearded and four beardless apostles with all except one appearing to move towards the right in a similar fashion to the Castor apostle and those on one of the panels at Breedon. The 'beardless youth' on the extreme right of the series has been identified as St. John and, as discussed in Chapter Four (pp. 100–1), from the rare occurrence in Anglo-Saxon art of spiky hair on the figure third from the left, he has been identified as St. Andrew.[174]

The dominance of apostle arcading in the ornament of the Peterborough cenotaph and the emphasis placed on Christ and the Virgin within it, through the directional angling of the flanking figures, provides a rare and near complete

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[170] Duval, 1991: 290, 296; Henderson, 1994: 85–6.

[171] The appearance of paired griffins on one of the roof panels was thought by Neuman de Vegvar to be traceable to late Antique representations on sarcophagi where they signified eternal life (2000: 37–8). Griffins also appear on the St. Andrews sarcophagus (Henderson, I., 1998: 145–6, pl. 10) and on the fragments from a possible shrine at Croft (Neuman de Vegvar, 2000: 37).

[172] Because the cenotaph has become so worn, recent photographs cannot do the extant detail justice and the most frequently reproduced illustrations remain those from the late nineteenth century (Irvine, 1889: figs. 1 and 2).

[173] Cramp, 1977: 210; Bailey, 1996b: 58–9; Plunkett, 1998: 208; Mitchell, forthcoming.

[174] Bailey 1996b: 58–9; Mitchell, forthcoming.

iconographic programme.[175] The combination of Christ and the Apostles in this arrangement would have signified the intercessory power of the communion of saints to bring the faithful closer to God through Christ and the Virgin. And, as Higgitt and Mitchell have noted, St. Peter's position flanking Christ, together with his upheld key, alludes to the saint's role in controlling access to Heaven.[176] Thus on St. Cuthbert's coffin, St. Peter is represented at the top of the rows of saints, introducing the saint to Heaven.[177] The iconography of the Peterborough cenotaph is therefore one of personal salvation: promised in the annunciation signified by the Virgin; offered through Christ's sacrifice, and fulfilled through intercession with the communion of saints, culminating in admittance by St. Peter into Heaven. This weighty symbolic ensemble is enhanced by the decoration on the roof of the cenotaph, which includes griffins as a sign of eternal life and birds perching in the Vine. The hole cut into the cenotaph just below St. Peter would suggest that the monument was at one time used as an interactive reliquary. Such apertures were often used to access holy dust from within reliquaries, and it is possible that the hole on the Peterborough monument was part of such a ritual, despite the monument being otherwise solid.[178]

Whilst the Peterborough cenotaph is the only known surviving monument of its type, the fragmentary remains of a similar monument can be found at Bakewell in Derbyshire (Ill. 5.17).[179] This cenotaph appears to have originally been coped, and retains part of at least one nimbed figure on its surviving vertical face.[180] Unlike the Peterborough cenotaph, the fragments at Bakewell suggest that at least one face of the monument's roof also bore figural ornament. The fragments of a later, possibly tenth-century coped monument also at Bakewell provide additional evidence for the underrepresented tradition of stone cenotaph production in Mercia.[181]

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[175] If it is assumed that the ends of the cenotaph once bore an apostle each, likely moving towards Christ and the Virgin, the cenotaph would have carried all twelve apostles as does St. Cuthbert's coffin.
[176] Higgitt, 1989: 276; Mitchell, forthcoming.
[177] Bonner *et al.*, 1989: fig. 21; Mitchell, forthcoming. Mitchell (forthcoming) has identified a similar arrangement on a frieze fragment at Fletton, where he suggests St. Peter and the Virgin flank Christ. Whilst Christ can be identified by his cruciform nimbus, the fragment is too worn to be able to discern recognisable detail in the flanking figures' features (Ill. 5.20).
[178] Radford, 1955: 178; Biddle, 1986: 3. The cathedral is also dedicated to Saints Peter, Paul and Andrew.
[179] Routh, 1937: 15, pl. V A and B; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 65.
[180] Routh, 1937: pl. V B.
[181] *op. cit.*, 16–17, pl. VII.

Repton and Mercian crypts

In tangent to the production of embellished stone sarcophagi and cenotaphs, the Mercian preoccupation with commemoration and the cult of saints can be traced in the architectural and archaeological remains of their crypts. It was following the reordering by Pope Gregory of the sanctuary in St. Peter's in Rome for better access by pilgrims to the holy relics in the early seventh century, that the development of crypts in the Christian West began (see Chapter Three, p. 84).[182] But while the Frankish Church does not appear to have adopted the Roman tradition until the mid-eighth century, there is evidence that the Anglo-Saxons had constructed crypts by the end of the seventh century at sites like Ripon and Hexham in Northumbria.[183] The earliest evidence for a crypt in Mercia appears to be at Brixworth in Northamptonshire where, in the nineteenth century the remains of a possible ring-crypt were uncovered, although it is now thought to date from the ninth or tenth century.[184] Despite archaeological evidence for the manipulation of space to accommodate and facilitate veneration at Brixworth, it is not clear whether the site was associated with a saint's cult.[185] In contrast to this, the crypt at Repton in Derbyshire has not only provided a wealth of archaeological evidence for its development and use over time, but can also be examined through documentary sources to illustrate the history and use of the site, and its association with the cult of saints and the Mercian elite.[186]

The constructional phases identified through excavation have revealed that the crypt was likely to have initially been built as a baptistery in the early eighth century rather than a *hypogeum* of the Poitiers type as suggested elsewhere.[187] This first building cut through the early cemetery, to the east of the original church which was part of the double monastery founded at Repton at the end of the seventh century.[188]

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[182] Taylor, 1968: 17–52; Jacobsen, 1997: 1134.

[183] Taylor and Taylor, 1965a: 297–312; Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 516–18; Kirby, 1974; Taylor, 1978: 1014–17; Gem, 1983: 3; Hall, 1993: 39–53; Jacobsen, 1997: 1134. Merovingian constructions comparable to crypts are the burial chambers of the late seventh and early eighth century, such as the Hypogée des Dunes at Poitiers (Gem, 1983: 3; James, 1977: 279).

[184] Cramp, pers comm.; Clapham, 1930: 156; Taylor and Taylor, 1965a: 108–4; Taylor, 1968: 38; Fletcher, 1974: 88–96; Parsons, 1978: 129–47; Audouy, 1984: 1–44; Crook, 2001: 103; Gem, 2011. The external ambulatory seen at Brixworth was thought to have its counterpart at Wing in Buckinghamshire, which has a crypt thought to date to the tenth century, but this has since been disproved (Jackson and Fletcher, 1962: 1–20; Crook: 2001: 130–2).

[185] Crook has suggested that the original association vanished as part of the wider loss of many local Anglo-Saxon saints' cults outlined by Blair (Crook, 2001: 104; Blair, 2002a: 455–94).

[186] Repton and its crypt has been the subject of much scholarly attention, notably by Taylor and the Biddles, who have greatly advanced our understanding and interpretation of the site (Taylor, 1971, 1977, 1979, 1987; Biddle, 1986; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985, 1992 and 2001).

[187] Kjølbye-Biddle, 1998: 767; Crook, 2001: 62–3.

[188] Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 510–11. It was during this period that Guthlac took his tonsure at Repton before leaving for Crowland (Felix: 83, 85).

The internal shape of the baptistery was cruciform with rectangular niches in the middle of each side, and the remains of a drain run out from the centre of the chamber through the north-east corner.[189] It is thought that the baptistery made use of a natural high-water level that was observed during excavations.[190] As is paralleled at St. John's church in Canterbury, the baptistery at Repton was then altered to become a crypt.[191] The pillared stone vaulting that survives today was part of a remodelling that took place in the ninth century, when new entrances were inserted to link the crypt with the north and south chapels of the Anglo-Saxon church that had extended east above it.[192] The vaulting is carried by four monolithic columns, carved with what Taylor and Taylor described as 'two encircling fillets', giving them a twisted appearance.[193] This design has its roots in late Antique prototypes such as the twisted columns that supported Constantine's *baldacchino* above the tomb of St. Peter in Rome and it can be supposed that the design of the vaulting at Repton was intended to mimic such a structure.[194]

The ninth-century modifications to the crypt at Repton have long been associated with the cult of Wigstan who was buried there following his death in 840.[195] From documentary records it is clear that Wigstan was but one in a succession of Mercian royal figures to be buried, and presumably venerated at Repton. One tradition suggests that Penda's son Merewalh, king of the Magonsæte, was buried there, although the reliability of the text has been debated.[196] King Æthelbald, who was responsible for the embellishment of the tomb of Guthlac at Crowland (see above, p. 156), was buried at Repton following his murder in 757, and Wiglaf, Wigstan's grandfather, was buried there in c. 839.[197] While there is no definitive archaeological evidence for the monumental promotion of saints' cults at Repton before the ninth century, the impression from the documentary evidence is that the site was already well established as a mausoleum for Mercian royal figures by that time. The expansion and modification of the crypt, which focused on increased access and the aggrandizing of space, suggests that the crypt was by then a focal point for veneration by groups of people. This

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[189] Kjølbye-Biddle, 1998: 764, 767.

[190] *op. cit.*, 765, 767–8.

[191] Taylor, 1969: 102, 112–14, 122–3, 126; Biddle, 1986: 13, 16n; Kjølbye-Biddle, 1998: 768.

[192] Biddle, 1986: 16; Crook, 2001: 129–30.

[193] Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 513.

[194] Krautheimer, 1980: 27; Crook, 2001: 130. An example of ninth-century ciborium with twisted columns can be found in the church of S. Apollinare in Classe in Ravenna (see Chapter Three, pp.82–3). For the revival of early Christian architecture on the Continent and the liturgical significance of imitation, see Krautheimer, 1942: 1–38.

[195] Taylor, 1977, 1979; Rollason, 1978: 63–4, 89; Rollason, 1981: 10–12; Rollason, 1983: 5–9.

[196] Rollason, 1982: 26, 77, 81 and 93; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1992: 235.

[197] Whitelock, 1965: 360; Rollason, 1983: 5–7; Thacker, 1985: 5–6, Rollason, 1989: 114; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1992: 235. Wiglaf's burial at Repton is only described in the post-Conquest accounts relating to his grandson Wigstan (Rollason, 1983: 7).

provides an altogether unique perspective on the development of Mercian saints' cults and the importance of commemoration in the creation of a Mercian royal lineage.[198] The seventh-century foundation of the monastery at Repton within a pre-existing estate centre created a link between the monastic community and the Mercian secular elite that persisted for almost two centuries until Viking disruptions in 873–4 when the church was incorporated into the defences of their camp.[199] This link is supported by the surviving fragments of sculpture at Repton, particularly the cross-shaft known as the Repton Stone, which the previous chapter showed evoked late Antique imperial styles.[200] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle argued that the monument had been erected by Offa shortly after his suppression of Beornred's claim to the throne in 757, and that the rider was a representation of king Æthelbald.[201] If so, the cross at Repton, of which only a fragment now remains, can be interpreted as a monument to the glory and authority of Mercian over-lordship and a permanent statement to be understood within the context of the long standing importance of the site. It is this preoccupation with the investment in a sense of place that anchored the cult of Mercian saints in the landscape and which provides the common thread for the types of sites at which focal cult monuments are found.

Summary: the sites in context

As discussed in the opening sections of this chapter (pp. 152–7), the development of Mercian sepulchral monuments coincided with, and was a response to, the rise in the cult of Mercian royal saints. Of the nine sites discussed here for their extant evidence of the monumental focus given to veneration, six have known associations with documented saints.[202] Within this group it is clear that certain sites benefited from a network of monastic colonies, at the centre of which were royal foundations. The best documented of these colony networks is that of Peterborough, whose links to neighbouring and outlying monastic communities is recorded in the written sources and

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[198] A parallel and near contemporary example of a possible crypt created as the focus for a noble secular burial is at the monastery of S. Vincenzo al Volturno in northern Italy (Mitchell, 1993: 75–114; Hahn, 1997: 1101).

[199] Whitelock, 1965: 48; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1992: 36–51; Bourne, 1996: 147–64; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001: 45–96; Thacker, 2002a: 12–13.

[200] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1992: fig. 3, pl. VI.

[201] *op. cit*., 1992: 290.

[202] These are as follows: Breedon – Frithuric (late seventh century), Beonna (d. 805), Cotta (eighth century) and Eardwulf (d. 810); Castor – the abbesses Cyneburg and Cyneswith (late seventh century); Derby – Alkmund (d.800); Lichfield – Ceadda (d. 672), and the seventh-century bishops Ceatta and Cedd; Repton – Wigstan (d. 849) (Blair 2002a: fig. 12.1 and Blair 2002b).

corroborated by the stylistic affinity of its cenotaph to other pieces of Mercian sepulchral sculpture. Bede alludes to the seventh-century foundation of the monastery at Peterborough by Seaxwulf who had been made bishop of the Mercians after the synod of Hertford in 673 (see Chapter One, pp. 37–8).[203] Of the documents relating to Peterborough that claim to be of pre-Danish date, none is now believed to be older than the twelfth century.[204] However, it is agreed that many of the properties listed as belonging to Peterborough, including Breedon and Repton, are certain to have been within its orbit.[205] Breedon is recorded as being founded in the late seventh century after a grant of 20 *manentes* to Peterborough by the lay patron Friduricus, possibly associated with St. Frithuric who is said to have been buried there.[206] The association of Repton with Peterborough is based on the interpretation by scholars of the name *Hrepingas* named by Hugh Candidus and a twelfth-century cartulary of Peterborough as one of its properties.[207] From the material evidence other sites in the eastern Midlands can be seen to have benefited from Peterborough's sphere of influence. Stylistic affinities link the carvings at nearby Castor and Fletton to the Peterborough network. Indeed, it has been asserted that the fragments at Fletton were originally part of the shrine at Peterborough from which the cenotaph survives, although this is unlikely given the differences in style that are apparent between the two sets of carvings.[208] The stylistic links that have been shown to exist and extend outside the immediate vicinity of Peterborough and its monastic colony give the impression of overlapping and linked centres of ecclesiastical power and secular focus.[209]

Within the group of sculpture sites there can be discerned another type of connection: those that are known and those that can be supposed to have established a monumental focus for a saint's cult at a site of inherited significance. At Breedon, Castor, and possibly Bakewell, there is evidence for such inherited significance. Even today the church at Breedon-on-the-Hill is an imposing sight, perched on top of a rocky promontory overlooking the vale of Trent. The flat summit of the hill is enclosed by the remains of ramparts from an Iron Age hillfort, and it is within this space that the church

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[203] Bede, *HE,* iv. 6.

[204] Hart, 1975: 55, 67 and 68; Whitelock, 1979: 652. For a full appraisal of the reliability of these documents see Stenton, 1970: 179–92. For an alternative interpretation see Dornier, 1977: 155–68.

[205] Stenton, 1970: 179; Dornier, 1977: 157–60; Bailey 1980b: 11.

[206] Birch, 1885–93: no. 841; Stenton, 1970: 182–3; Mellows, 1949: 160; Stafford, 1985: 182. The charter also records that Hædda, a priest at Peterborough, was appointed abbot at Breedon. It is unlikely that this was the same Hædda associated with the later tradition of the cenotaph at Peterborough, as he died in the ninth century (Dornier, 1977: 157).

[207] Mellows, 1949: 160; Stenton, 1970: 185; Rumble, 1977: 169–71.

[208] Irvine, 1891–3: 156; Allen, 1887–8: 417.

[209] The importance of Peterborough as a secular and economical centre is signalled by the archaeological discoveries from its *wic* and cemetery (Scull, 2001: 69).

sits.[210] At Castor, the church stands within the remains of a Roman fort that was part of the settlement *Durobrivae*, near to the Roman road Ermine Street, at the heart of the Nene Valley ceramic industry.[211] At Bakewell, there is little archaeological evidence for an early church at the site, but the village is ringed by a number of prehistoric earthworks, including Bole Hill to the south east; a cairn with cists and inhumations.[212] As Rollason noted, the creation of a burgh at Bakewell in the tenth century points to its strategic importance, which it can be assumed had been long recognised.[213] The vast collection of sculptural fragments at Bakewell, which include the coped sepulchral monument, hint at the possibility of a focal point for veneration established at an early centre of secular importance and patronage.[214] A charter of the mid-tenth century suggests that the monastery there was not a new foundation.[215] It can be supposed that part of the importance of Bakewell as a Mercian centre was its position within a landscape that was already marked with the monumental statements made by the barrows ringing the village. Certainly by the time of the Domesday survey, Bakewell's church had two priests and was the head of a large estate.[216] These three sites appropriated an existing heritage and significance provided by the monuments and landscapes of their immediate vicinity.[217] By establishing foci for the veneration of saints' cults within these environments, the Mercian elite were associating the importance of their saints with the inherited significance of the earlier monuments. The creation of free-standing, ornate sepulchral monuments at these sites and elsewhere can be interpreted as immortalising the Mercian saints, and all that they represent, into the permanence of the landscape, the Mercian kingdom and the psyche of the Mercian people. In this way, it is possible to interpret the concentration of Mercian saints in the eastern Midlands, and possibly the evidence at Bakewell, as taking advantage of their periphery location. Peterborough and the sites in its immediate locale were positioned on the edge of the Fens; and South Kyme, which sits on an 'island of high ground in the

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[210] The bank of this boundary was excavated in 1946 during a rescue operation following the partial destruction of the hill through quarrying (Kenyon, 1950; Kenyon, 1956: 172; Radford 1956: 170). For the association of churches with existing monuments such as hill-forts, see Semple, 2009: 39–40 and 2010: 33.
[211] Adkins, 1902: 190; Dallas, 1973: 16–17; Henderson, I., 1997: 223; Bell, 2005: 203.
[212] Historic Environment Record. Taylor and Taylor identified that the crossing of the church was wider than its body arms which might indicate an Anglo-Saxon date; an arrangement paralleled at Repton (1965a: 36).
[213] Whitelock, 1965: 199; Rollason, L., 1996: 5–7.
[214] Most of the fragments were discovered in 1841 beneath the foundations of the north transept and piers of the tower during its modification (Routh, 1937: 6–18).
[215] Sawyer, 1968: no. 548.
[216] Morgan, 1978: 272c, d.
[217] For the appropriation of pre-Christian 'sacred spaces' in conversion-period Anglo-Saxon England, see Semple, 2011: 742–63.

peat fen, detached from the mainland' is reminiscent of the documented Fenland monastery sites which attracted hermits for their seclusion.[218]

In addition to the manipulation of people's attitudes towards the landscape and the past, the predominance of certain motifs in the corpus of sepulchral sculpture demonstrates that the patrons and sculptors of Mercia were also concerned with signalling their political affiliations. As demonstrated above, the dominance of apostle iconography, and the particular occurrence of Saints Peter and Paul, is further evidence of a familiarity with and a wish to imitate the art of late Antiquity, as shown in the previous chapter.[219] Within the particular historical context of Mercia in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, the popularity of the apostles is also symptomatic of the relationship between Mercia and the papacy in Rome, highlighted in Chapters One and Four (pp. 45–8, 147). The popularity of apostle imagery in papal circles at the end of the eighth century can be understood as a vehicle for emphasising the pope's authority in the Christian West under the protection of and growing relationship with Charlemagne, as discussed in Chapter Three (pp. 83–7).[220] In Mercia, the predominance of apostle imagery in the late eighth and early ninth centuries was part of a wider political agenda to distance the kingdom from the Archiepiscopal see at Canterbury, and raise its status in the eyes of its Carolingian neighbours. This agenda came to fruition in 787 when Lichfield was elevated to archiepiscopal status after the Chelsea synod, a decision that is believed to have contributed to the success of Chad's cult there.[221] The relationship between political agenda, theological understanding and artistic prowess is thus encapsulated in the range, distribution and style of Mercian sepulchral monuments. The tradition of embellishing saints' tombs was a long standing one, as can be seen in the documentary evidence.[222] In the context of late eighth- and early ninth-century Mercia, the development of ornate stone sarcophagi and cenotaphs for the cult of Mercian saints was a tool for anchoring the ideology of the Mercian elite in the legitimacy of sanctity and conspicuous investment. The dialogue that existed with the Continent, in relation to

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[218] Everson and Stocker, 1999: 251. Everson and Stocker drew comparisons with the monasteries at Thorney, Ely and Crowland, the latter to which Guthlac retired (1999: 251). Early suggestions that South Kyme was the monastery *Icanho*, founded in the mid-seventh century by St. Bonolph have been proved to be unlikely (Hawkes, C., 1946: 92; Taylor and Taylor, 1965b: 365–6; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 251).
[219] The importance of Saints Peter and Paul during late Antiquity as symbols of universality and unity in the Church has recently been highlighted by Bracken in his discussion of Pope Leo the Great's sermons (2009: 84–7).
[220] Noble, 1984: 241–4, 290; Lang, 2000: 109, 118; Mitchell, forthcoming.
[221] Godfrey, 1964: 145–53; Cubitt, 1995: 153–90; Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 50. The archiepiscopal status only lasted until 802 when Pope Leo III issued a decree restoring full rights to Canterbury (Cubitt, 1995: 153–90).
[222] Henderson, I., 1997: 225.

the production and circulation of luxurious objects, is illustrated in the ornament of the Mercian shrines and cenotaphs.

Chapter Six: Discussion and Conclusions

Defining continental influence in Mercian sculpture

In its range of forms and ornament, the extant corpus of Mercian sculpture is unparalleled in the early medieval West of the late eighth and ninth centuries. This thesis proposes that the single greatest influence of continental origin on the development of Mercian sculpture was not physical models, but a *concept* – the appropriation of the artistic heritage of late Antiquity.[1] This concept betrays two major concerns, to which Charlemagne, and Offa and his successors aligned themselves. The first was that of visibly supporting the papacy in Rome and its endowment of Rome's early Christian heritage. The second involved an investment in the visual language of authority and legitimacy, the symbolism for which was no better epitomised than in the imperial styles of late Antiquity.[2] This research has demonstrated that both concerns are evident in the development of monumental artistic production on the Carolingian continent and in Mercia, and in the supporting archaeological and written records for the wider affairs of state in both regions. Across the breadth of the Mercian sculptural corpus, these concerns are reflected in varying degrees, as dictated by localised and regional responses to models accessible by the sculptors and patrons associated with each site or group of sites. The result is a body of material that in *motivation* is influenced by the Continent, but in style stands apart from contemporary monumental artistic production in the Christian West. It is therefore argued that discernible stylistic parallels with the art of the Continent represent a conscious, but selective adoption and adaptation of motifs, and not the linear, passive reception of continental models that has so often been assumed in scholarship.[3]

Within the corpus of Mercian stone sculpture, the influence of 'continentally-minded' concerns is clearly visible in the appropriation of symbolically pertinent, well-established late Antique forms and styles. The dominance of apostle imagery in the sepulchral and architectural sculpture of the Mercian heartland and its immediate neighbours – at Breedon, Fletton, Castor and Peterborough – illustrates this. The depiction of full-length robed apostle-figures in arcading recalls the late Antique

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[1] As Chapter Four demonstrated, an existing interest in late Antique artistic styles is discernible in the stone sculpture of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria.

[2] These two concerns are interrelated, as both Charlemagne and Offa desired the legitimising support of the papacy in their rule.

[3] Baldwin Brown, 1937: 182; Clapham, 1930: 77; Stone, 1955: 21; Kidson *et al.*, 1965: 26.

imperial styles of sarcophagi and monumental mosaics. In addition, the prominence given to Sts. Peter and Paul at a number of sites, is a conscious nod to the important role of those saints in late Antiquity as symbols of the Church's universality and unity – qualities the papacy were promoting in their vision of a revived Constantinian Rome.[1] Equally, the widespread regard for Marian imagery in Mercian sculpture – at Breedon, Lichfield, Peterborough, Fletton, Eyam and Sandbach – can be traced to Rome, where *Maria Regina* was revered as the principal protector of royalty; and the Roman liturgy, adopted by Charlemagne, which included four Marian feasts.[2] The renewed focus on the Virgin and the Apostles in Rome was part of a broader promotion of the late Antique fascination with the cult of saints, and thus pilgrimage to and veneration at the city's newly embellished tombs (see Chapters One, Three and Five, pp. 45–8, 84–5, 157–60). Mercian patrons and sculptors demonstrated their alignment to this papal endeavour in the creation of their unique range of cultic monuments, which in form and ornament echoed the authority of late Antiquity. For example, the arrangement of figures in arcading – seen on the Peterborough cenotaph and the shrine panels at Castor, Fletton and Breedon, and in the use of narrative scenes at Wirksworth – was a direct appropriation of early Christian sarcophagi styles and iconographies (see p. 190).

By contrast, there is no evidence in the Carolingian artistic repertoire to suggest that late Antique sarcophagi were ever a popular model for contemporary continental cult monuments.[3] The range of Mercian monumental sepulchral sculpture and its particular relationship with late Antique sarcophagi therefore signifies an independent interpretation of the continental concern for the cult of saints, developed in response to models not mediated by the Carolingian courts. This independent response to models is the defining feature of the relationship that Mercian art had with its continental counterpart. It prompts a re-evaluation of the supposed importance that the Mercians placed on visually expressing 'prestigious links' with Carolingian royal centres.[4] The Mercians may have subscribed to continental concerns in order to be recognised as legitimate rulers in the early medieval West, but they manipulated the visual language of late Antiquity to actively differentiate themselves from the Carolingian courts, and in the process created an altogether individual 'brand' of monumental expression.

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[1] Noble, 1984: 241–4, 290; Lang, 2000: 109, 118; Bracken, 2009: 84–7; Mitchell, 2010: 264 and forthcoming.
[2] Ó Carragáin, 1978: 132–3; Leveto, 1990: 406; Hawkes, 1997: 125; Mitchell, 2010: 265–7.
[3] But, see below, p. 201, for the implications of the relationship between the styles of contemporary continental reliquaries and late Antique monuments.
[4] Hawkes, 2002a: 144–5.

Investment in a visual language of authority and legitimacy is also manifest in Mercian cultic monuments. As the previous chapter demonstrated, the emergence of Mercian sarcophagi and cenotaphs signalled the use of saints' cults as a mechanism for legitimising rule on a local and regional level. The correlation between church dedications, hagiographies and extant sepulchral monuments revealed that members of the Mercian ruling families, both male and female, were venerated as saints after their death. Often these saints' cults were established at sites of inherited significance, bolstering the legitimacy of the cult and thus the dynasty from which they came. In their adoption of features from late Antique sarcophagi, including iconographic details, such as the sprouting arcades and drapery and carving styles, the promoters of Mercian saints' cults were also adopting the legitimacy of the imperial symbolism that the sarcophagi embodied.

The unique development of cult monuments was but one mechanism by which the Mercians participated in dialogues of authority with the Carolingian continent. The Mercian king's construction of considerable earthworks along his western borders parallels Charlemagne's reinforcements of Roman lines against Saxon incursions and his ambitious plans to construct a canal to facilitate access to Byzantium.[5] In these endeavours, both rulers revealed their concern to demonstrate territorial control. As outlined in Chapter One, Offa reformed his coinage in line with Charlemagne's coinage, modelling himself on Imperial rulers; and through trade and attempted marriage alliances Charlemagne was encouraged to engage with Offa as an equal.[6] This desire to project an image of authority is apparent in sculpture from across the greater Mercian kingdom, where patrons and sculptors adapted established motifs of prestige to reflect the exchange networks they were part of. This is most clearly seen at Repton where the rider depicted on the fragmentary remains of the cross-shaft (see Chapter Four, p. 107) evokes the late Antique splendour of the *Adventus* scenes from which it drew.[7] In its adaptation of this scene from portable ivories and cameos, the Repton Rider includes elements of Germanic battledress, which strengthen its specific significance as an emblem of Mercian kingship.[8]

Elsewhere, secular motivations behind the signalling of authority are more subtly conveyed. At the royally-endowed monastery at Breedon, extensive lengths of

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[5] Hill, 1974; 102–7; Gelling, 1992: 102–18; Gillmor, 2005: 34–5, 39.
[6] Levison, 1946: 118–19; Whitelock, 1965: 785; Wallace-Hadrill, 1975: 159–60; Nelson, 2001: 132, 134; Williams, 2001: 216; Story, 2002: 178–80, 188–95; Gannon, 2003: 13–14.
[7] Beckwith, 1961: fig. 49; Bianchi Bandinelli, 1971: ill. 329; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 255; Cutler, 1998: 329–39.
[8] Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 265, 269.

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ornamental frieze-work not only acted as a reminder of the wealth of their patron and the church they adorned, but also of the long distance networks of gift exchange that introduced many of their motifs into the sculptural repertoire. Long-established and exotic motifs, including mythical creatures like the *Senmurv*, and vintage scenes from prestigious textiles and metalwork were synonymous with the authority and longevity of the eastern Empire.[9] Access to and use of these motifs reflected both the prestige of the patron and the site that was endowed. Similarly, appropriated prestige is represented in the 'scaling-up' of models in the form of portable eastern late Antique and contemporary ivories. The deep under-cutting technique of the carving seen at Breedon, in the Miracle at Cana fragment and the panel with the two figures holding foliate rods, intentionally mimicked the animate carving styles associated with ivories. Even at sites where little or no written evidence survives, the concern for projecting authority visible in the extant sculpture, points to the status of the patron who commissioned the monument and the prestige of the links that the models behind its design reflect. This can be seen in the adoption and adaptation of late Antique ornamental motifs and votive imagery for use on the cross-sculpture of the Derbyshire Peak. The early Christian ivories, icons and mosaic schemes that Chapter Four (see p. 103) showed inspired elements of the design on the crosses at Eyam, Bradbourne and Bakewell, contributed to the monuments' role as signposts to the wealth and connections of their patrons. Similar motivations inspired the design and creation of the figures on the monuments at Pershore (Worcs.), Berkeley Castle (Glos.), and on the cross-sculpture at Newent, Bisley and Lypiatt (Glos.). Despite regional variety, the displays of wealth and connections exhibited in the appropriation of late Antique artistic styles contributed to the use of sculpture as a means of expressing authority. On the Continent, parallel concerns are reflected in Charlemagne's revival of imperial grandeur – by creating a *Roma Nova* at Aachen, where his cathedral was embellished with *spolia*, and in the revival of ivory carving in his court schools.[10] The perpetuation of late Antique imperial symbolism is also seen in the widespread, continued use of the classicising styles adopted by the Lombard sculptors.

Locating the sources of influential models

One of the primary aims of this research was to reassess the relationship between Mercian sculpture and the art of the Continent, particularly continental stone sculpture.

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[9] Harper, 1961: 95; Jacoby, 2004: 199.

[10] Hubert *et al.*, 1970: 217–33; Henderson, 1994: 258–73; Nees, 2002: 102 and Schutz, 2004: 145–6, 361–2.

In the light of evidence, presented above, for the influence of continental concepts on the development of Mercian sculpture, to what extent were Mercian sculptors directly influenced by Carolingian artistic production? Were models introduced into the Mercian repertoire as a result of the dialogue that existed between the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and the Continent, or were Mercian sculptors and patrons accessing models independently? Can the Lombard sculptural style, as the only comparable body of sculptural material on the Continent, which persisted into the Carolingian period and was adopted outside the Lombard territories, be shown to have influenced the development of Mercian sculpture? The argument for direct absorption of Carolingian models has dominated scholarship relating to the style and development of Mercian sculpture and indeed influenced the lines of enquiry followed by scholars.[11] Accepted statements such as Jewell's assertion that 'most of the contemporary parallels for the ornament of the Breedon friezes in Carolingian art on the Continent are found in manuscripts' have dissuaded scholars from scrutinising the origin-models for many of the parallels between Mercian sculpture and Carolingian art.[12] The comprehensive survey of stylistic parallels presented in Chapter Four revealed the complex interrelationship that links Mercian, Carolingian and late Antique art, as for example can be seen in the shared use of the unusual *pelta* ornament (see p. 131). In Mercia, *pelta* ornament is found on sections of frieze-work at Breedon and Fletton. Its origins are certainly early Christian, when it was used as carpet ornament in the fifth century on Roman sculpture and wall paintings.[13] Despite a lack of supportive evidence, it had been assumed that there must have been a pre-Romanesque tradition of using this motif in carving to have inspired its use in Mercian sculpture.[14] Subsequently it was argued that the motif was adopted from contemporary Carolingian manuscripts, where it appears in the borders of the Godescalc Gospel lectionary (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1203, fol. 3r), the Dagulf Psalter (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS. 1861, fol. 25r) and the Corbie Psalter (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. 18, fol. 1v).[15] The more recent discovery of mosaic *pelta* ornament in the early ninth-century San Zeno funerary chapel at S. Prassede, Rome, where it forms a continuous carpet on the underside surface of the entrance archway, is the only contemporary monumental example of its use.[16] Whilst

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[11] Baldwin Brown, 1937: 182; Clapham, 1930: 77; Stone, 1955: 21; Kidson *et al.*, 1965: 26; Jewell, 1982: 244–5; Mitchell, 2007, 2010 and forthcoming; Hawkes, 1995a, 1995b and 2002a.

[12] Jewell, 2001: 249.

[13] Broccoli, 1981: pl. XXV; Mackie, 1995: 162–4; Cormack and Vassilaki, 2009: pl. 9.2.

[14] Jewell, 1982: 175.

[15] Mütherich and Gaehde, 1977: pl. 1; Jewell, 1982: 175–7; Mütherich, 1999: pl. 9; Caillet, 2005: fig. 105; Lafitte and Denoël, 2007: 128–30, no. 22.

[16] Mackie, 1995: fig. 1.

this provides a convincing model for the *pelta* ornament seen at Breedon, the juxtaposition of *pelta* ornament with figure-busts at Fletton is still best compared with contemporary continental manuscripts, for example in the early ninth-century Lorsch Gospels (Bucharest, Nationalbibliothek, Filiale Alba Iulia, Biblioteca Batthyáneum, MS. R. II. I, pag. 36).[17] Distinguishing between stylistic affinity and stylistic influence thus continues to be a difficulty in understanding the relationship between Mercian sculpture and continental art, when both traditions were looking back to the artistic styles of late Antiquity. The differences in design seen in the Mercian use of *pelta* ornament confirm that sculptors intended to demonstrate their familiarity with a range of models from different sources. Nonetheless, there are indicators that Mercian sculptors were not reliant on Carolingian adaptations of late Antique motifs. In addition to the sepulchral monuments of Mercia and the use of exotic metalwork and textile motifs at Breedon discussed above, the exaggerated vine-scroll characteristic of the Derbyshire cross-sculpture derives directly from late Antique sources (see Chapter Four, p. 113). This suggests that the Derbyshire sculptors were independently accessing late Antique monumental models at centres such as Ravenna, bypassing the vine-scroll traditions of their Northumbrian neighbours and central Mercia, where the most convincing evidence for the influence of contemporary continental sculpture can be seen in the narrow friezes at Breedon (see Chapter One, pp. 108–9).

Inspiration from late Antique models of the eastern Empire is consistently signalled across the corpus of Mercian sculpture and arguably constituted the single most influential source for its development. Documentary and archaeological evidence illustrate the continued draw of Byzantium and the monasticism of the East for the Lombards, the Carolingians and Rome itself. In Lombard Italy, the Byzantine cross bearing a niello Crucifixion scene, which Gregory the Great gave to Theodolinda at Monza, illustrates the prestige of imported liturgical metalwork in the seventh century.[18] This prestige was transferred to Lombard sculpture, where Byzantine and eastern artistic motifs inspired the fantastical beasts populating the arched panels, and the extensive use of intricately composed patterned borders of Ravennate vine-scroll, acanthus-scrolls and geometric patterns on the elaborate font of Callisto at Cividale del Friuli. The stucco figures in the *Tempietto* at Cividale similarly draw on Byzantine models, imitating the tall, slender form of figures, the linear nature of the robes with their embellished trim, and the oval-shaped eyes seen in Byzantine art styles. This conscious imitation evoked

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[17] Mütherich, 1999: pl. 25.
[18] Di Corato and Vergani, 2007: 13.

the authority and status of the Eastern Empire and its exarchate at Ravenna. In Mercia, this is paralleled in the style of the Breedon Virgin and the figure panel at Pershore (Worcs.), which replicate the architectural setting, low relief style and frontality with heavy drapery seen in the early seventh-century chancel barrier panels from Hagios Polyeuktos.[19]

During the Carolingian period, the range and quality of valued Byzantine artworks available to the Franks was recorded in the ninth-century *Gesta Pontificum Autissiodorensium*, which lists Byzantine silver vessels given by Bishop Desiderius to the cathedral and the church of St. Germain in Auxerre.[20] Nordhagen demonstrated the Byzantine inspiration in both the seventh- and eighth-century schemes of paintings at S. Maria Antiqua in Rome.[21] Byzantine models continued to influence the artistic outputs of Carolingian Rome as seen in the enthroned Madonna and Child mosaic adorning the apse in S. Maria in Domnica, and in the mosaic decoration of the Zeno chapel in S. Prassede, which parallel schemes in S. Vitale and the Archbishop's Chapel in Ravenna.[22] The influence of Byzantine artistic styles is recognisable across Mercia. The Breedon hounds find parallel on a fifth-century Byzantine stucco frieze at Salamis in Cyprus.[23] And even more exotic motifs, such as the heart-shaped leaf uniquely used in the narrow frieze Breedon and traceable to Near Eastern Sassanian textiles, are likely to have entered the Mercian repertoire due to their prestigious adoption by Byzantium.[24] Textiles from the Byzantine burials at Akhmīm in Egypt provide close parallels for the heart-shaped leaves at Breedon, and the late sixth-century decorative pillar from Acre now outside S. Marco in Venice, includes Sassanian textile designs.[25] Similarly, popular animals in Byzantine ivory carving, such as the stags, rams and rampant lions on Maximian's throne in Ravenna, were inspired by Sassanian models.[26] Exotic, Near Eastern models were therefore made available and accessed through intermediary models produced in Byzantine centres in the West. So, for example, the influence of Ravennate mosaics and metalwork is visible in Carolingian manuscript art, such as the

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[19] Jewell, 2001: 253; Nees, 1983: figs. 2–5.
[20] Davis-Weyer, 1986: 66–9; Henderson, 1994: 249.
[21] Nordhagen, 1990b: 164–5; Nordhagen, 2000: 115–16.
[22] Krautheimer, 1980: 131–2; Deliyannis, 2010: pl. V.
[23] Volbach and Kuehnel, 1926: pl. 45; Jewell, 1982: 111, 114, 117, 187, fig. 98.
[24] Jewell, 1982: 52–6; 1986: 97. As discussed in Chapter Four (pp. 110–11), these Sassanian artistic motifs made their way into the Byzantine repertoire during the fifth centuries via the importation of luxury goods such as silks (Gonosová, 2007: 40, 45).
[25] Kendrick, A. F. 1922: nos. 795, 800, 808, pls. 24, 22 and 25; Volbach, 1961: 352, pl. 208; Jewell, 1986: 97; Gonosová, 2007: 45.
[26] Beckwith, 1970: pl. 94.

late eighth-, early ninth-century Coronation Gospels (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Treasury, inv. SKXIII/18, fol. 76v).[27]

Whilst the evidence supports the conclusion that the art of eastern late Antiquity was strongly influential in the development of Mercian sculpture, its parallel, contemporary influence across the Christian West suggests that models could have been accessed in or through contact with western centres. The range of portable and monumental models that Mercian sculpture appears to have drawn from implies that both the movement of objects and people facilitated access to Byzantine artistic styles. There is however, no evidence to suggest that the individuality of Mercian sculpture resulted from the importation of continental sculptors, as has previously been supposed.[28] This has been demonstrated by the comprehensive analysis of the development and style of Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture. In a number of ways the emergence of Mercian and continental sculpture followed similar trajectories. Both regions used monumental stone sculpture as an expression of authority and prestige by endowing strategic centres of religious and secular importance. Similarly, the style of sculpture in both regions sought to emulate the prestigious heritage of late Antiquity, embellishing monuments with accepted symbolic motifs and mimicking the splendour of high status artworks including mosaics and metalwork. Both sculptural traditions also integrated existing motifs drawn from their own native artistic traditions to create individual synthetic styles. In Mercia, this is seen in the incorporation of Insular motifs from the Northumbrian sculptural tradition and contemporary manuscript, metalwork and ivory production. In Lombard and Carolingian-era sculpture, this integration saw the inclusion of ornamental metalwork motifs, notably triple-stranded interlace. Despite these apparent parallels, this thesis has established that the sculptural traditions in Mercia and the Continent developed independently of each other and there are no stylistic grounds on which to suggest either tradition influenced the other.

This conclusion is upheld by a number of key points of distinction. The first is the difference in the range of monuments that each tradition produced. As Chapter Three outlined (pp. 87–90), continental sculpture is predominantly architectural, comprising decorative pilasters, screen panels, arched ciborium fragments and infrequent examples of pierced window inserts and pulpit fragments. In addition to these architectural forms there survive a limited number of more monumental designs,

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[27] Rosenbaum, 1956: 81–90; Buchthal, 1961: 127–39; Dalton, 1961: fig. 391; Cramp, 1977: 195, 106; Schutz, 2004: pl. 12b.
[28] Brøndsted, 1924; Clapham, 1930: 64; Kitzinger, 1936: 63; Plunkett, 1984: 15; Cramp in Rodwell *et al.*, 2008: 75.

notably the altars at Cividale and Ravenna, the sarcophagus fragments at Gussago and bordered inscriptions. In contrast, the range of Mercian monuments is one of its characteristic features – including sepulchral monuments, architectural sculpture, votive panels and cross-sculpture. Within the range of *types* of monuments in Mercia, there is also a great variety in style, both in terms of carving technique and form and ornament. This is illustrated by the different forms of the sepulchral monuments discussed in the previous chapter, and by the contrast in carving technique seen when comparing monuments, sometimes at the same site. This is particularly apparent at Breedon, where the shallow relief of the Virgin panel can be contrasted with the deep under-cutting technique seen in the rectangular panel containing the two robed figures holding foliate rods.

The standardisation of style and the consistency of the ornamental repertoire across the majority of continental sculpture is also a striking distinction. From the emerging Lombard sculpture of the early eighth century through to the Carolingian era and beyond into the eleventh century the most dominant motif is the vine-scroll. But, unlike its Anglo-Saxon counterpart, the continental vine-scroll is rarely inhabited, particularly in Lombard Italy before the Carolingian takeover. The vine-scroll is distinguished by its close, geometric design, with fruits, leaves and tendrils contained in rigid and compact symmetrical arrangements. There is none of the variety seen in Mercian vine-scroll, which is typified by its organic and fleshy character. The widespread and persistent use of triple-stranded interlace as the primary decorative concept on continental sculpture is another key distinction. This motif can be found on all forms of monument on the Continent and at almost all sculpture sites across early medieval Italy as well as regions outside the traditional Carolingian territories – in the regions of Benevento and Spoleto and further afield, in northern Spain. The complete absence of this motif in the repertoire of Mercian, and indeed Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture, further separates the traditions.

Establishing motivations and modes of transmission

The Mercians were therefore not looking to contemporary stone sculpture for inspiration in their pursuit of continental concepts of authority and papal allegiance. Instead, patrons and sculptors endeavoured to reflect as comprehensively as possible, their direct and independent access to late Antique sources of artistic influence through two channels – the receipt of circulating portable prestigious objects originating from or imitative of eastern imperial court culture; and physical access to monumental

prestigious artworks such as mosaics and frescoes by the movement of people. As discussed, the use in Mercian sculpture of exotic, symbolically pertinent motifs associated with silks and silverware, signalled inclusion in important networks of communication reinforced by gift-exchange. Direct evidence for this exchange survives in documentary records, such as Charlemagne's letter of 796 to Offa outlining gifts of Avar loot, which have been thought to have included textiles.[29] Continued diplomatic and religious communication between the Continent and Anglo-Saxon England provided the ideal mechanism by which objects for elite consumption, such as reliquaries, textiles and ivories, found their way to religious and secular central places in Mercia.[30] Channels for communication with continental monastic centres contributed to the movement of people and objects. The installation of Offa's daughter Eadburh as abbess at Pavia in 802, and her possible connection with the convent at Reichenau, illustrates the complexity of the networks that enabled ideas and artistic models to travel between Mercia, strategic centres of importance on the Continent and artistic foci such as Rome and Ravenna.[31] Lichfield's elevation to archiepiscopal status prompted the arrival of diplomatic visitors from Carolingian courts in the company of papal envoys; and a charter exempting Breedon from hospitality duties towards royal visitors, demonstrate how the movement of people into Mercia could have facilitated model circulation.[32] Mercia's network of monastic colonies underpinned the transmission of prestigious continental goods within the kingdom, providing local and regional trading centres and established communication routes.[33]

Inconsistencies existed within Mercia's internal networks of exchange, presumably arising from the hierarchical interrelationships between different monastic colonies and their patrons. This is reflected in the geographical inconsistencies of non-Insular motif appropriation and the distribution of monument type and style. The prominence of the Peterborough monastic colony is reflected in the 'seminal monastic school' of Breedon and Peterborough, where the close relationship between the sites is shared by their styles of sculpture and the popularity of stone from Peterbrough's quarries at Barnack.[34] The comparable use of apostle imagery and the style of carving

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[29] Story, 2005: 200–2. Cincik, 1958: 52–5; Stenton, 1971: 221; Cramp, 1976: 271; Cramp, 1977: 206; Whitelock, 1979: 848–9.

[30] Moreland and van de Noort, 1992: 326, 328.

[31] Stafford, 1981: 3–27; Keynes, 1997: 115, note 71; Yorke, 2005: 45.

[32] Sawyer, 1968: no. 197; Whitelock, 1979: 22, 858–62; Hawkes, 2001: 245. Blair, 2005: 132.

[33] Blinkhorn, 1999: 4–23; Ulmschneider, 2000: 95–9; Blair, 2005: 260–1.

[34] Clapham, 1930: 76; Kendrick, 1938: 175–8; Jope, 1965: 100; Cramp, 1977: 192; Plunkett, 1984: 15; Alexander, 1995: 115.

seen in the drapery, pose and character of the figures at these sites points to shared models of late Antique origin and shared centres of production.[35]

In contrast, the networks of exchange that linked the cross-sculpture sites of the western Midlands contributed to a reliance on contemporary metalwork, of predominantly Anglo-Saxon design, that might reflect limited access to other models resulting from geographical or hierarchical isolation. These Mercian sites, outside the heartland of the kingdom, were however part of a network benefiting from royal interest, which would have made possible the circulation of non-Insular artistic models and sculptural trends. Monastic foundations in this region, including Wenlock in Shropshire, were established by and remained under the control of the Mercian royal family.[36] Royal involvement can also be detected at the small minster of Acton Beauchamp and the royal *vill* at Cropthorne.[37] Sculptors and patrons in the outlying regions of Mercia are argued here to have been consciously selective of which models, both Insular and continental, they chose to adopt and adapt in order to define their own 'sub-brand' within the broader Mercian style. This is illustrated by the Derbyshire cross-sculpture, which in its reactive style – reflective of its isolated position between Northumbria and the Mercian heartland – exhibits a deliberate independence of style that nonetheless acknowledges alliance with continental concepts in its use of late Antique vine-scroll motifs. It is this variety in Mercian sculpture that provides avenues for future research.

The relationship between the development of Mercian sculpture and continental artistic activity was not only complex, but resulted in a unique body of evidence that is unparalleled in the early Christian West. Mercian sculpture is thus an unrivalled source of information for understanding the nature of a kingdom whose documentary and archaeological records are so fragmentary. The variety of form and ornament in Mercian sculpture, which this thesis has shown points to regional and sub-regional attitudes towards monumental expression and motif transfer, alludes to the intricate nature of Mercian artistic and social identity. In the late eighth and early ninth centuries the creation and reinforcement of a Mercian identity constituted a subscription to the widespread intellectual renaissance of late Antique imperialism. Only through exploring and understanding the material and artistic manifestations of this intellectual renaissance in Mercia can the kingdom's relationship with Carolingian Europe be brought into

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[35] Cramp, 1977: 210, 218; Plunkett, 1984: 18–19; Mitchell, 2010: 264–5.
[36] Gelling, 1989: 192–3.
[37] Birch, 1885: nos. 134, 235; Sawyer, 1968: no. 118; Hill, 1981: ill. 145; Thorn and Thorn, 1982: 2; Finberg, 1972: no. 227; Hart, 1977: 58; Hooke, 1985: 88; Hooke, 1990: 30; Blair, 2005: 102.

sharper focus. This thesis has shown that the influence of late Antiquity was received and reworked within hierarchies of production in Mercian society and in alignment with differing regional and sub-regional agendas. It is this variety in Mercian sculpture that provides avenues for future research. Further work on the regional and sub-regional differences in the style and use of sculpture will contribute to our understanding of the origins and development of this complex kingdom, and its political organisation and structure in the eighth and ninth centuries.

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The Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture of Mercia as Evidence for Continental Influence and Cultural Exchange

2 Volumes

Volume 2

Gwendoline C C Bergius (née Dales)

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Department of Archaeology
Durham University

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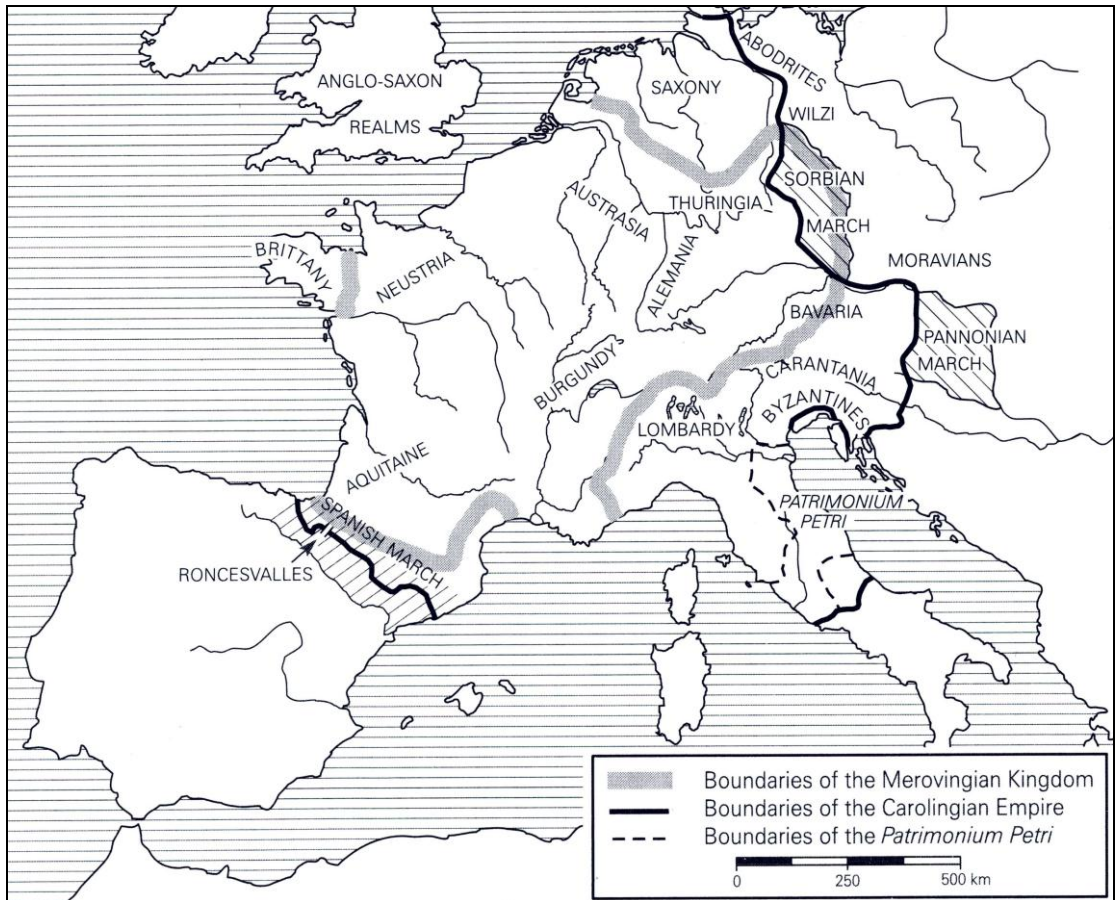
1.B The Continent in the late eighth century
(after Schutz, 2004: map 1)
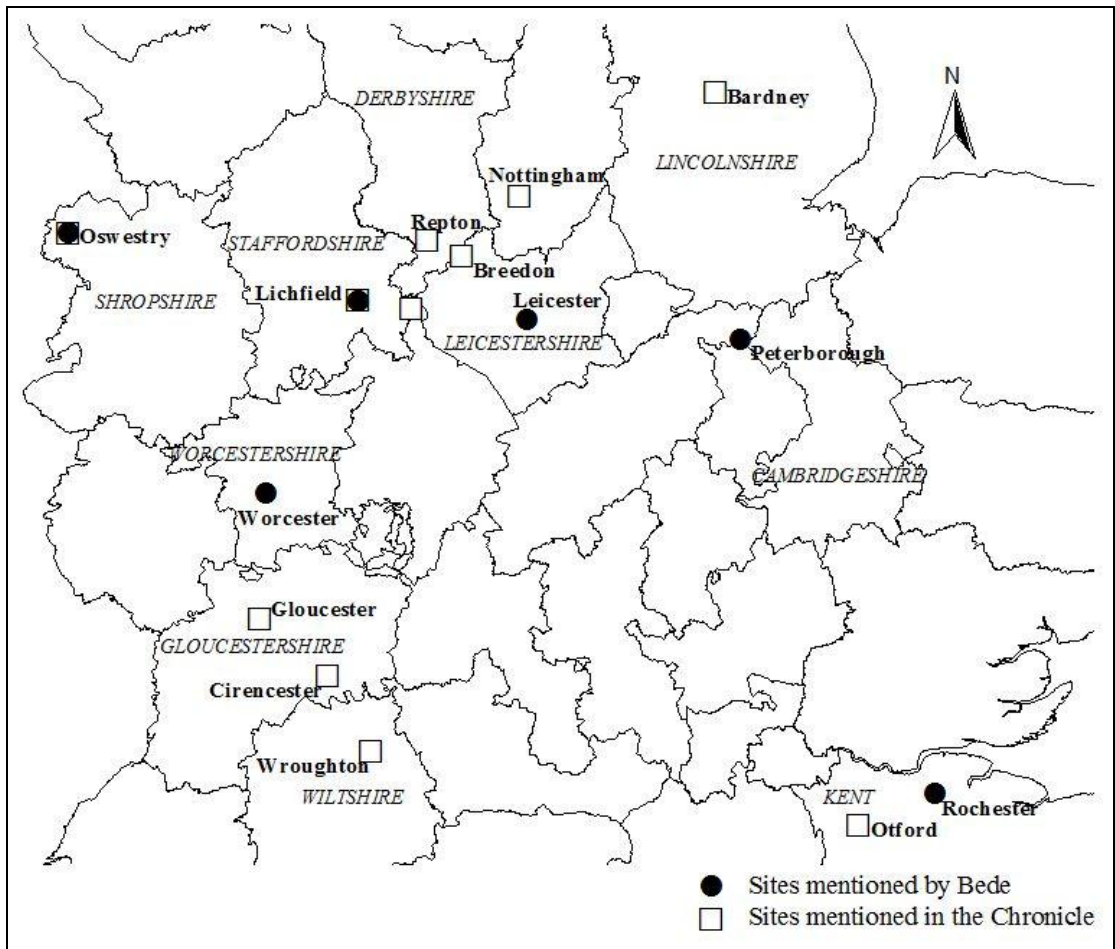
1.C Sites mentioned by Bede and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*
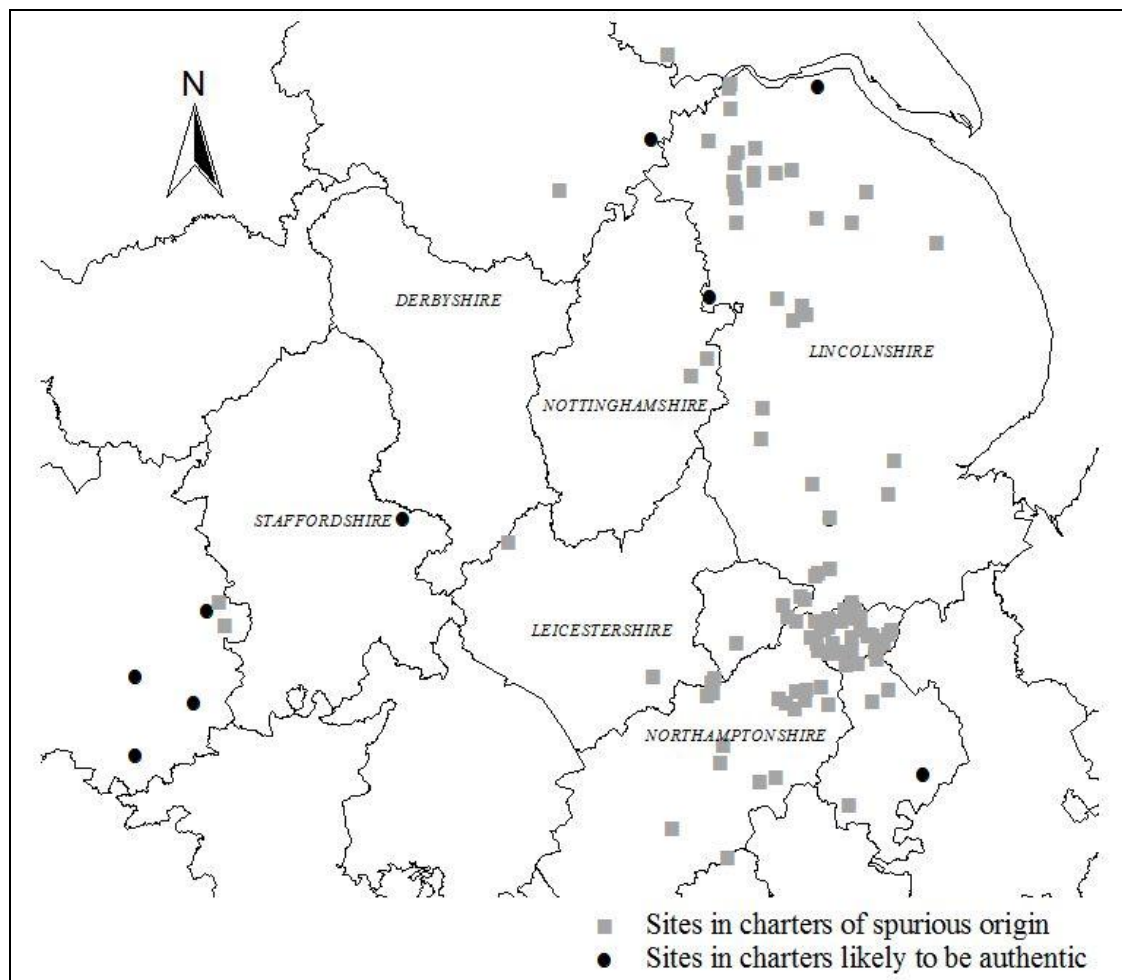
1.D Sites in Mercia from the charter evidence, c. 625-675
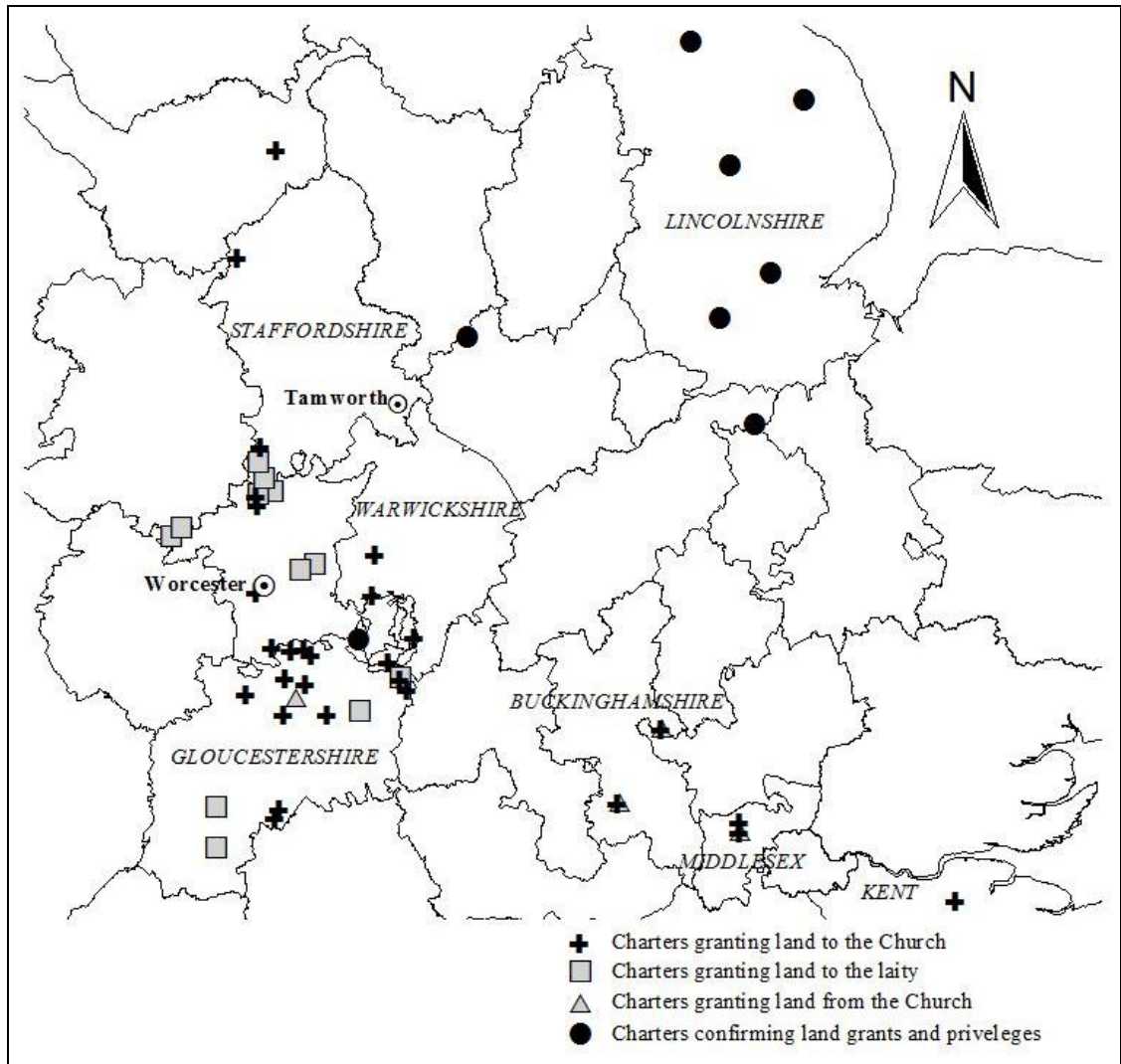
1.E Sites in Mercia from the charter evidence, c. 676-725
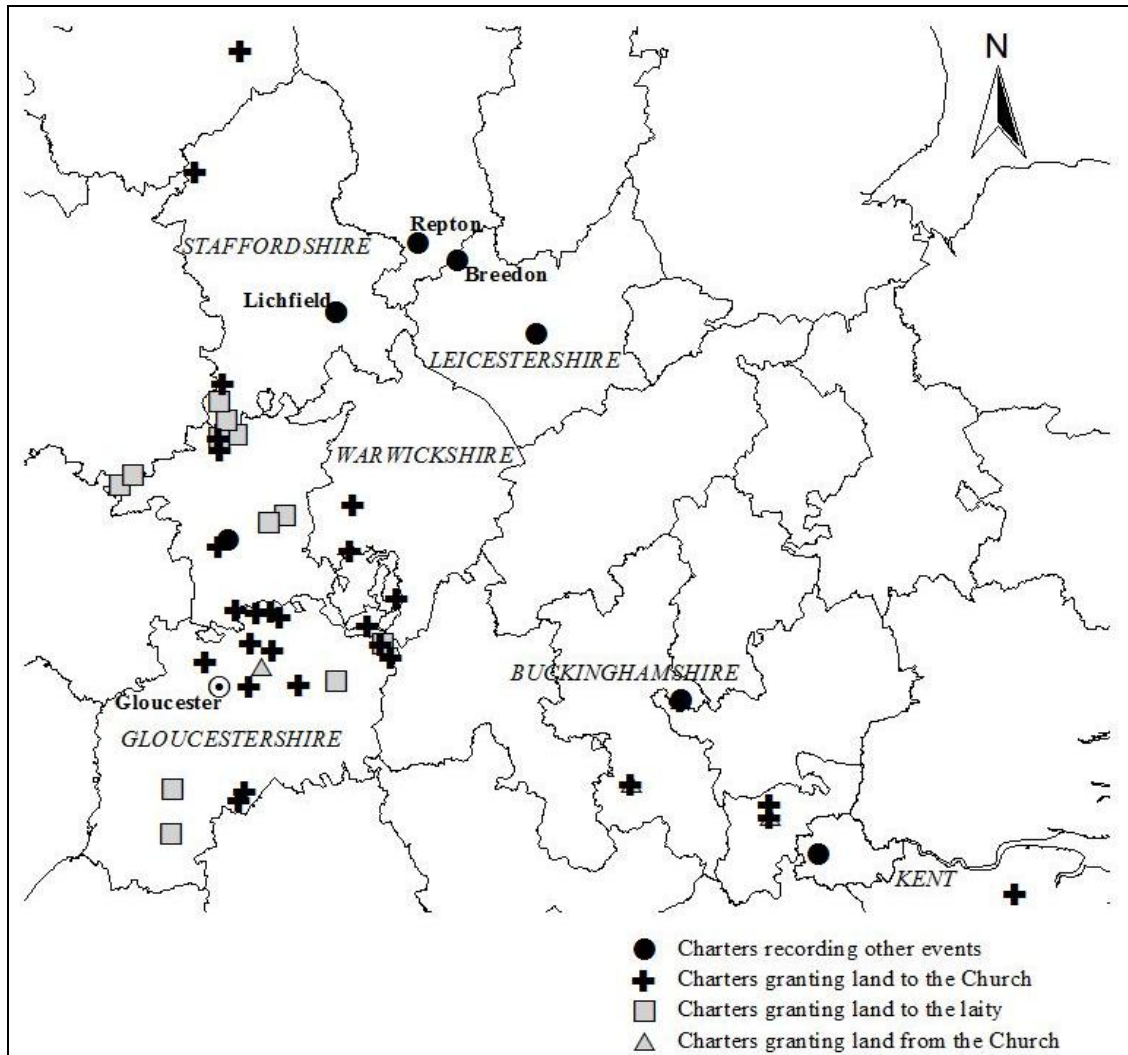
1.F Sites in Mercia from the charter evidence, c. 726-775
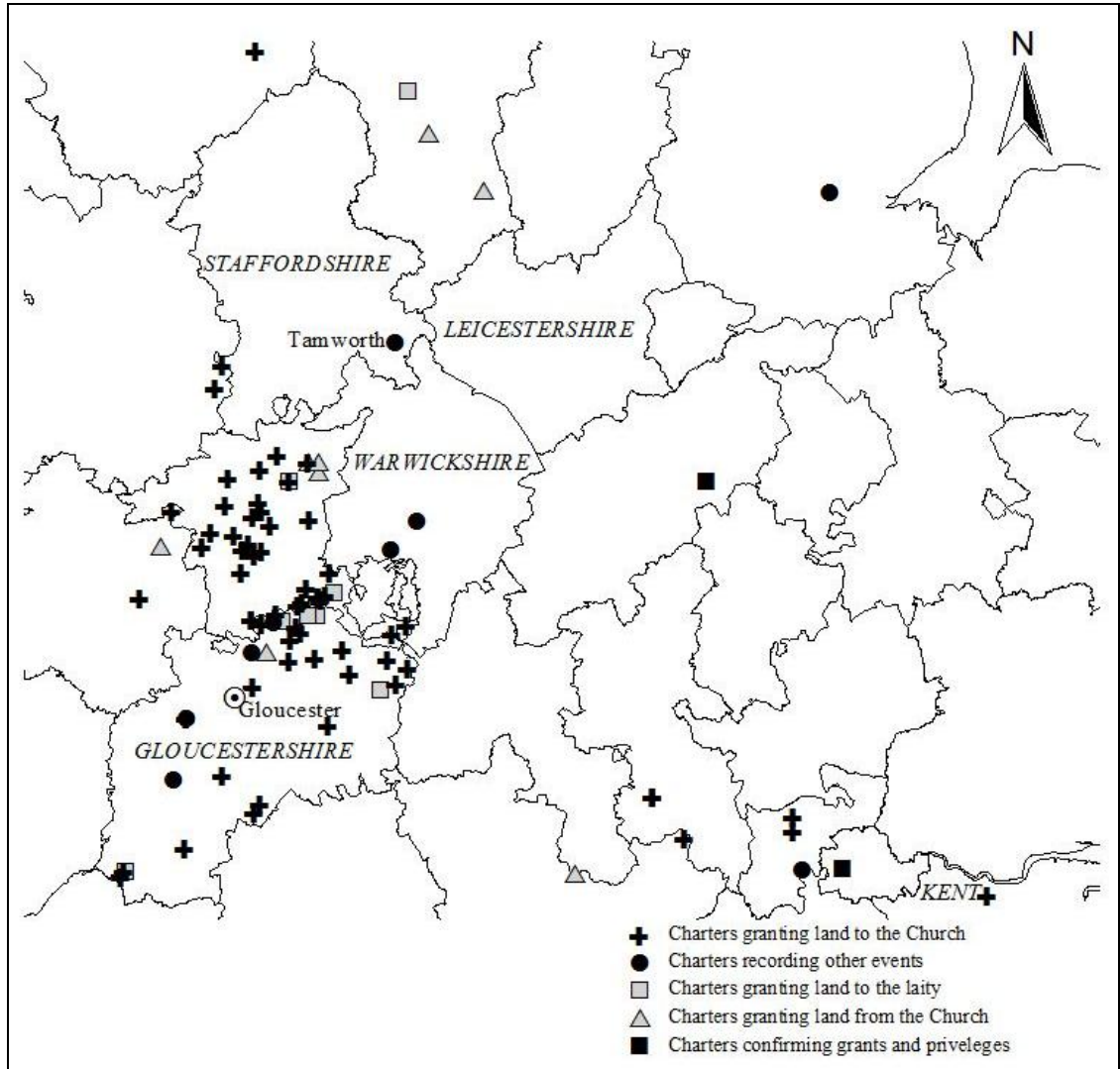
1.G Sites in Mercia from the charter evidence, c. 776-825
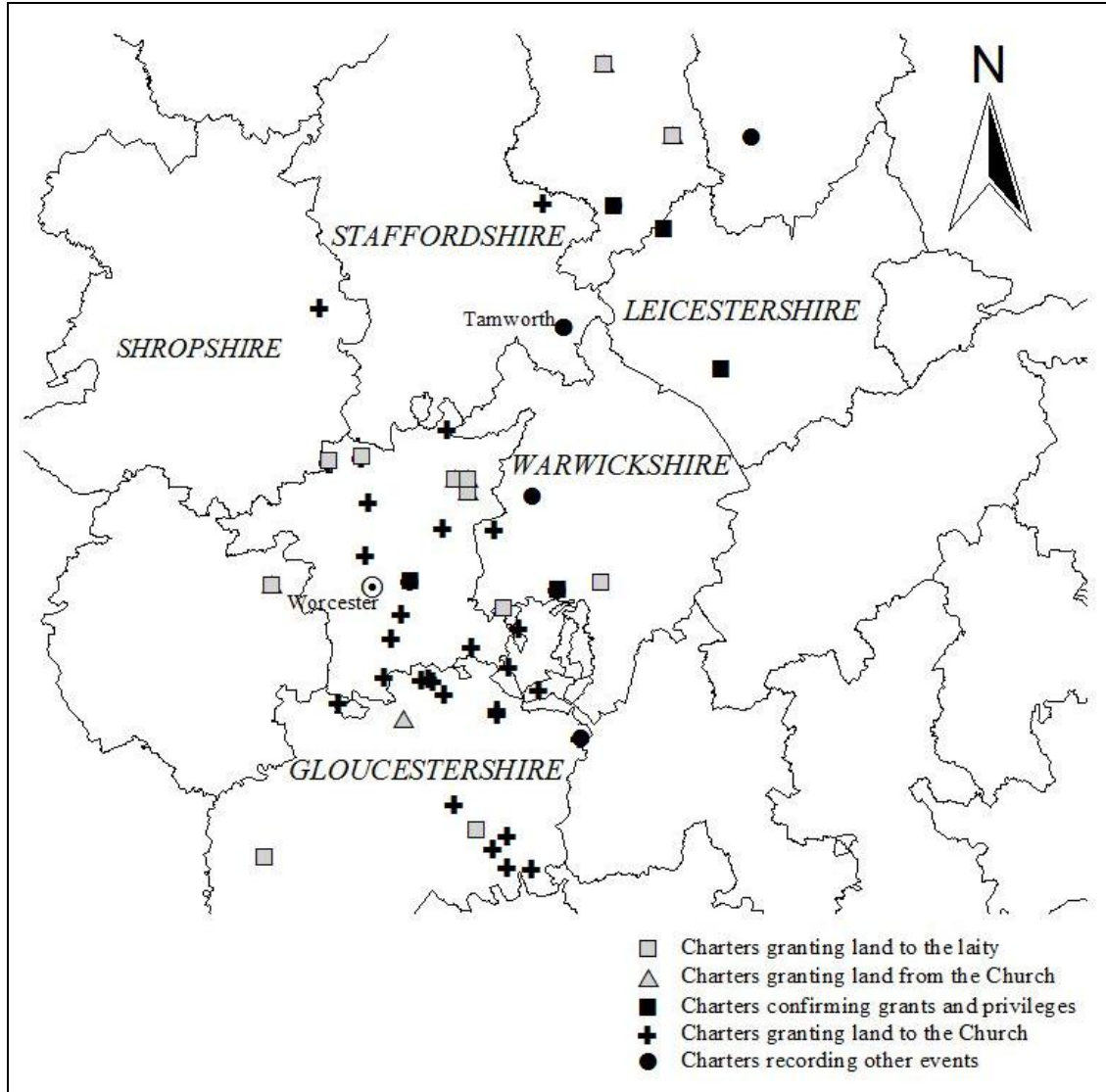
1.H Sites in Mercia from the charter evidence, c. 826-875

**1.I Conjectural map of Mercia based on the *Tribal Hidage*
(after Hart, 1977 and Brown and Farr, 2001: fig. 1)**
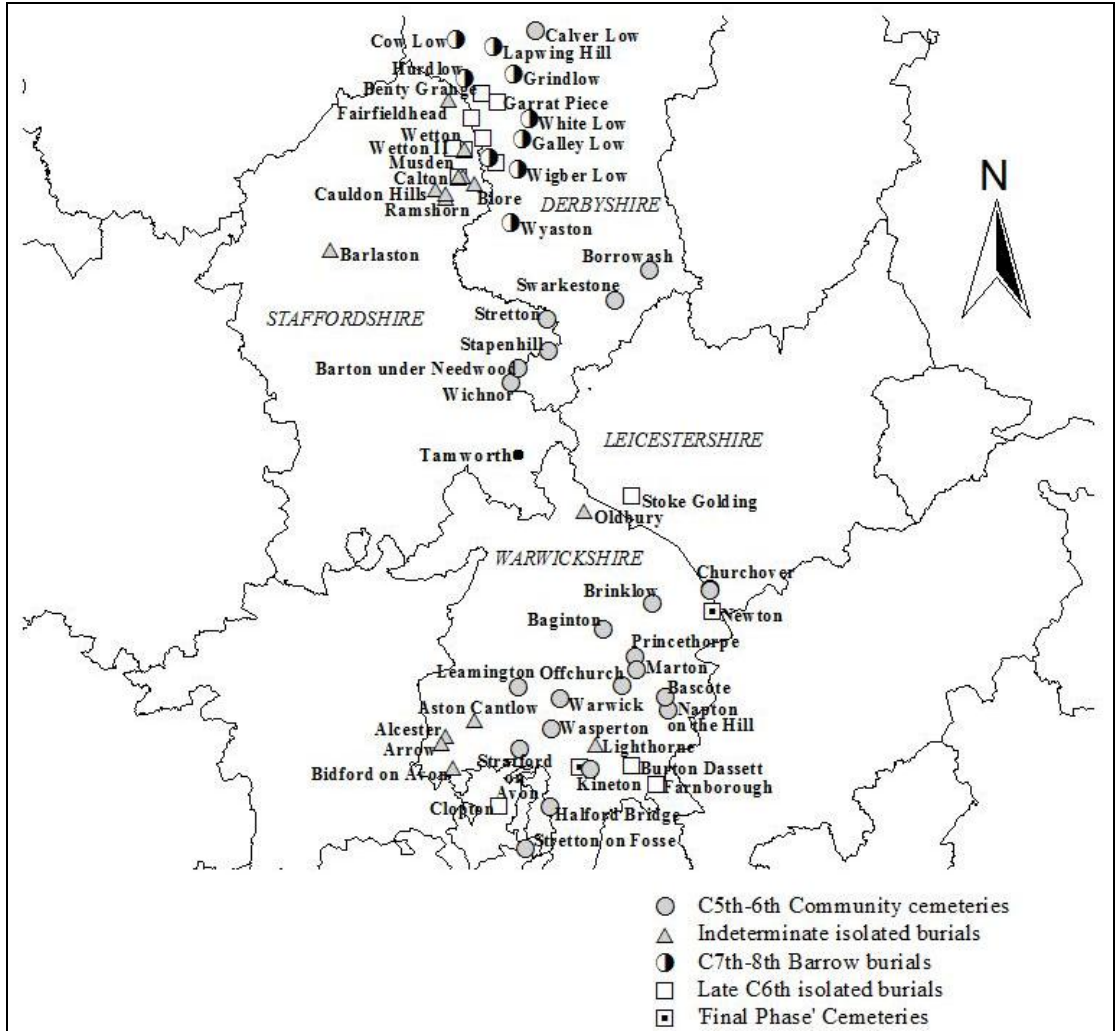
1.J Pagan burials in the Mercian heartland
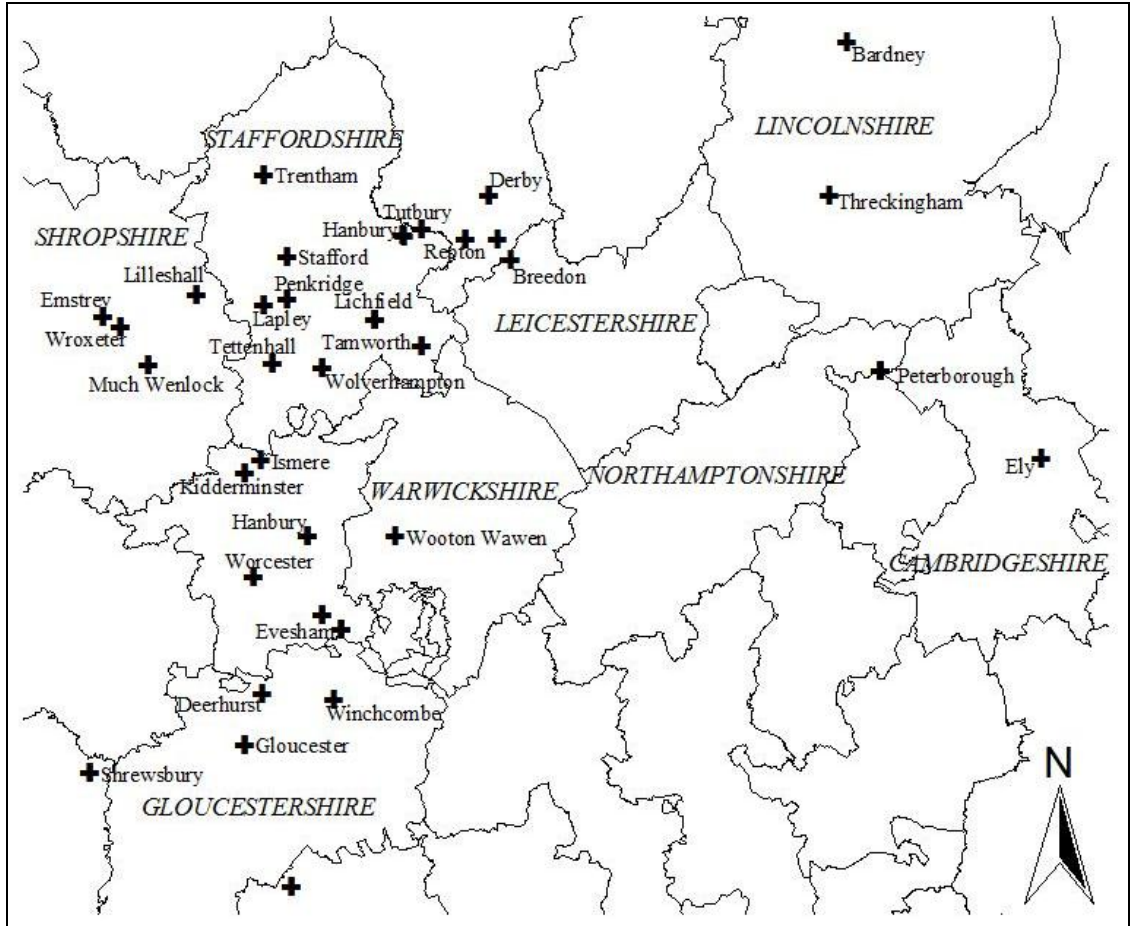
1.K The principal ecclesiastical sites in Mercia.
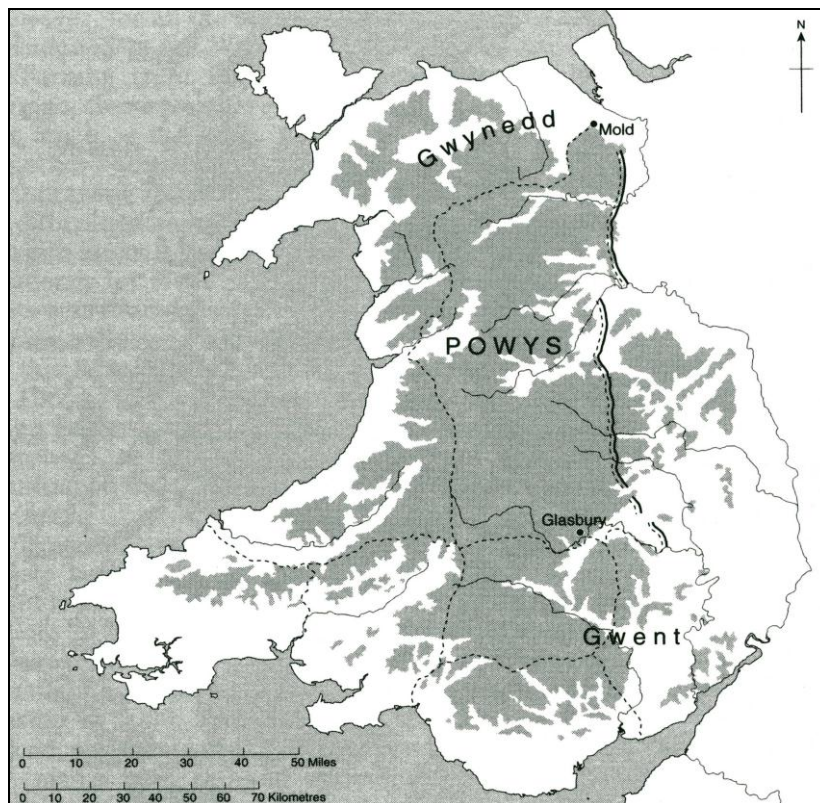
1.L The location of Offa's Dyke.
(after Hill, 2001: map 3)
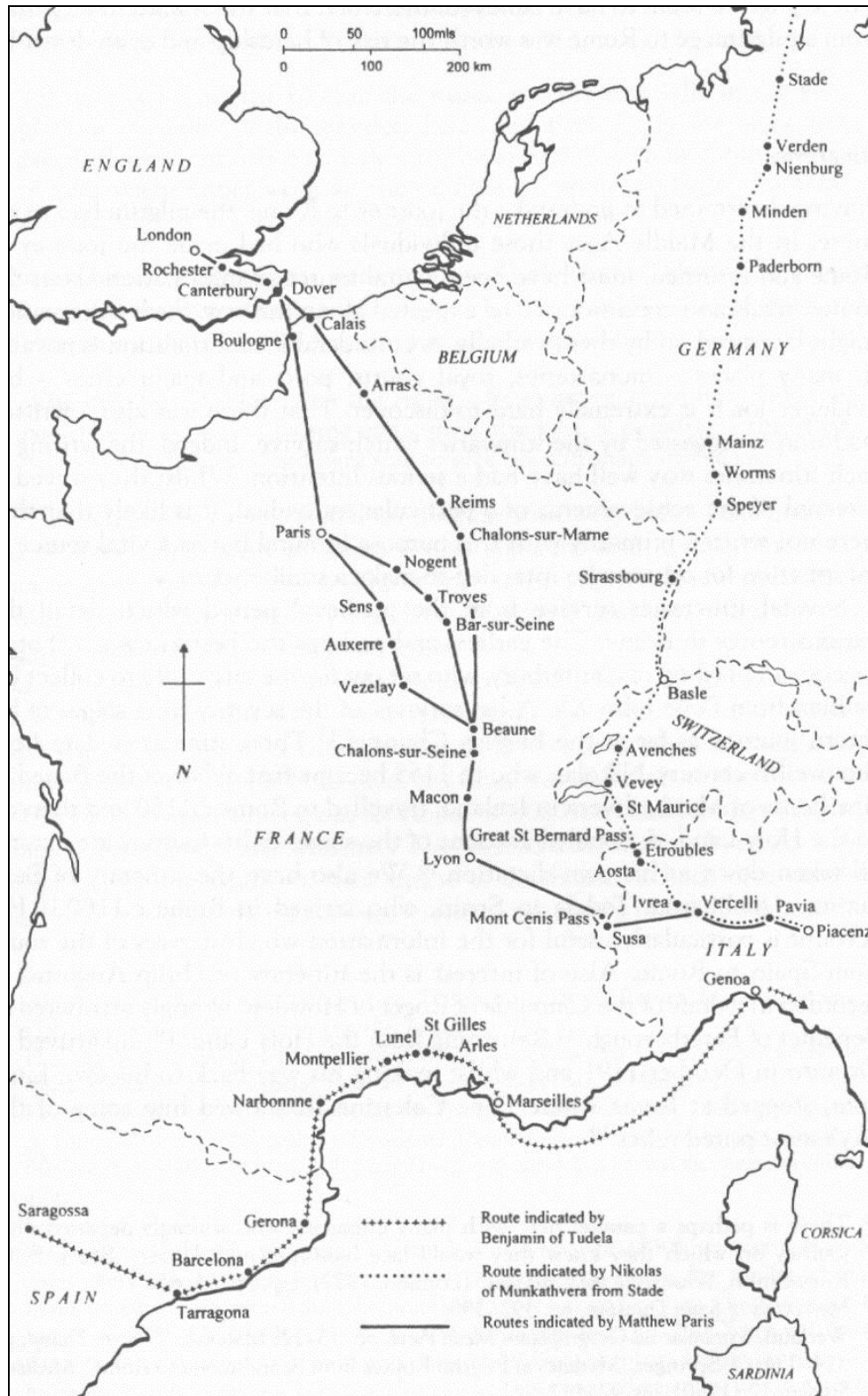
1.M The pilgrimage routes between England and Italy
(after Birch, 1998: map 2)

2.A Mercian sculptural schools
(after Cramp, 1977: fig. 49)

2.B The distribution of Mercian sculpture by type

2.C Key sculpture sites in Italy
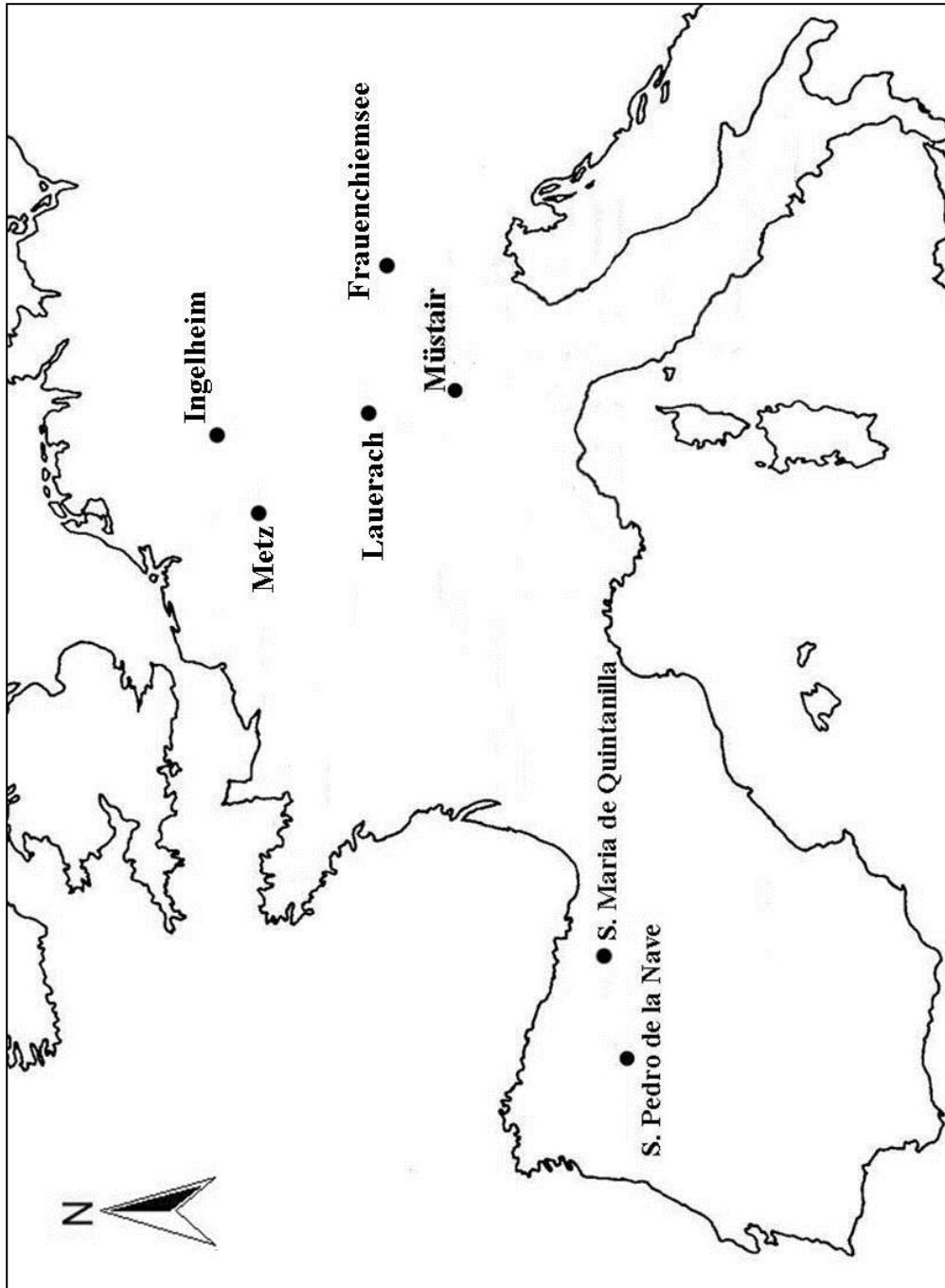
2.D Key sculpture collections outside Italy
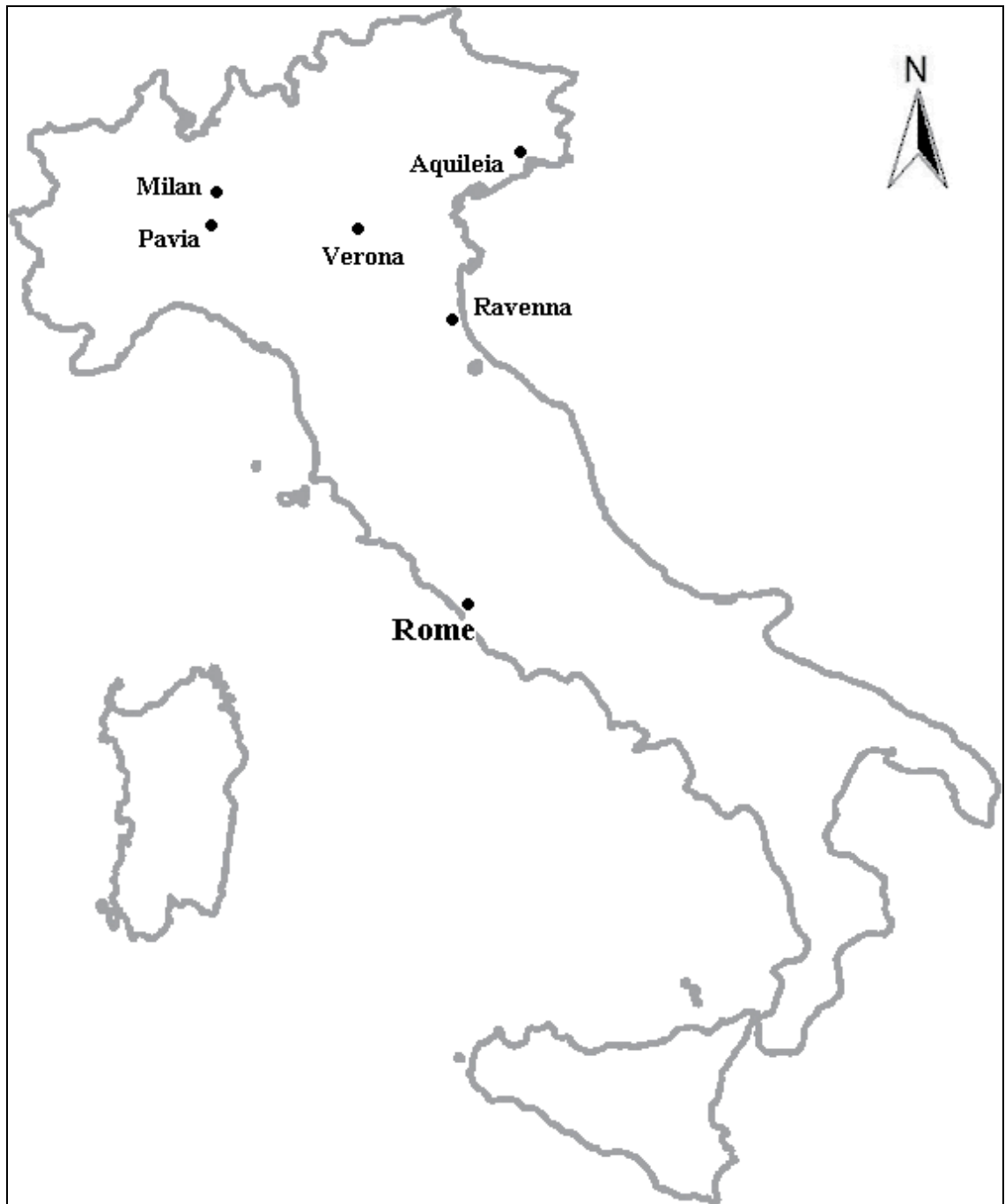
3.A Key sites in late Antique Italy

LATE ROMAN MILAN

N

S. Vittore
al Corpo

S. Ambrogio
(Basilica
Martyrum)

S.
Valeria

Memoria

S.
Vitale

Necropolis
(University Zone)

Amphitheatre

Porta
Vercellina

Porta
Giovia

Baths

Circus

Palace
Zone

Porta Ticinese

S. Lorenzo

S. Eustorgio

Theatre

Granary

Porta
Comacina

Porta
Nuova

Late
Roman
Domus

S.
Tecla

S.
Giovanni

Late
Triapsidal
Building

Domus
Ambrosii?

S.
Stefano
(Baptistery?)

Baths of
Hercules

East Gate

S. Stefano

S. Simpliciano

S. Dionigi

Porta Romana

S. Nazzaro
(Basilica Apostolorum)

Porticoed
routeway

S.
Calimero

Honorary
Arch

S. Celso

**3.B Early Christian Milan
(after Christie, 2006: fig. 1.9)**

Gaii (S. Susanna) Ciriaci

St. Peter's

S. Lorenzo
in Lucina

VII VI

S. Vitale S. Andrea Catabarbara

S. Pudenziana S. Maria Maggiore

S. Lorenzo in Damaso Vito in Prassede

S. Marcel Macello Eusebio S. Bibiana

IX V

S. Agata
dei Goti

S. Marco IV S. Martino
ai Monti III

S. Pietro
in Vincoli

Matteo

VIII Marcellino

S. Anastasia X S. Clemente e Pietro S. Croce
in Gerusalemme

S. Maria in S. Crisogono

Trastevere II Quattro
Coronati

XI

Cecilia Lateran Basilica

XIV S. Sabina SS. Giovanni
e Paolo

Prisca S. Sisto Vecchio Sto. Stefano Rotondo

Balbina Fasciola (Nepeo ed Achilleo)

XII I

XIII

Constantinian churches

Major non-titular churches

Minor non-titular churches

Tituli replaced by churches

Tituli continuing

◇ Secular and pagan buildings built or
rebuilt after Constantine:
a Porticus Deorum Consentium
b Temple of Saturn
c Praefectura Urbis
   (SS. Cosma e Damiano)
d Statio Annonae

**3.C Early Christian Rome
(after Krautheimer, 1983: fig. 90)**

**3.D The principal Lombard sites in Italy
(after Christie, 1995: fig. 7)**

3.E Carolingian Italy
(after Story, 2005: ill. 3)

3.F Papal Rome, c. 800
(after Noble, 1984: map 5)

Milan

Ravenna

Rome

Byzantium

Salamis

Acre

St. Catherine's, Sinai

Luxor

Bawit

Akhmīm

Oxyrhynchus

Ahnas

Saqqara

Cairo

4.A Late Antique sites mentioned in the text.

4.B Eastern early medieval sites mentioned in the text.

4.C Western early medieval sites mentioned in the text

4.D Northumbrian sites mentioned in the text.

4.E Southumbrian sites mentioned in the text.

5.A The distribution of Mercian sepulchral sculpture

Martham *Blida*

Blythburgh *Hiæmma*

Iken *Ashwulf, Botwulf*

E. Dereham St. Benet's *Wihtburh* *Wulfric*

Bawburgh *Walstan*

Crowland *Ælfthryth, Cissa, Guthlac*

Beorhthelm (i) Norbury
 O *Barloc*

Hanbury Derby
 Wærburh O *Alchmund (iv)*

Grantham *Eadthryth, Wulfram*

Breedon-on-the-Hill
 Beonna, Cotta, Eardwulf, Frithuric

Stone O
Stafford O
Wulfhad, Ruffinus O
Beorhthelm (i) O Burton O *Modwynn*

Lichfield *Ceadda, Ceatta* O

Tamworth O
Eadgyth (ii) Polesworth
 Eadgyth (i)

Castor *Cyneburh (i), Cyneswith* O
Peterborough *Cuthbald, Florentius, Botwulf*

Ryhall *Tibba* O

Peakirk *Pega*

Thorney *Albinus, Thancred, Torthred, Iova, Wihtred*

March *Wymhryth*

Honey Hill *Huna*

Ely *Æthelthryth, Eadnoth, Eormenhild, Seaxburh*

Soham *Felix*

St. Ives O *Ivo*

Ramsey *Æthelflaed (i)*

Bury Eadmund (i) O

Grundisburgh *Botwulf*

Wenlock O
Mildburh

Coventry O
 Osburh

Northampton *Regenhere*

Huntingdon O
Herebeht

Boxworth (?) O
 Incium

Eltisley
 Pandionia

Shelford
 Æthelthme (ii) O

Hadstock
 Botwulf

Eynesbury O
 Neot

Bedford O
 Æthelburh (iii)

North Crawley *Firmin*

Cropredy O
 Freomund

Stortford O
 Eadgyth

Berkswell O O
 Mildred

Evesham
 Credan, Ecgwine, Odwulf

Stowe O
 Kyfnoth

Stow-on-the-Wold
 Eadweard (ii)

Buckingham O
 Rumwold (i)

Beckley *Eadburh (i)*

Aylesbury *Eadgyth (i), Osgyth*

St. Albans
 Alban

Barking
 Æthelburh (ii), Hildelith, Wulfhild

London
 Earconwald

Rochester
 Paulinus

Minster-in-Thanet
 Æbbe (iii), Eadburh (iii), Eormengyth, Mildthryth (i)

Wakering
 Æthelburh (i), Æthelad (v)

Chich
 Osgyth

Worcester
 Oswald (ii) O
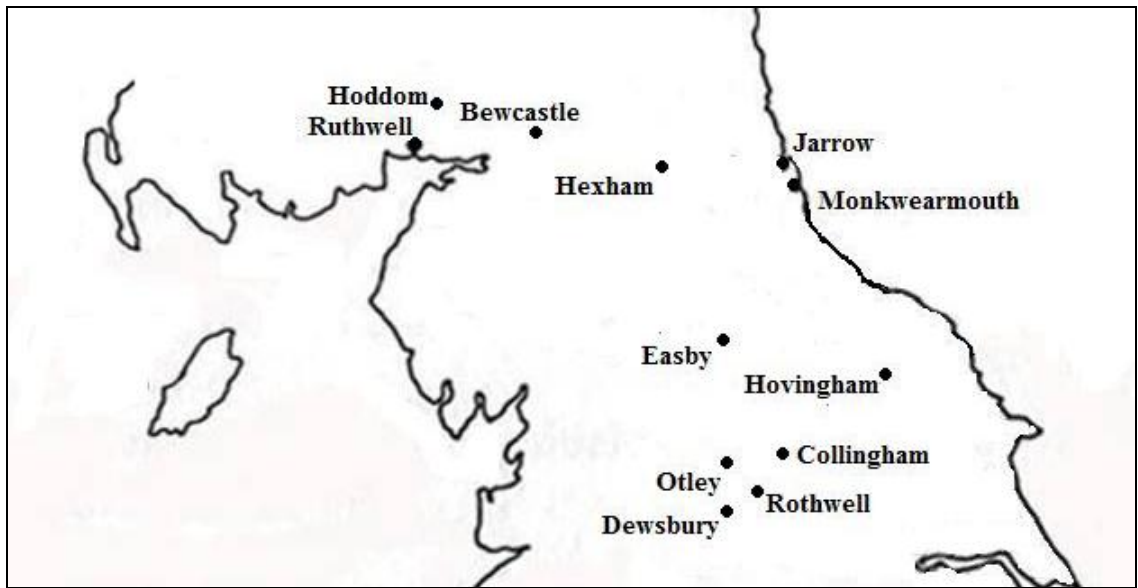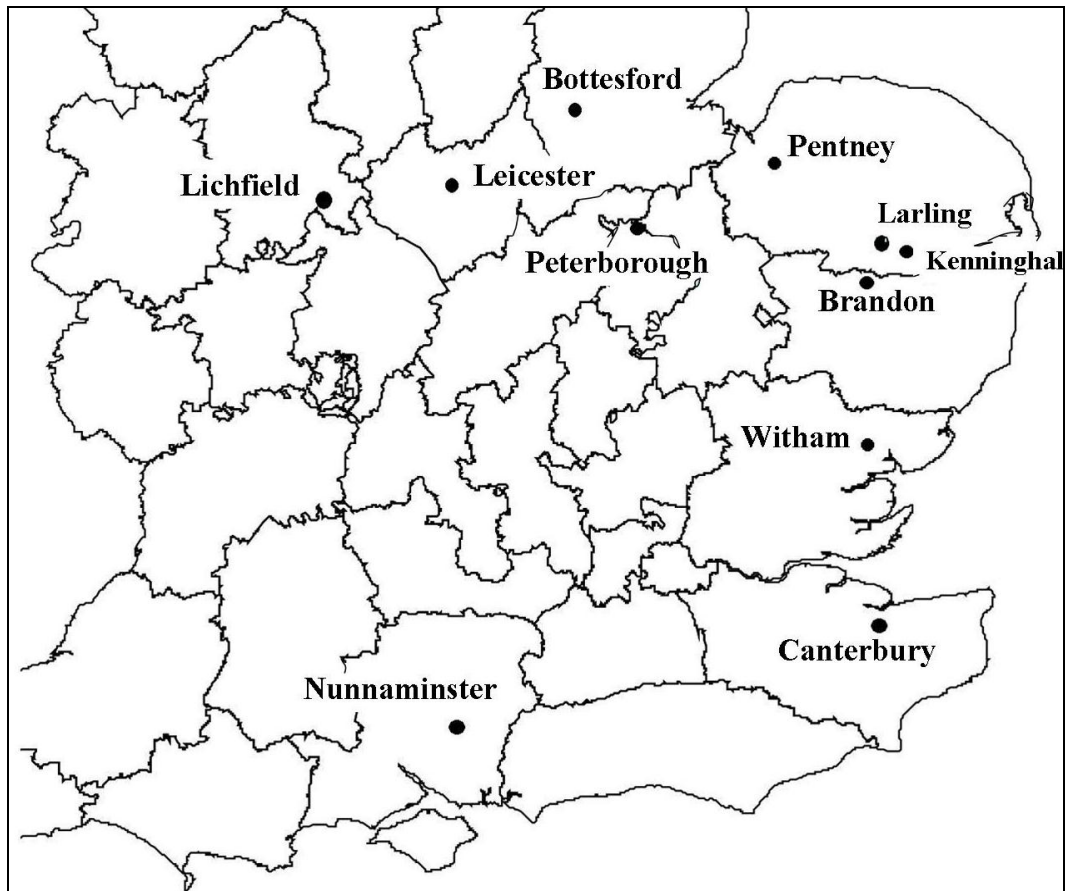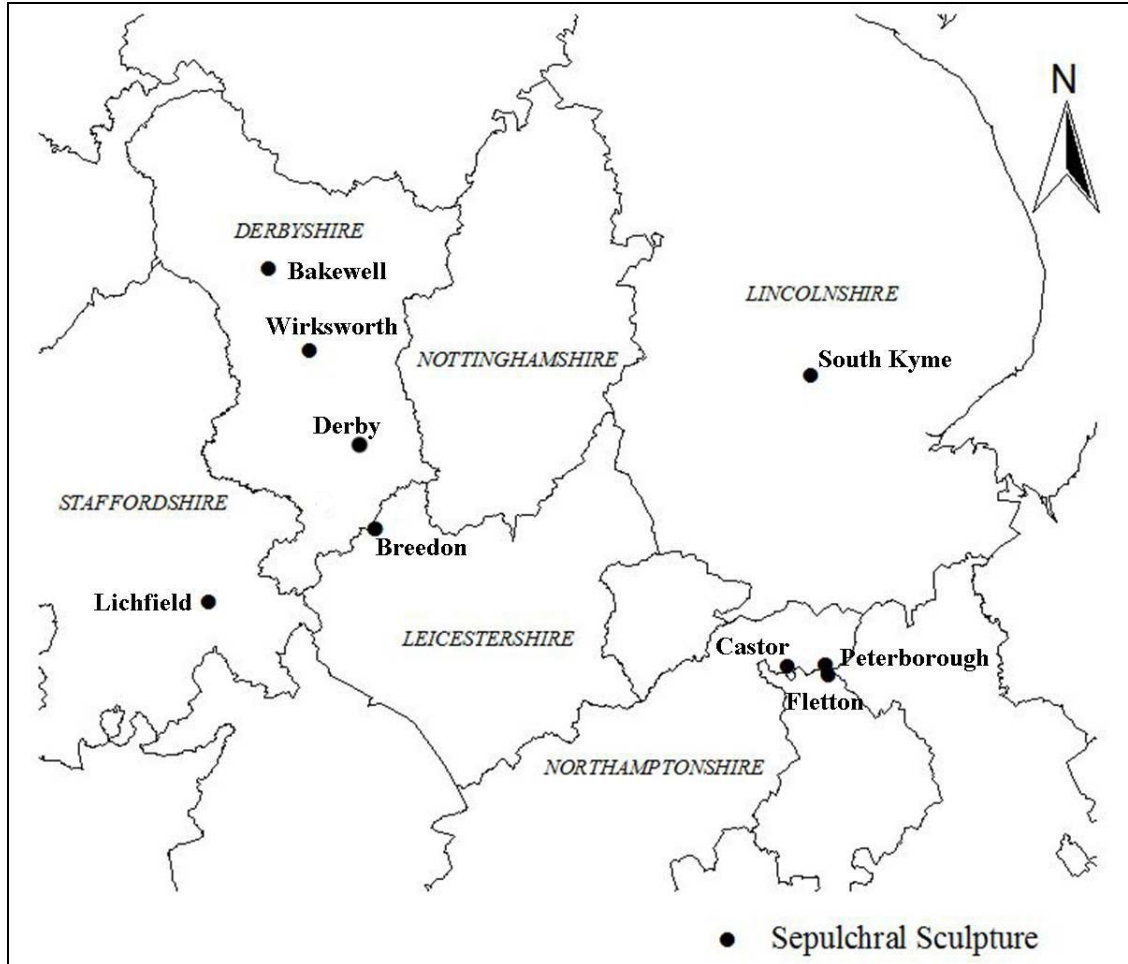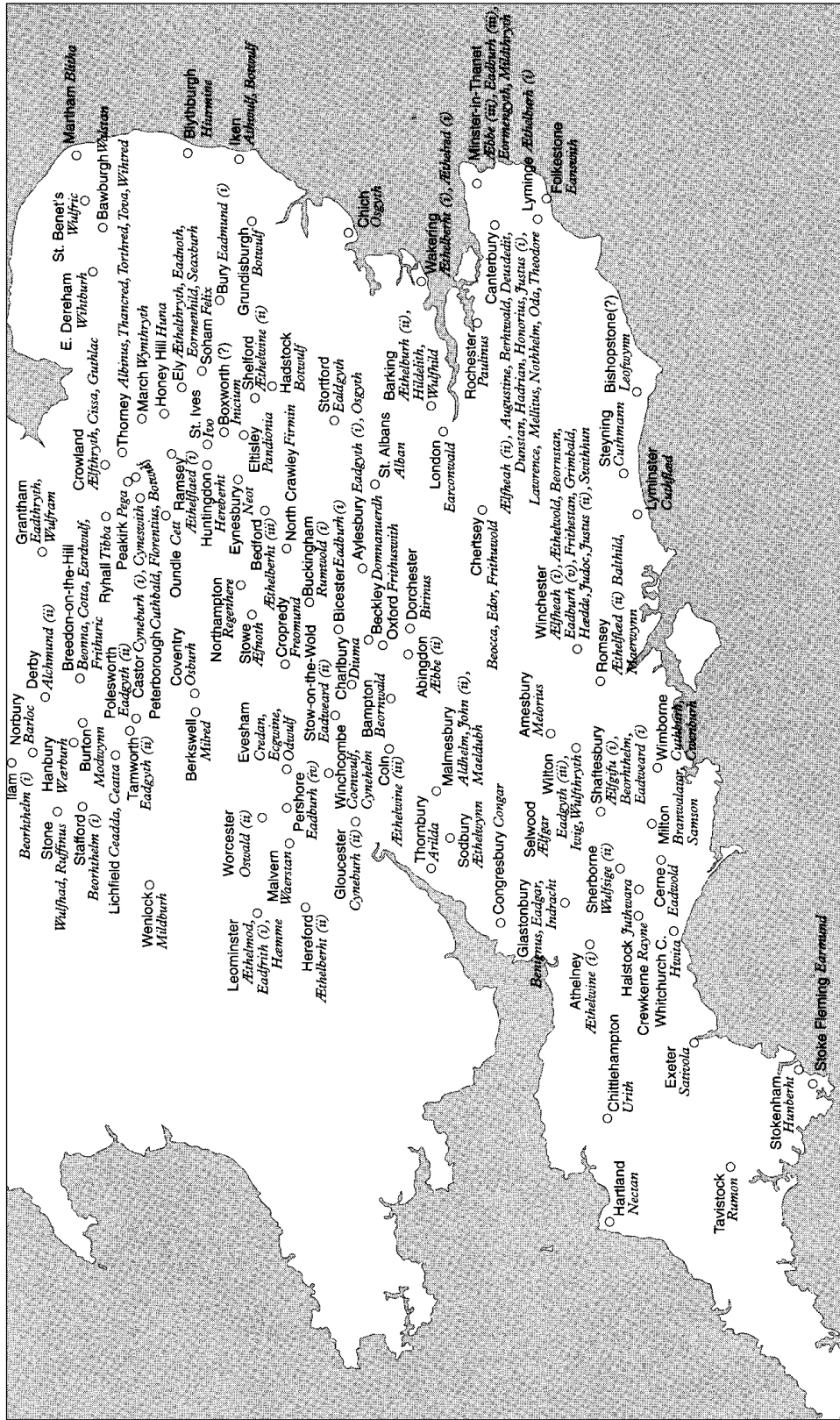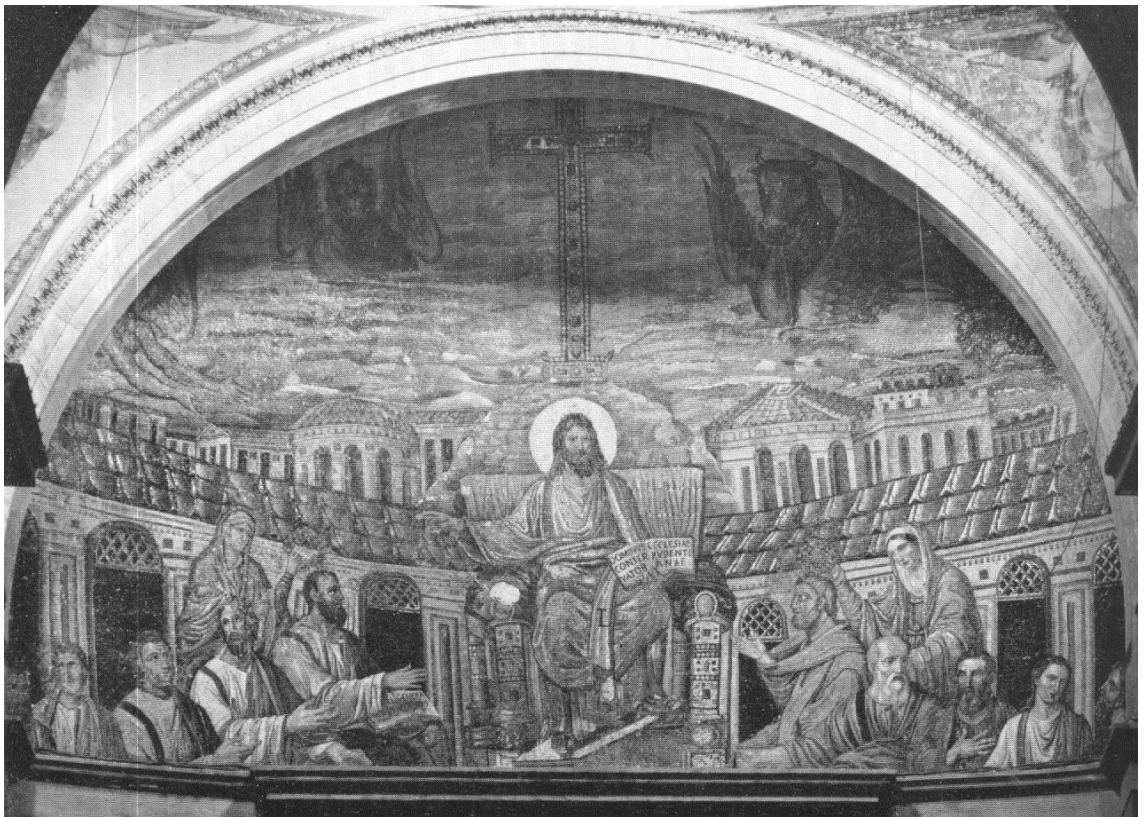
Malvern O
Wærstan

Pershore O
Eadburh (iv)

Winchcombe O
Coenwulf, Cynehelm

Charlbury O
Diuma

Bicester *Eadburh (i)*

Oxford *Frithuswith*

Dorchester
 Birinus

Chertsey
 Beocca, Edor, Frithuwold

Canterbury
Ælfheah (i), Augustine, Berhtwald, Deusdedit, Dunstan, Hadrian, Honorius, Justus (i), Laurence, Mellitus, Nothhelm, Odda, Theodore

Lyminge *Æthelburh (i)*

Folkestone
 Eanswith

Gloucester
Cyneburh (ii) O

Thornbury O
 Arilda

Bampton
 Beornwald

Coln O
 Cynehelm

Abingdon O
 Æbbe (ii)

Sodbury
Æthelwynn

Malmesbury
 Aldhelm, John (ii), Maeldubh

Amesbury
 Melorius

Winchester
Ælfheah (i), Æthelwold, Beornstan, Eadburh (v), Frithestan, Grimbald, Hedda, Judoc, Justus (ii), Swithun

Bishopstone (?) O
 Leofgyth

Steyning
 Cuthmann

Lyminster
 Cuthflaed

Leominster
Æthelmod, Eadfrith (i), Hemme

Hereford O
Æthelberht (ii)

Æthelwine (ii) O

Selwood
 Ælfgar

Wilton
 Eadgyth (iii), Iwig, Wulfthryth O

Congresbury Congar

Romsey
Æthelflaed (ii) Balthild, Mærwynn

Glastonbury
Benignus, Eadgar, Indracht O

Athelney O
Æthelwine (i)

Sherborne
 Wulfsige (iv) O

Shaftesbury
Ælfgifu (i), Beorhthelm, Eadweard (i)

Wimborne
Branwalater, Cuthburh, Samson, Cwenburh

Chittlehampton O
 Urith

Halstock *Juthwara* O

Crewkerne *Rayne* O

Whitchurch C. O *Hwita*

Cerne O *Eadwold*

Milton O
 Branwalater

Exeter
 Sativola O

Hartland
 Nectan

Stokenham
 Humberht

Stoke Fleming *Earmund*

Tavistock O
 Rumon

5.B Saints' cult sites in Southumbria
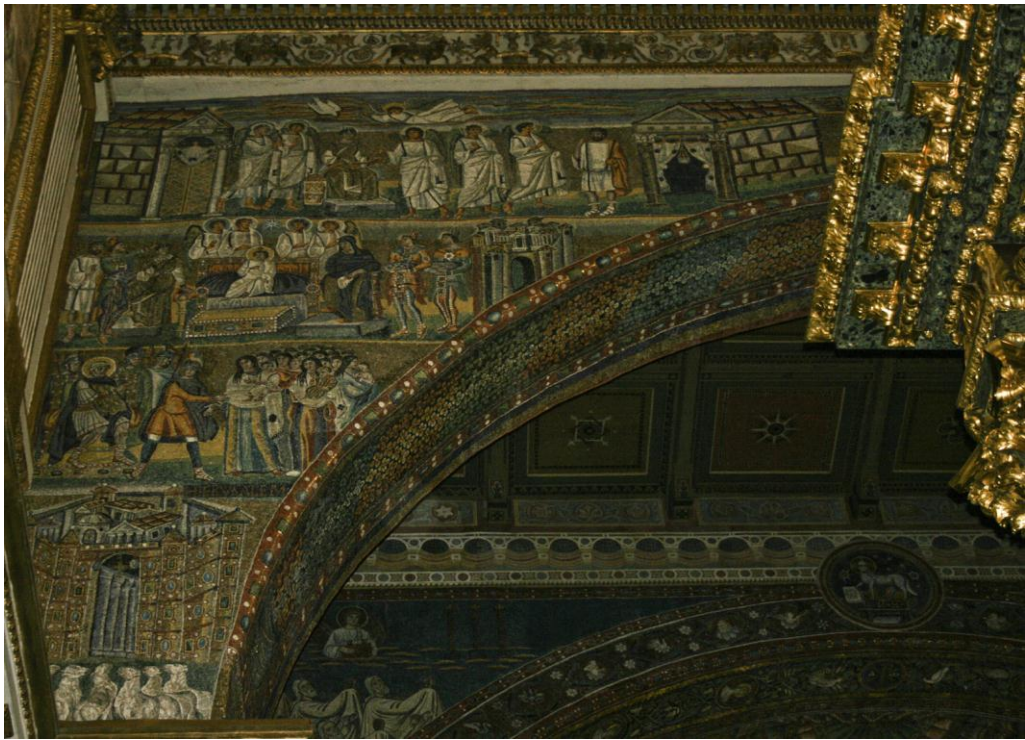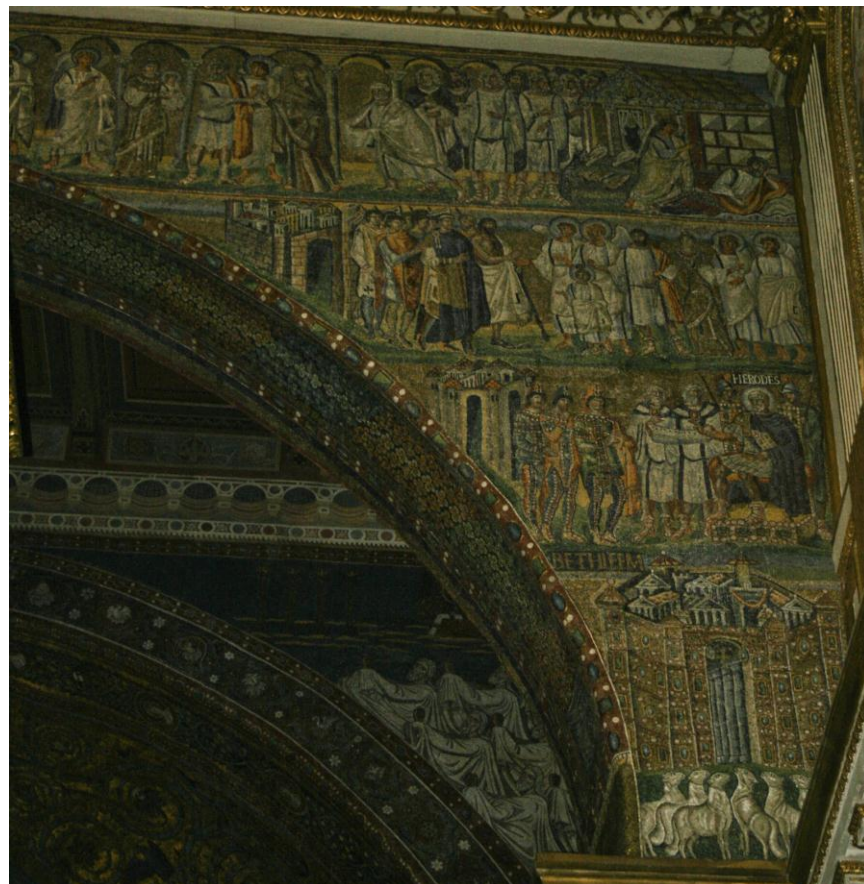**(after Blair, 2002a: 13.1)**

Illustrations

3.1 Carpet mosaic, fourth century, S. Maria Assunta, Aquileia
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.2 Apse mosaic, fourth century, S. Pudenziana, Rome
(Beckwith, 1970: pl. 18)

**3.3 Detail of mosaic ornament, early fifth century, S. Maria Maggiore, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.4 Detail of mosaic ornament, early fifth century, S. Maria Maggiore, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)**

3.5 Mosaic ornament, mid-fifth century, Neon Baptistery, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.6 Mosaic ornament, fourth to fifth century, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna
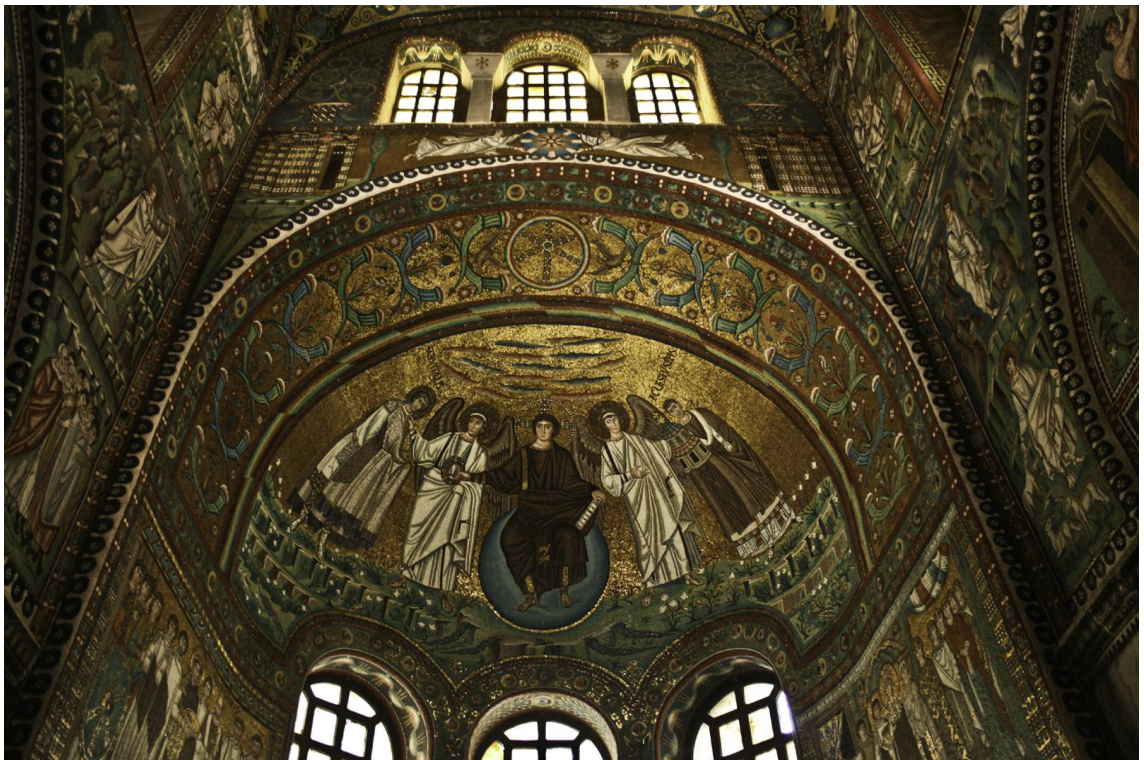**(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.7 Mosaic ornament, fifth century, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.8 Mosaic ornament, sixth century, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

3.9 Mosaic ornament, sixth century, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.10 Apse mosaic, mid-sixth century, San Vitale, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)

**3.11 Apse mosaic, early sixth century, SS. Cosma e Damiano, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.12 Apse mosaic, sixth century, S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**
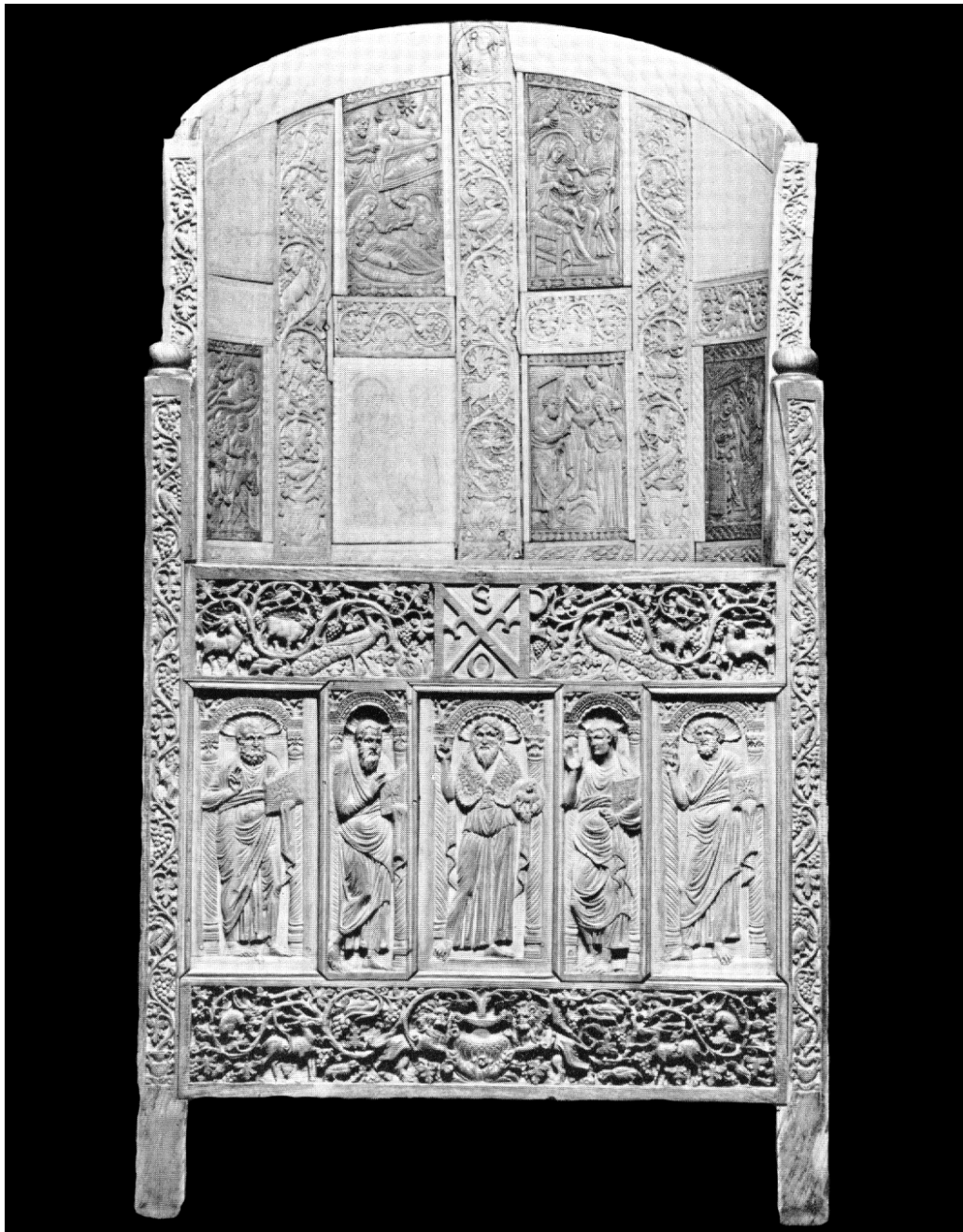
3.13 Maximian's throne, mid-sixth century, Ravenna, Museo Arcivescovile (Beckwith, 1970: pl. 94)

**3.14 Sarcophagus (side view), sixth century, S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.15 Sarcophagus (end view), sixth century, S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

3.16 Pewter ampulla, sixth century, Museo e Tesoro, Monza
(Cormack and Vassilaki, 2000: no. 26)

3.18 Donor mosaics pavement, late sixth century, S. Maria della Grazia, Grado (Photo: G. Dales)

3.17 Donor mosaics pavement, late sixth century, S. Eufemia, Grado (Photo: G. Dales)

**3.20 Queen Ragintruda's epitaph, eighth century,
Musei Civici, Pavia
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**3.19 Lombard epitaph, seventh century,
Musei Civici, Pavia
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**3.21 'Theodota's sarcophagus' panel, eighth century, Musei Civici, Pavia
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.22 'Theodota's sarcophagus' panel, eighth century, Musei Civici, Pavia
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.23 Ambo panel, eighth century, Santa Giulia Museo della Cittá, Brescia
(Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: no. 366)**

**3.24 Architrave fragment, eighth century, Museo Archeologica, Cividale del Friuli
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.25 Altar of Ratchis (front panel), eighth century,
Museo Christiano del Duomo, Cividale del Friuli
(Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. 311)**

3.27 Altar of Ratchis (side panel), eighth century, Museo Christiano del Duomo, Cividale del Friuli, (Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. 313)

3.26 Altar of Ratchis (side panel), eighth century, Museo Christiano del Duomo, Cividale del Friuli, (Tagliaferri, 1981: pl. 312)

3.28 *Il Tempietto Longobardo*, **mid-eighth century,**
S. Maria in Valle, Cividale del Friuli
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.29 Frieze fragment, early ninth century, S. Maria D'Aurona,
Castello Sforzesco, Milan
(Photo: G. Dales)

**3.30 and 3.31 Pilasters, early ninth century, S. Maria D'Aurona,
Castello Sforzesco, Milan
(Photo: G. Dales)**

3.33 Capital, early ninth century, S. Maria D'Aurona, Castello Sforzesco, Milan (Photo: G. Dales)

3.32 Panel fragment, eighth to ninth century, Musei Civici, Pavia (Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: no. 147)

3.34 Carved panels, eighth to ninth century, *Il Tempietto*,
S. Maria in Valle, Cividale del Friuli
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3.35 Panel, ninth century, Museo Archeologico, Cividale del Friuli
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.36 Panel, ninth century, Museo Archeologico, Cividale del Friuli
(Photo: G. Dales)

**3.37 Chancel screen panel, ninth century, S. Maria Assunta, Aquileia
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.38 Chancel screen panel, ninth century, S. Maria Assunta, Aquileia
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.39 Chancel screen panel, ninth century, S. Eufemia, Grado
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.40 Architrave fragment, ninth century, S. Maria della Grazie, Grado
(Photo: G. Dales).**
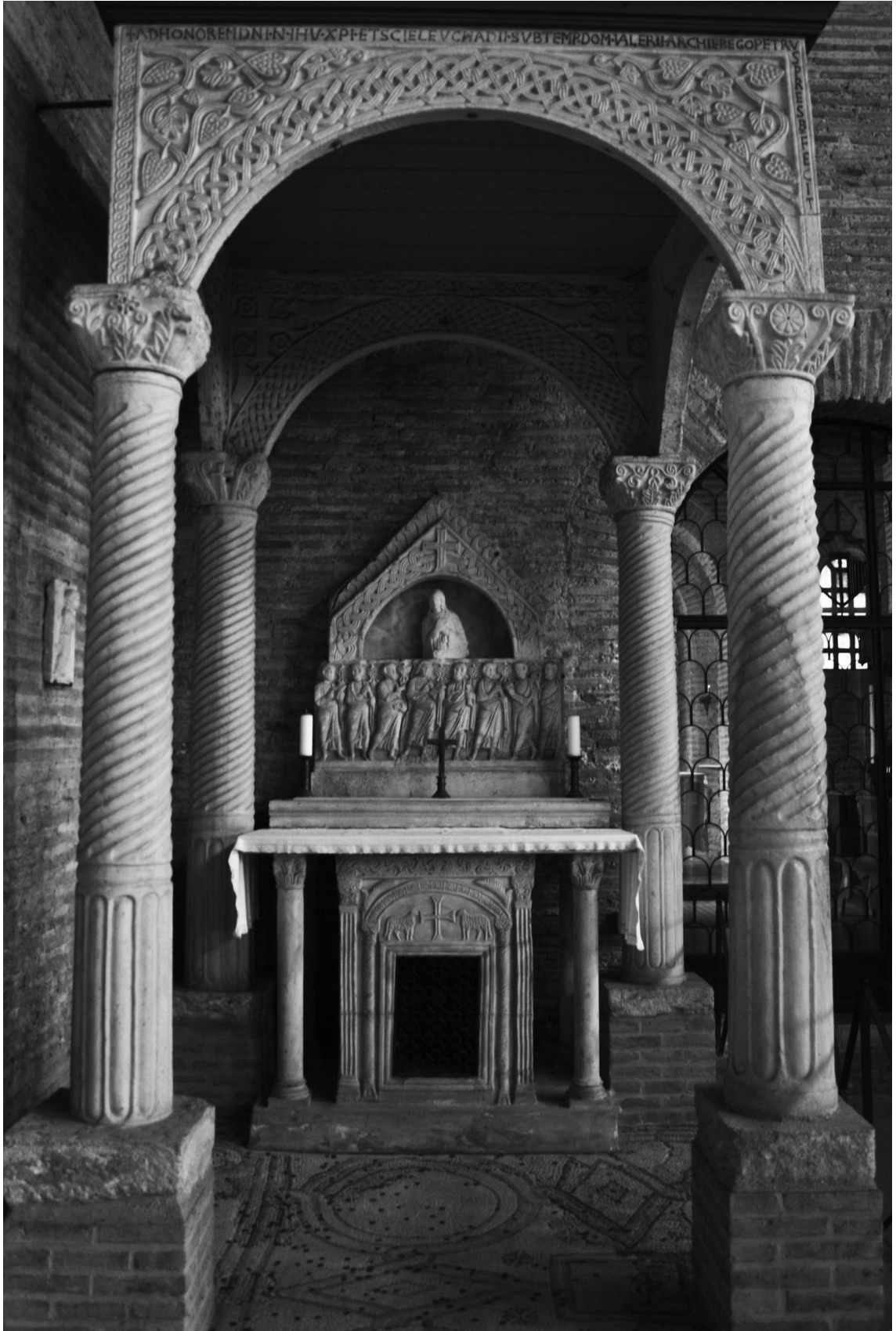
**3.41 Ciborium, ninth century, S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.42 Apse palimpsest frescoes, seventh to eighth century, S. Maria Antiqua, Rome
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3.43 Apse mosaic schemes, ninth century, S. Prassede, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.44 Apse mosaic, ninth century, S. Maria in Domnica, Rome
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**3.45 Vault mosaic ornament, ninth century, San Zeno chapel, S. Prassede, Rome
(Krautheimer, 1980: fig. 102)**

**3.46 Vault mosaic scheme, sixth century, San Vitale, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

3.47 Vault fresco scheme, ninth century, Quattro Coronati, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.48 Panel fragment, ninth century, S. Agnese, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.49 Panel, ninth century, Quattro Coronati, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.50 Chancel screen panel, sixth century, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.51 Panel, ninth century, Quattro Coronati, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.52 Pilaster, ninth century, S. Maria in Aracoeli, Rome
(Pani Ermini, 1974a: pl. 14)

3.53 Pierced window insert, ninth century, S. Maria in Cosmedin, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)
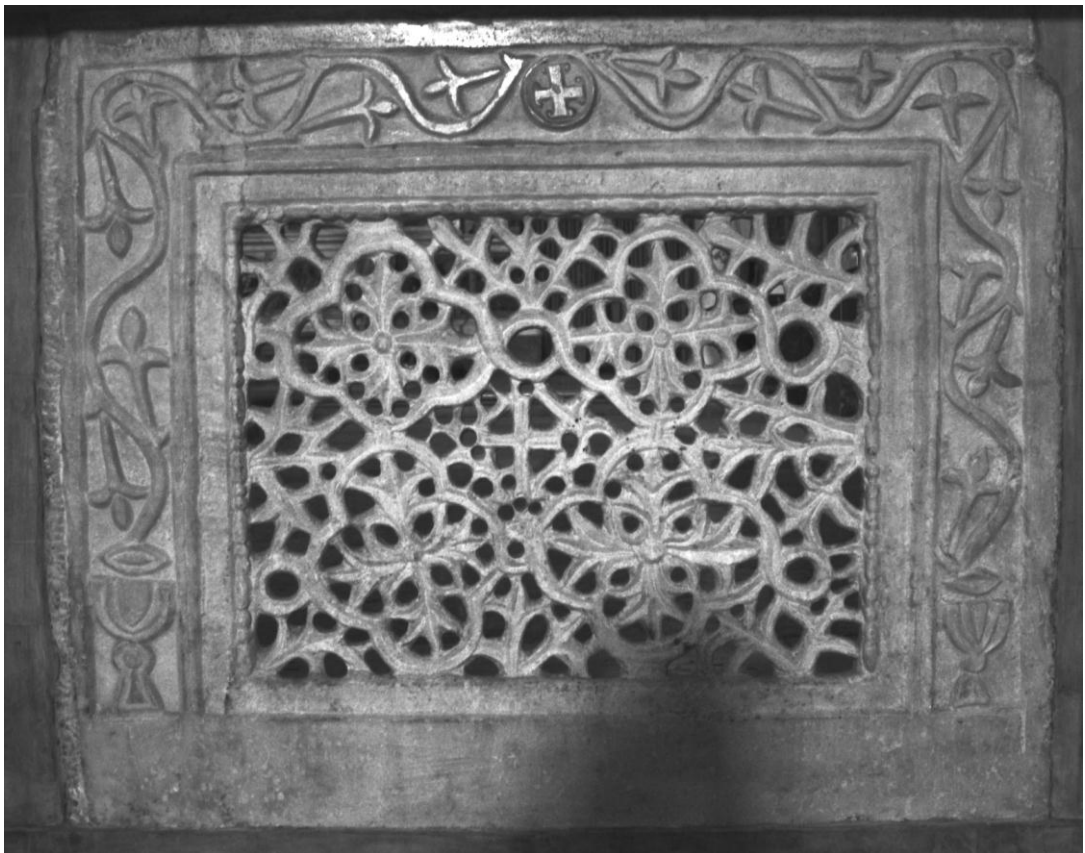
3.54 Pierced chancel panel, sixth century, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)

**3.55 Mosaic ornament, sixth century, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**3.56 Panel fragment, ninth century,
from St. Wigbert, Ingelheim,
Landesmuseum, Mainz
(Schutz, 2004: fig. 50)**

**3.57 Altar screen panel, ninth century,
from St. Johannis,
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**3.58 Altar panel, ninth century, from Lauerach,
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(Schutz, 2004: fig. 68b)**

**3.59 Altar panel fragment, ninth century, Müstair
(Schutz, 2004: 68a)**

3.62 Figure-bust, stucco,
ninth century, S. Salvatore, Brescia
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.61 Virgin and Child, stucco,
ninth century, S. Salvatore, Brescia
(Photo: G. Dales)

3.60 Virgin and Child, stucco,
ninth century, S. Salvatore, Brescia
(Photo: G. Dales)

4.2 The Virgin, figure panel, Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.1 The Miracle at Cana, panel fragment, Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire (photo: G. Dales)
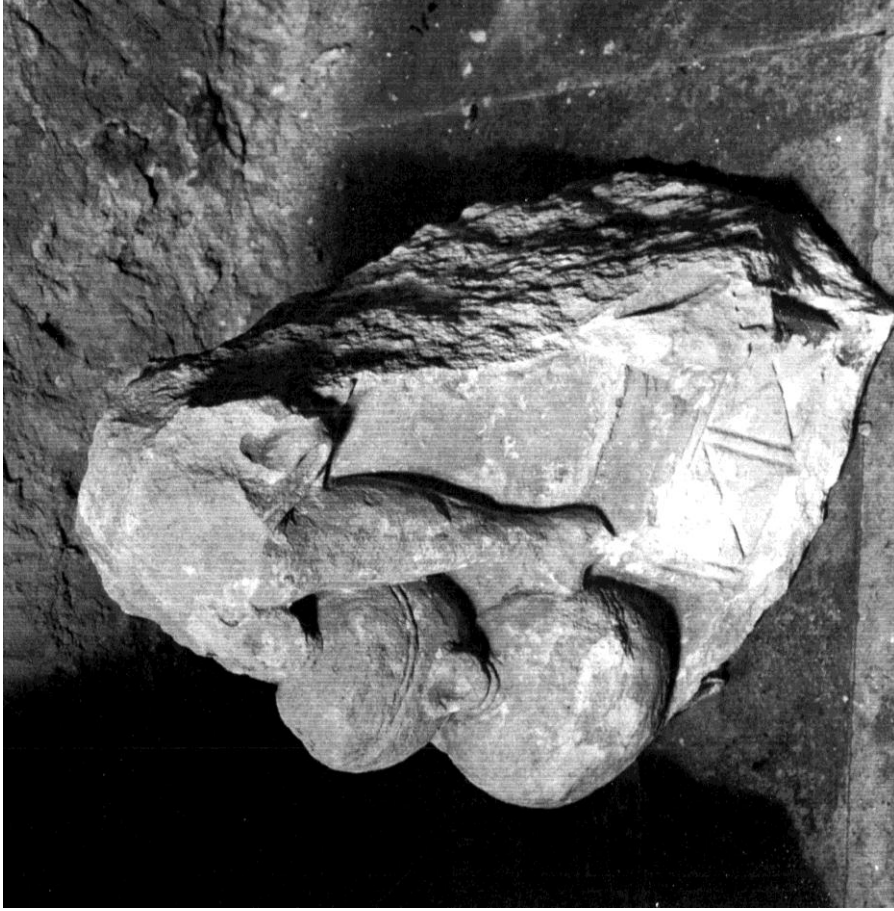
4.4 The Miracle at Cana, panel fragment, Breedon, Leicestershire (Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960, NMR B60/494)

4.3 The Miracle at Cana, ivory panel, seventh century, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (Weitzmann, 1972: fig. 13)

4.6 The Miracle at Cana, architrave detail, fifth to sixth century, St. Mark's basilica, Venice (Árnason, 1938: fig. 4)

4.5 The Miracle at Cana, ivory panel (detail), fifth to sixth century, Bode Museum, Berlin (Árnason, 1938: fig. 6)

**4.7 The Miracle at Cana, Andrews Diptych (detail), early ninth century,
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
(Rosenbaum, 1954: fig. 7)**
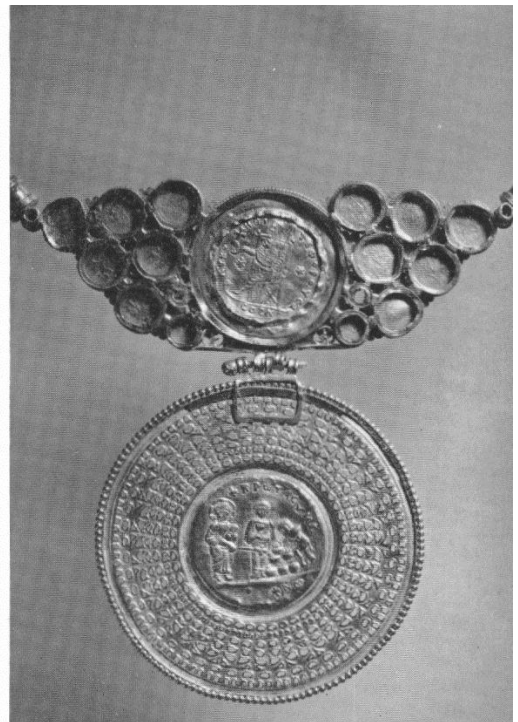
**4.8 The Annunciation and the Miracle at Cana, gold medallion,
sixth century, Staatliche Museum, Berlin
(Beckwith, 1970: pl. 43)**

**4.9 Line drawing of the Peterborough cenotaph,
Cathedral Church of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Andrew, Peterborough
(Bailey, 1996b: fig. 5)**

4.12 Apostle, shrine panel, St. Margaret's church, Fletton, Huntingdonshire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.11 Archangel Michael, shrine panel, St. Margaret's church, Fletton, Huntingdonshire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.10 Apostle arcade, shrine panel fragment, St. Kyneburg's church, Castor, Northamptonshire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.14 Adoration of the Magi, ivory panel, early sixth century, British Museum, London (Cormack and Vassilaki, 2008: no. 22)

4.13 Carved panel, late sixth or early seventh century, Hagios Polyeuktos, Istanbul (Yasin, 2009: fig. 6.18)

4.17 Figure bust, mosaic (detail), fifth century, Archbishop's palace, Ravenna (Coburn Soper, 1938: fig. 47)

4.16 *ecclesia ex circumcisione*, mosaic (detail), fifth century, S. Sabina, Rome (Coburn Soper, 1938: fig. 46)
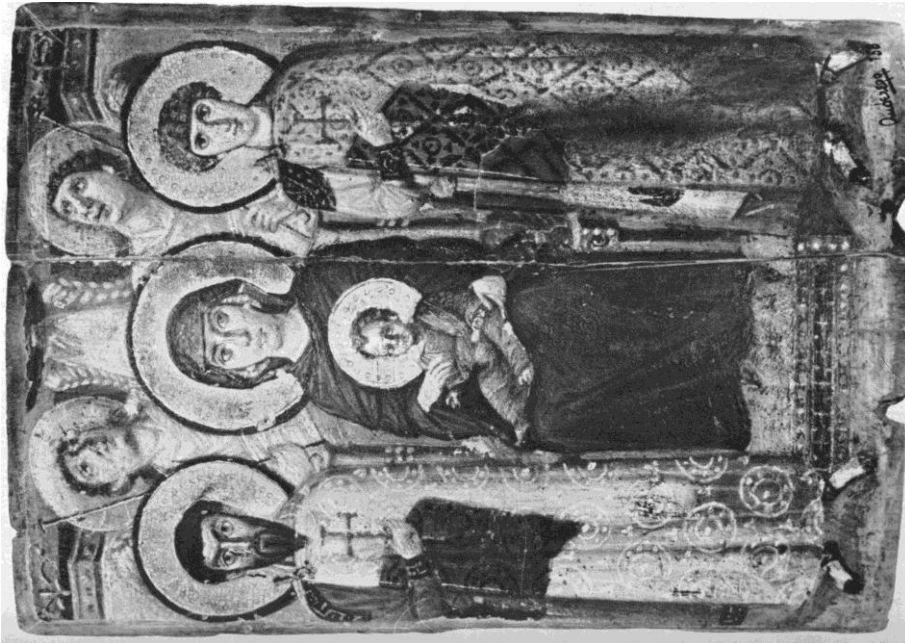
4.15 The Virgin and Child, painted icon, sixth or seventh century, St. Catherine's monastery, Sinai (Beckwith, 1970: pl. 75)

4.20 Figure-bust, cross-head fragment, All Saints church, Bakewell, Derbyshire (Hawkes, 2007: fig. 25)

4.19 Figure-busts, cross-shaft fragment, Rugby, now in Warwick Museum (Cottrill, 1935b: pl. LXXIV)

4.18 Figure-busts, cross-shaft, St. Lawrence's church, Eyam, Derbyshire (Routh, 1937: pl. XIVa)

**4.24 Figure-busts,
cross-arm fragment,
All Saints church, Bisley,
Gloucestershire
(Henig, 1993: 252)**

**4.23 Angel-busts, cross-shaft,
St. Lawrence's church, Eyam,
Derbyshire
(Routh, 1937: pl. XIVb)**

**4.22 The Virgin and Child,
ivory diptych panel, sixth century,
Staatliche Museum, Berlin
(Cormack and Vassilaki, 2008: no. 25)**

**4.21 The Virgin in Majesty,
limestone carving,
sixth to seventh century,
Coptic Museum, Cairo
(Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 73)**

**4.25 The Lichfield Angel, shrine panel fragments, early ninth century,
Cathedral church of St. Mary and St. Chad, Lichfield, Staffordshire
(Rodwell *et al*., 2008: fig. 7)**

**4.26 The Wirksworth slab, grave slab, ninth century,
St. Mary's church, Wirksworth, Derbyshire
(Routh, 1937: pl. VIb)**

**4.27 Frieze fragments, early ninth century,
St. Margaret's church, Fletton, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.30 Figure-bust arcade, frieze fragment,
early ninth century,
St. Margaret's church,
Fletton, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.29 Angel-bust, frieze fragments,
early ninth century,
St. Margaret's church,
Fletton, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.28 Angel-bust, frieze fragment,
early ninth century,
St. Margaret's church,
Fletton, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

4.33 Archangel Michael, ivory panel, sixth century, British Museum, London (Kitzinger, 1969: pl. 8)

4.32 The Breedon Angel, ninth century, St. Mary and St. Hardulph's church, Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)
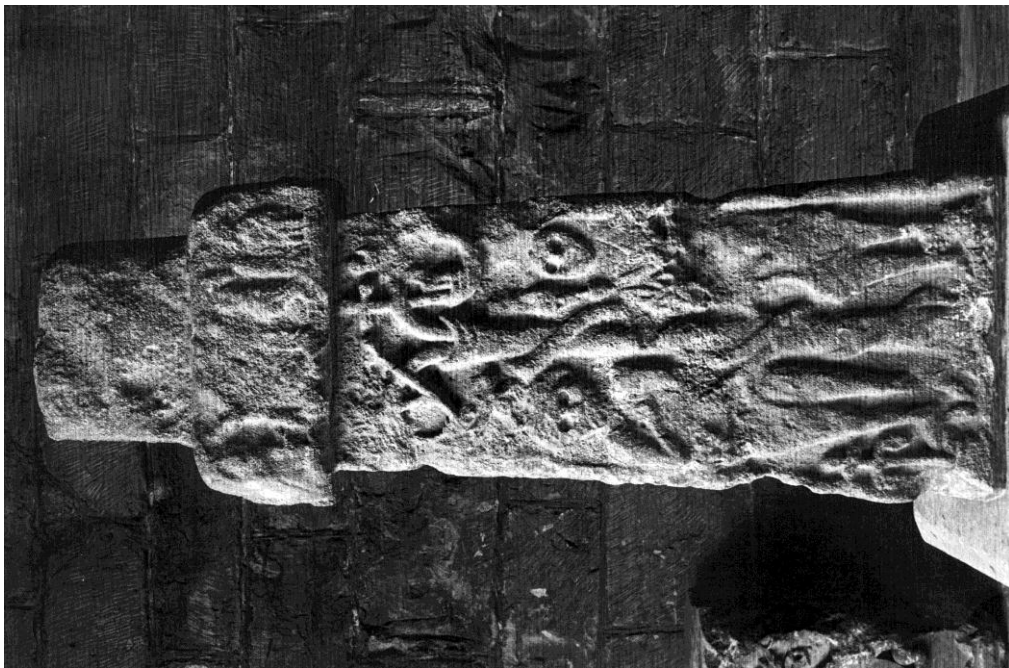
4.31 Cross-shaft, ninth century, St. Mary's church, Newent, Gloucestershire (Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960, NMR S16/180)

4.35 Serpent face, cross-shaft fragment, ninth century, St. Wystan's church, Repton, Derbyshire (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: pl. 7)

4.34 Rider face, cross-shaft fragment, ninth century, St. Wystan's church, Repton, Derbyshire (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: pl. 6)
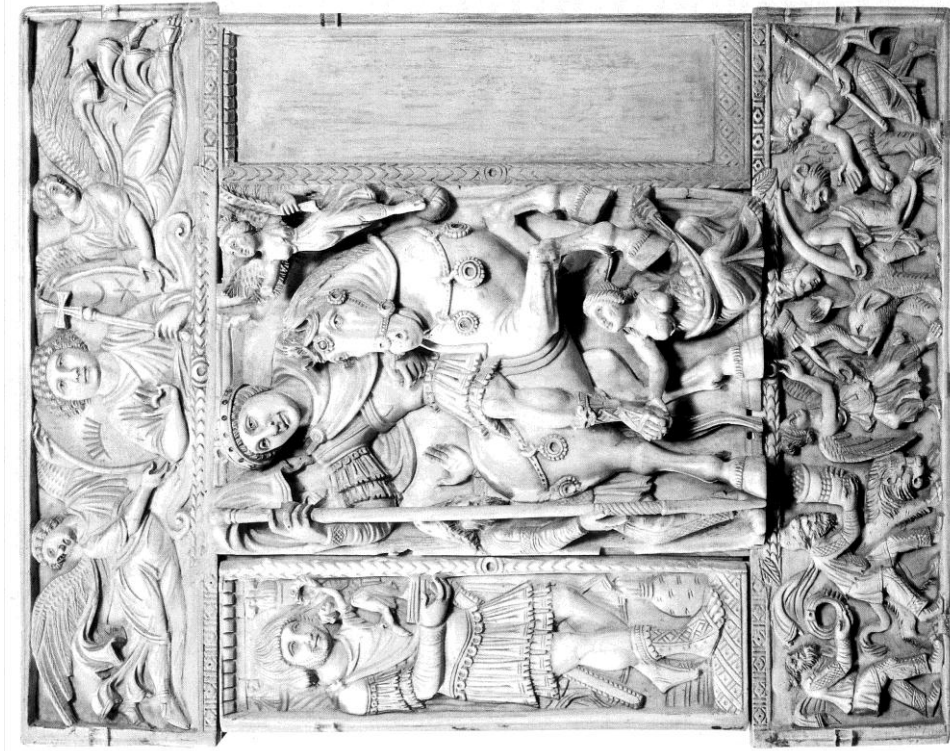
4.37 The Barberini Ivory, diptych panel, sixth century, Musée du Louvre, Paris (Effenburger, 1999: pl. 9)

4.36 The Belgrade Cameo, cameo fragment, fourth century, National Museum of Serbia, Belgrade (Bianchi Bandinelli, 1971: ill. 329)

**4.39 Vine-scroll, narrow frieze fragments
(north mid-section, east end wall), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.41 Vine-scroll, narrow frieze fragments
(south mid-section, east end wall), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.43 Medallion-scroll, narrow frieze fragments
(east end wall), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.38 Vine-scroll, narrow frieze fragments
(north section, east end wall), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.40 Vine-scroll, narrow frieze fragments
(mid-section, east end wall), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.42 Vine-scroll, narrow frieze fragments
(south section, east end wall), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

4.44 Medallion scroll, narrow frieze fragments (south wall, tower), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: pl. xliiia)

4.46 Hounds in plant-scroll and vintage scenes, broad frieze fragments (south wall, tower), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: Routh, English Heritage, NMR B45/383)

4.45 Medallion scroll, narrow frieze fragment (south wall, south aisle), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.48 Paired birds in plant-scroll, broad frieze fragment (north wall, north aisle), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.50 Inhabited vine-scroll, broad frieze fragment (over east column, south arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: xlvb)

4.47 Paired lions in plant-scroll, broad frieze fragment (over central column, north arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960, NMR B60/534)

4.49 Inhabited vine-scroll, broad frieze fragment (east spandrel, south arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: pl. xlva)

4.52 Inhabited vine-scroll, broad frieze fragment
(west spandrel, south arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960, NMR B60/510)

4.54 Interlace and a Rider, broad frieze fragment
(east spandrel, north arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960,
NMR B60/526 or 525)

4.51 Inhabited vine-scroll, broad frieze fragment
(over west column, south arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960, NMR B60/531)

4.53 Inhabited vine-scroll, broad frieze fragment
(over west column, north arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, 1960, NMR B60/530 or 527)

4.56 Geometric ornament, broad frieze fragment, (north wall, tower), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: pl. xlviib)

4.58 Geometric ornament and hounds, broad frieze fragment, (south wall, south aisle), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.55 *Pelta* ornament, broad frieze fragment, (north wall, tower), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: pl. xlvf)

4.57 Key pattern and animal ornament, broad frieze fragments, (north wall, tower), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: pl. xlviic)

4.60 Cockerels, broad frieze fragment, (south wall, south aisle), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.59 Hounds and key pattern ornament, broad frieze fragment, (south wall, south aisle), Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)

4.61 Hunting scenes and abstract ornament, broad frieze fragment, (over central column, north arcade), Breedon, Leicestershire (Jewell, 1986: pl. la)

4.62 Wood panel (detail), eleventh century, from St. Barbara's church, Coptic Museum, Cairo (Beckwith, 1963: pl. 135)
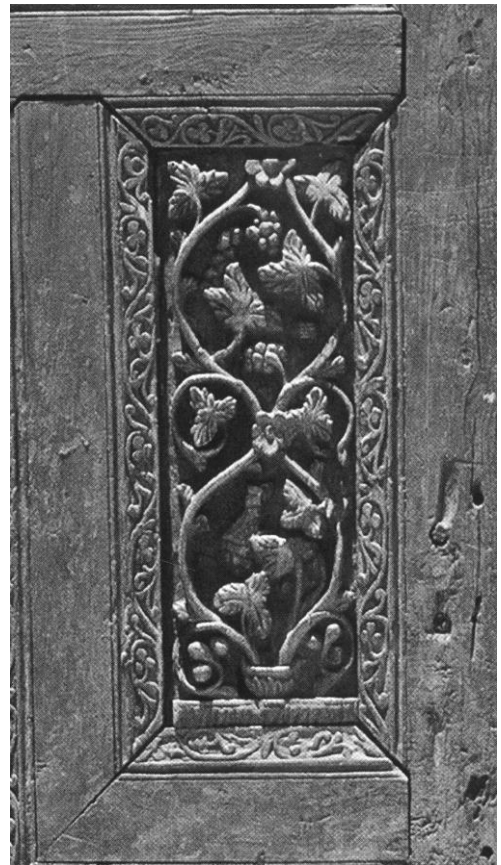
4.63 Wooden door (detail), sixth century, St. Barbara's church, Old Cairo (Gabra and Eaton-Krauss, 2006: no. 133)

4.64 Inhabited vine-scroll, frieze fragment, fourth or fifth century, Oxyrhynchus, Coptic Museum, Cairo (Gabra and Eaton Krauss, 2006: no. 92)

**4.65 Limestone capital, sixth century,
Saqqara, Coptic Museum, Cairo
(Gabra and Eaton Krauss, 2006: no. 45)**
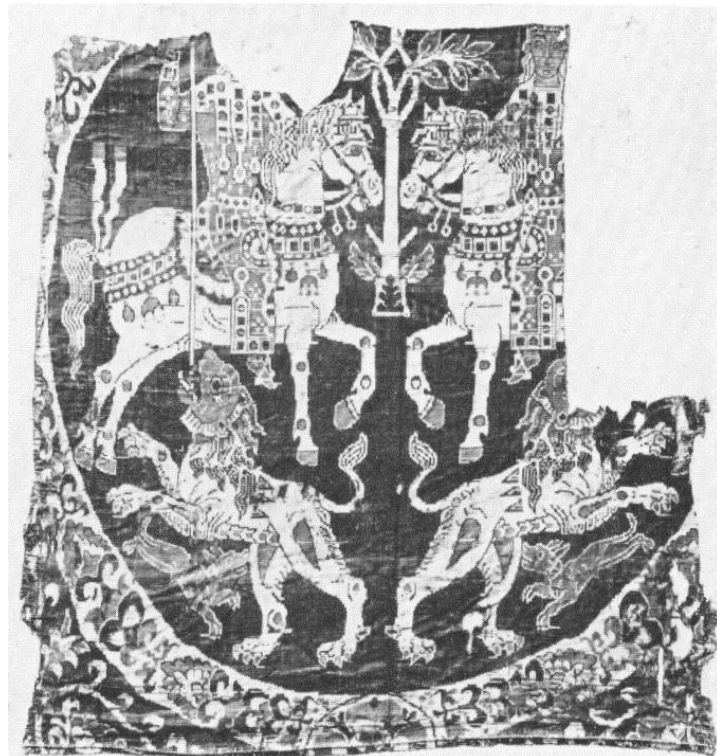
**4.66 Byzantine imperial silk, eighth century,
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**4.67 Sassanian silver plate, fifth century,
Iran, Metropolitan Museum of Art,
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**4.68 Sassanian silver bowl, fifth century,
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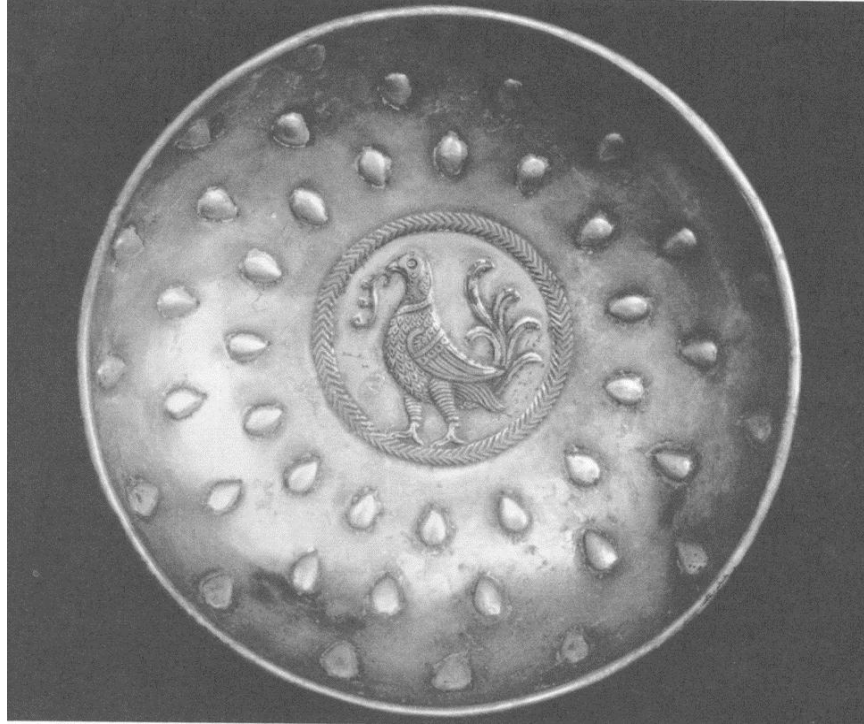
**4.69 Sassanian silver bowl, fifth century, Iran,
Nash and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, New York
(Grabar, 1967: no. 39)**
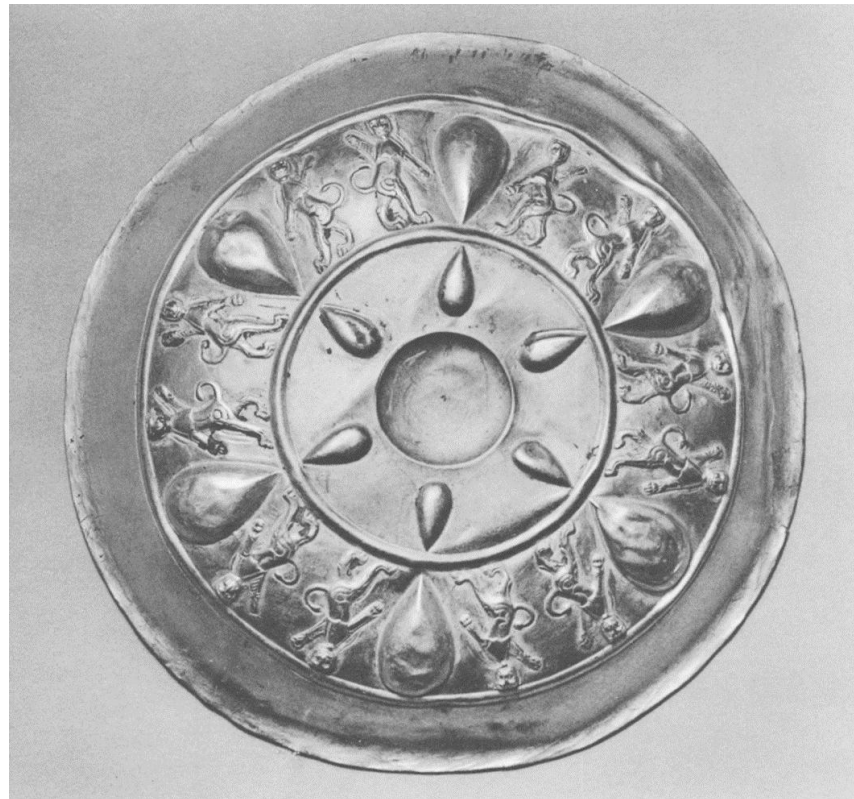
**4.70 Sassanian gold bowl, sixth century, Iran, British Museum, London
(Dalton, 1964: pl. VIII)**

4.73 Cross-shaft, ninth century, Holy Trinity church, Wroxeter, Shropshire (Photo: K. Jukes, copyright CASSS)

4.72 Cross-shaft, ninth century, St. Giles' church, Acton Beauchamp, Herefordshire (Photo: K. Jukes, copyright CASSS)

4.71 Cross-head, ninth century, St. Michael's church, Cropthorne, Worcestershire (Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 209)

4.76 Cross-shaft, ninth century,
All Saints church, Bakewell, Derbyshire
(Routh, 1937: pl. IIc)

4.75 Cross-shaft, ninth century,
All Saints church, Bakewell, Derbyshire
(Routh, 1937: pl. IIa)

4.74 Cross-shaft fragment, ninth century, All Saints
church, Bradbourne, Derbyshire
(Routh, 1937: pl. VIIIa)

4.79 Heraldic lion, panel, ninth century, Breedon, Leicestershire (Photo: G. Dales)
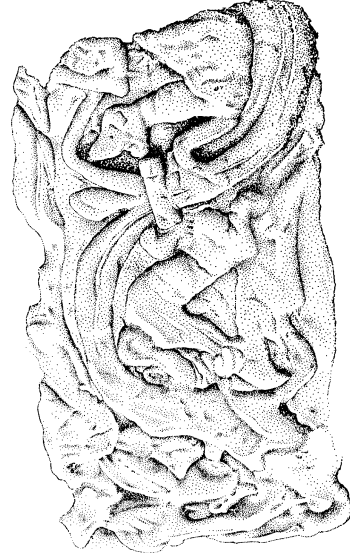
4.80 Inhabited vine-scroll, frieze fragment, ninth century, St. Egelwin's church, Scalford, Leicestershire (Parsons, 1996: fig. 4a)
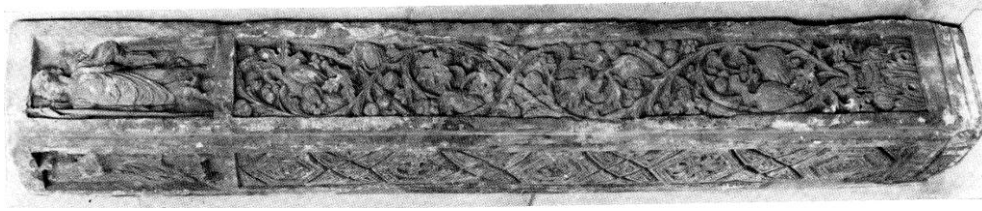
4.78 Vine-scroll ornament, pilaster, sixth century, from Apa Apollo, Bawit, Musée du Louvre, Paris (Beckwith, 1963: pl. 87)
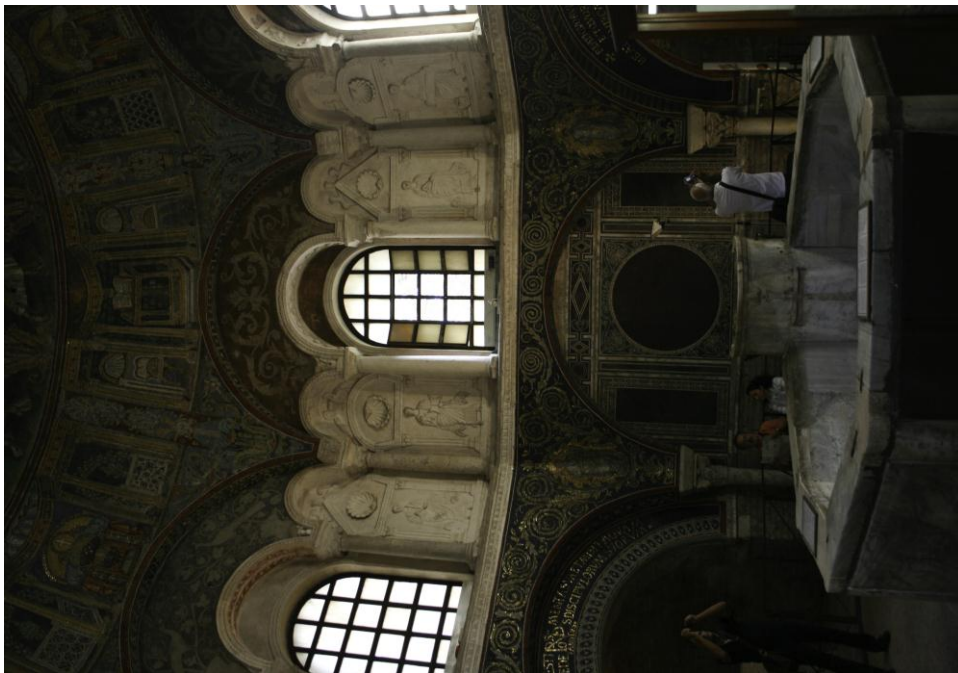
4.77 Vine-scroll mosaic ornament, late fifth century, Neon Baptistery, Ravenna (Photo: G. Dales)
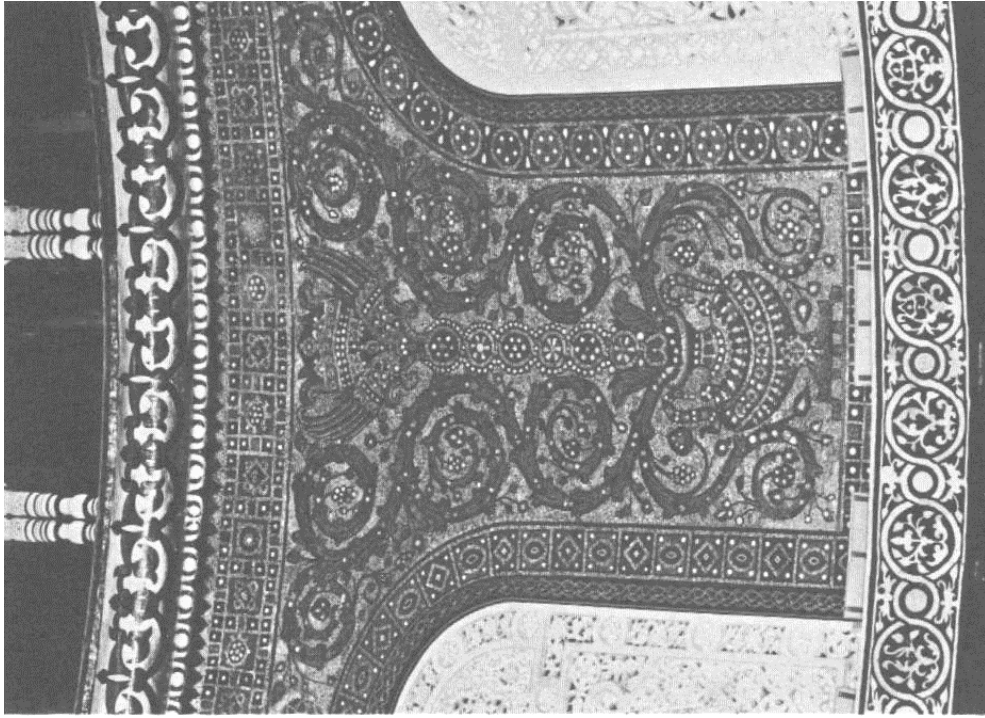
4.82 Vine-scroll mosaic ornament, seventh century, Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, (Grabar, 1973: pl. 9)
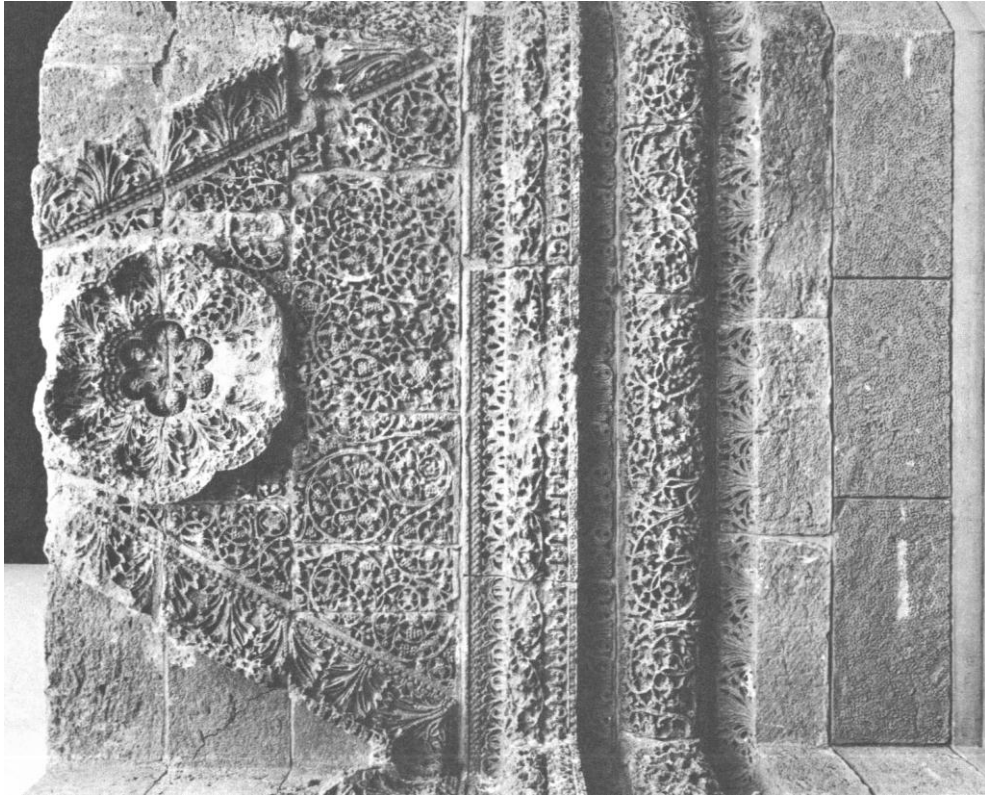
4.81 Vine-scroll ornament, palace façade, eighth century, Mshatta, Jordan, Pergamon Museum, Berlin (Grabar, 1973: pl. 120)

4.83 Figure-bust, panel fragment, ninth century,
St. Mary's church, Pershore, Worcestershire
(King, 1992: fig. 1)

4.84 St. Demetrius, mosaic (detail), seventh century, Hagios Demetrios, Salonika
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4.86 The Maccabees, fresco, eighth century, S. Maria Antiqua, Rome (Photo: D. Dales)

4.85 St. John Chrysostom, early ninth century, copy of St. John Chrysostom's sermons on St. Matthew, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS. cod. 1007, fol. 1 (Beckwith, 1970: pl. 137)

**4.87 Figure panel, Cathedral church of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Andrew,
Peterborough, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)**
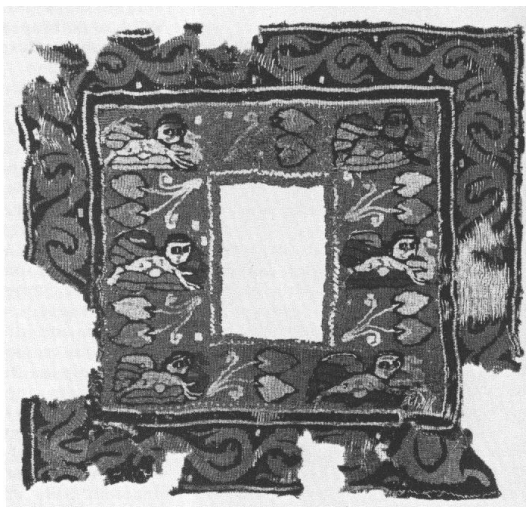
**4.88 Egyptian textile, eighth century,
Museum Reitberg, Zürich
(Peter-Müller, 1976: no. 64)**

**4.89 The Annunciation,
eastern silk, early ninth century,
Museo Sacro Vaticano, Rome
(Schiller, 1971a: ill. 73)**
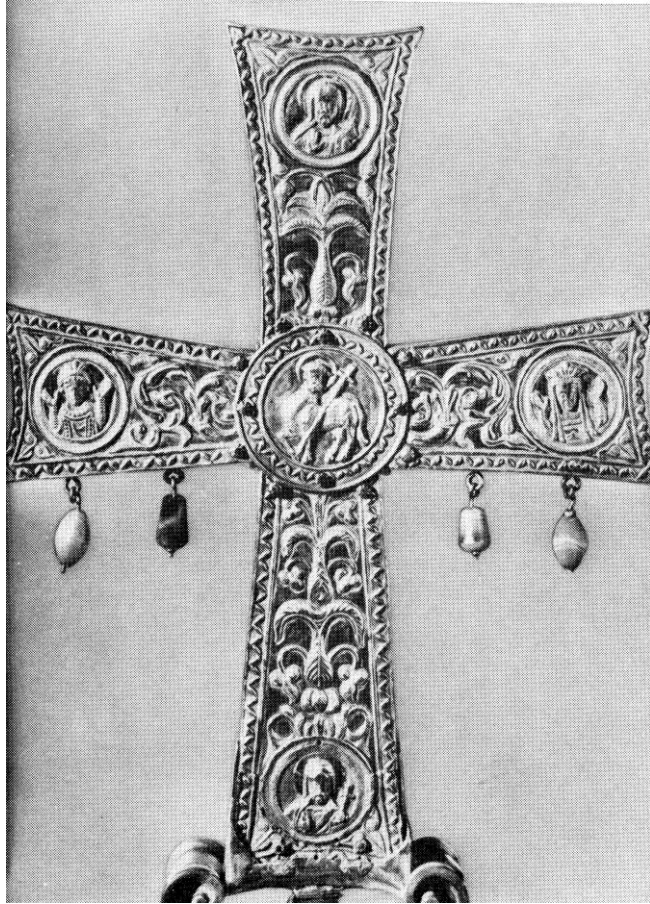
**4.90 Silver gilt cross of Justinian II, later sixth century, Museo Sacro Vaticano, Rome
(Kozodoy, 1986: pl. XXXIXd)**

**4.91 Sculpture fragment, ninth century,
via Flaminia, Otricoli, Umbria
(Bertelli, 1985: fig. 213)**

**4.92 Sculpture fragment (detail), ninth
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(Novelli, 1974: pl. 71, fig. 91)**

4.94 Decorative roundel fragment, ninth century, St. Michael's church, Edenham, Lincolnshire (Everson and Stocker, 1999: ill. 169)

4.93 Decorative roundel, ninth century, St. Michael's church, Edenham, Lincolnshire (Everson and Stocker, 1999: ill. 168)

4.96 The Sacrifice of Isaac, capital (south-west corner of crossing), late seventh century, San Pedro de la Nave, province of Zamora (de Palol and Hirmer, 1967: pl. 7)
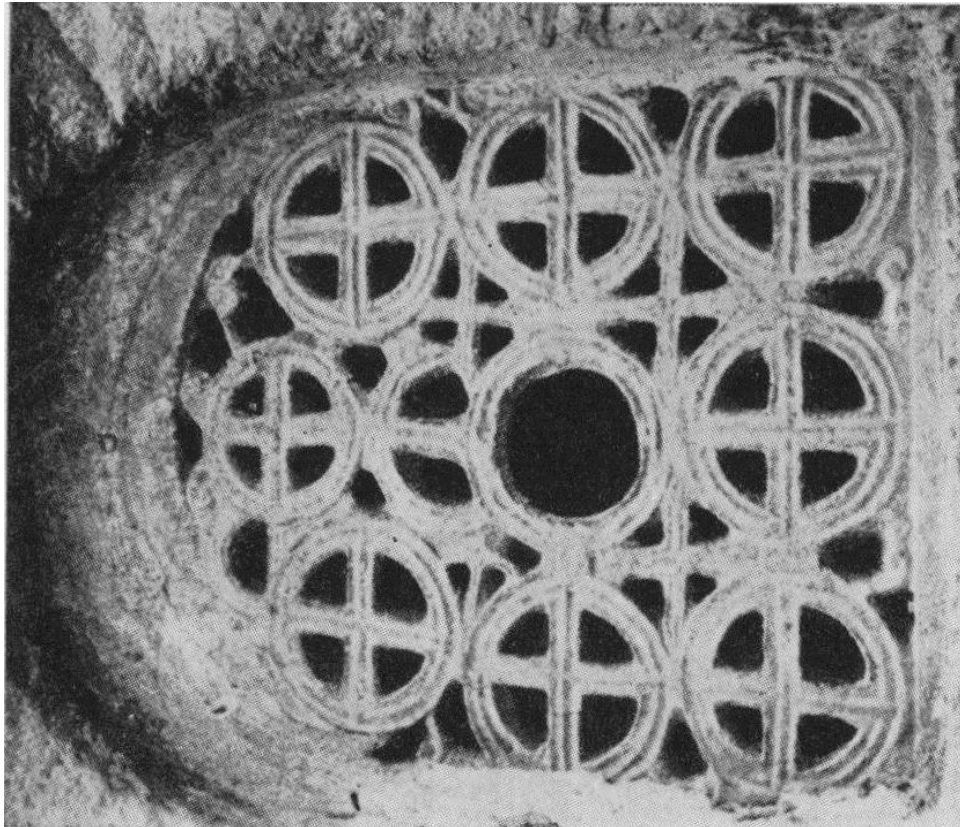
4.95 Pierced window insert, ninth century, Albenga baptistery, Liguria (L'Orange and Torp, 1979: fig. 227)

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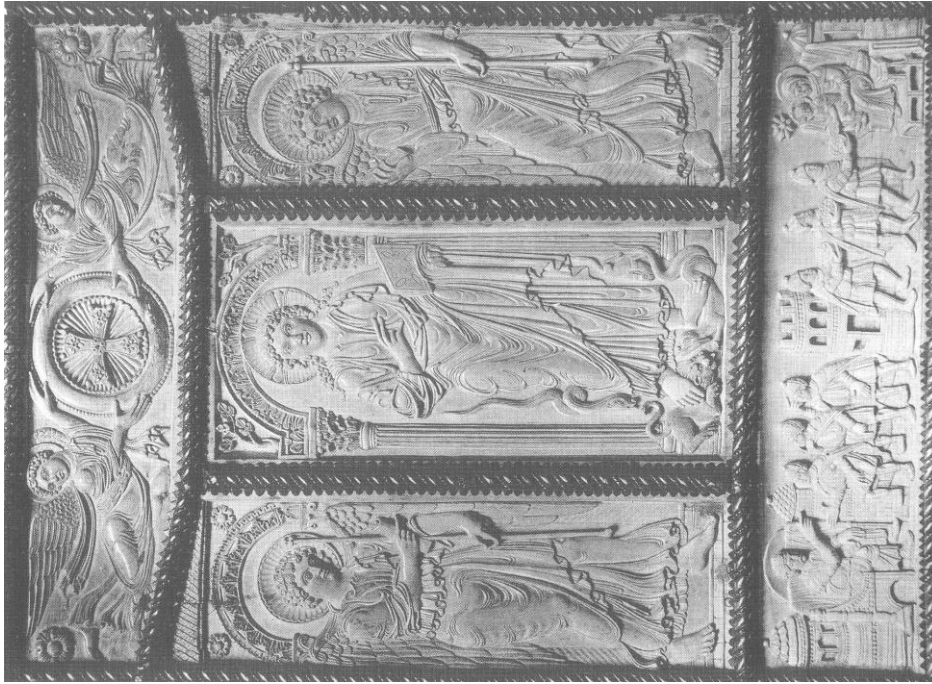
4.98 Back cover of the Lorsch Gospels, ivory panels, c. 810, Vicotria and Albert Museum, London (Schutz, 2004: fig. 22)

4.97 Front cover of the Lorsch Gospels, ivory panels, c. 810, Museo Sacro Vaticano, Rome (Schutz, 2004: fig. 21)

4.100 Christ Triumphant, ivory panel, Gospel lectionary cover, c. 800, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Lasko, 1972: ill. 28)
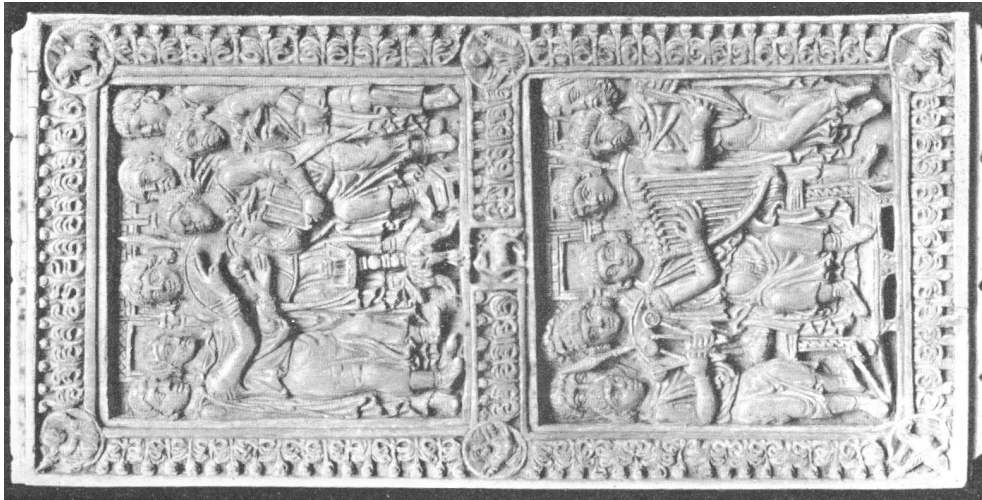
4.99 Panel from the cover of the Dagulf Psalter, ivory, later eighth century, Musée du Louvre, Paris (Lasko, 1972: ill. 26)

4.102 The Annunciation and the Visitation, Genoels-Elderen Diptych, late eighth century, Royal Museum of Art and History, Brussels (Beckwith, 1972: pl. 15)

4.101 Charlemagne Victorious, ivory panel, early ninth century, Museo Nazionale, Florence (Lasko, 1972: ill. 27)
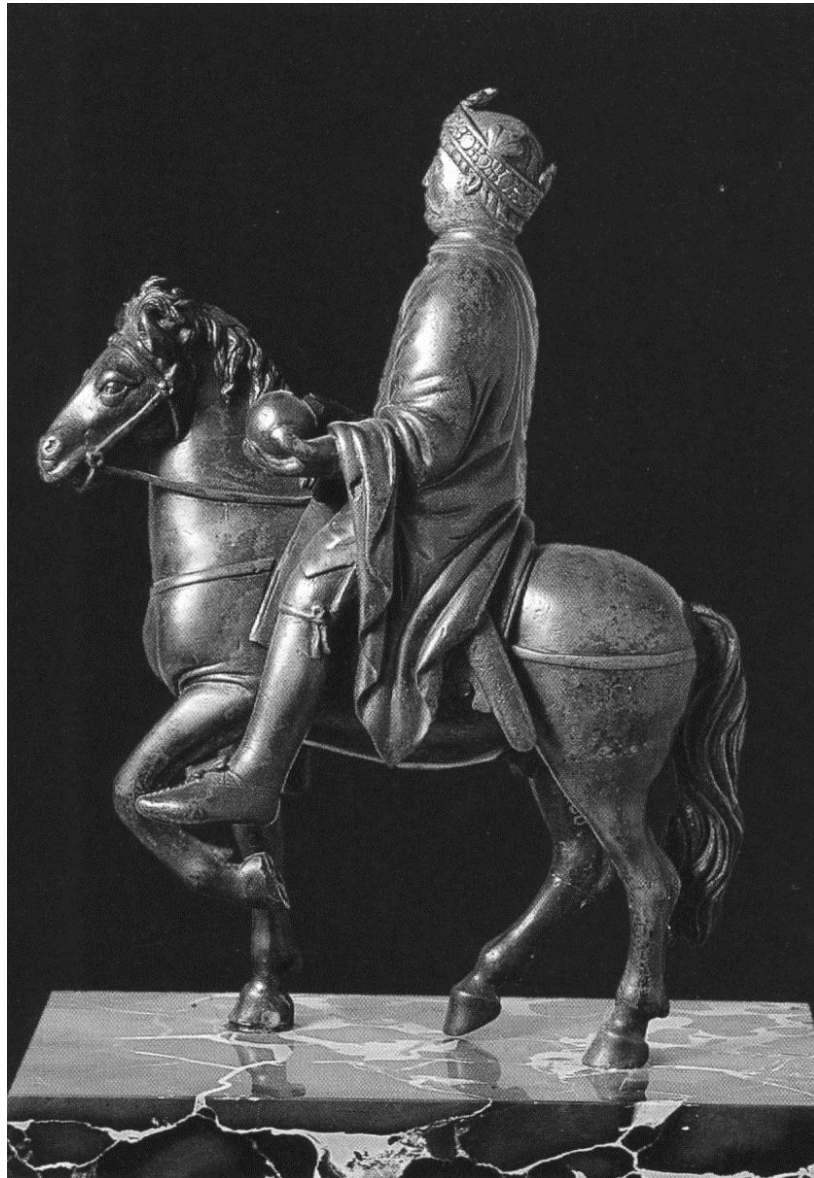
4. 103 Charlemagne's equestrian statue, left profile, bronze, early ninth century, Musée du Louvre, Paris (Gaborit-Chopin, 1999: ill. 1)

4.105 Initial page, Dagulf Psalter, c. 783–795, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS. 1861, fol. 25r (Mütherich, 1999: pl. 9)

4.104 Christ, Godescalc Gospel lectionary, c. 781–783, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouv. acq. lat. 1203, fol. 3r (Mütherich and Gaehde, 1977: pl. 1)

**4.106 Initial page, Corbie Psalter, c. 800,
Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS. 18, fol. 1v
(Coatsworth, 2008: ill. 862)**

**4.107 *Pelta* ornament, figure panel, fifth century, S. Agnese, Rome
(Photo: G. Dales)**

4.109 Canon Tables, Soissons Gospels, c. 800, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8850, fol. 7v (Schutz, 2004: pl. 8c)

4.108 Christ in Majesty, Lorsch Gospels, early ninth century, Bucharest, Nationalbibliothek, Filiale Alba Iulia, Biblioteca Batthyáneum, MS. R. II. I, pag. 36 (Mütherich, 1999: pl. 25)

4.110 The Nativity and the Annunciation to the Shepherds, fresco, ninth century,
S. Maria foris portas, Castelseprio
(Chatzidakis and Grabar, 1965: fig. 112)

4.111 Niched figures, fresco, ninth century, St. Benedict's church, Malles
(Schutz, 2004: pls. 31a and b)

4.112 *Pelta* ornament, mosaic, ninth century,
San Zeno chapel, S. Prassede, Rome
(Mackie, 1995b: fig. 1)

**4.113 Apostle arcade, shrine panel, ninth century, Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.114 Apostle arcade, shrine panel, ninth century, Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.115 Apostle arcade, shrine panel, ninth century, Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.116 St. Lawrence, mosaic ornament, fifth century,
Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**4.117 Inhabited vine-scroll,
cross-shaft, eighth century,
Ruthwell, Dumfriesshire
(Bailey and Cramp, 1988: ill. 685)**

**4.118 Inhabited vine-scroll,
cross-shaft, early ninth century,
Easby, North Yorkshire
(Lang, 1991: ill. 199)**

4.119 Running arcade ornament, frieze fragment, late eighth or early ninth century, Holy Trinity church, Rothwell, West Yorkshire
(Coatsworth, 2008: ill. 678)
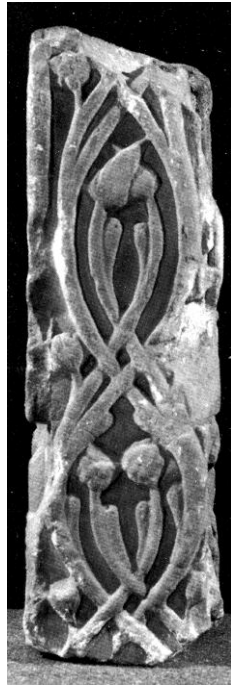
4.120 Medallion scroll, cross-shaft, early ninth century, All Saints church, Otley, West Yorkshire (Coatsworth, 2008: ill. 561)

4.121 Bush scroll, frieze fragment, ninth century, St. Margaret's church, Fletton, Huntingdonshire (Photo: G. Dales)
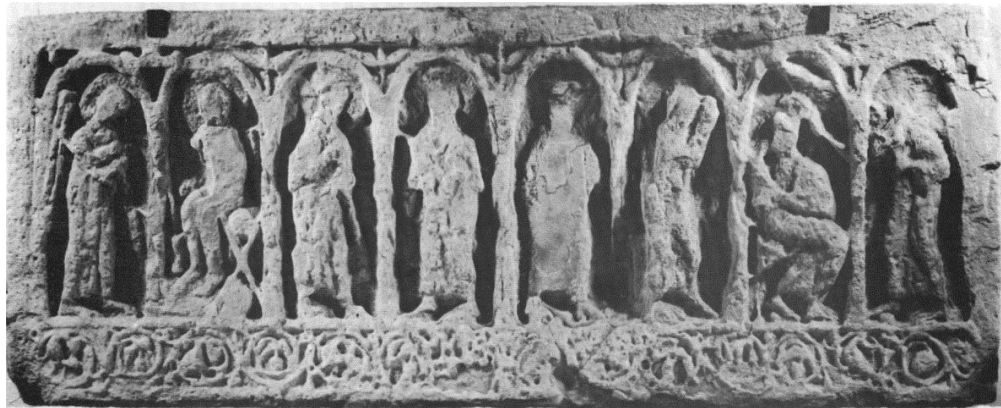
4.122 Arcaded figures, shrine panel, ninth century, All Saints church, Hovingham, North Yorkshire (Lang, 1991: ill. 494)

**4.123 Cross-base, ninth century
St. Kyneburg's church,
Castor, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)**
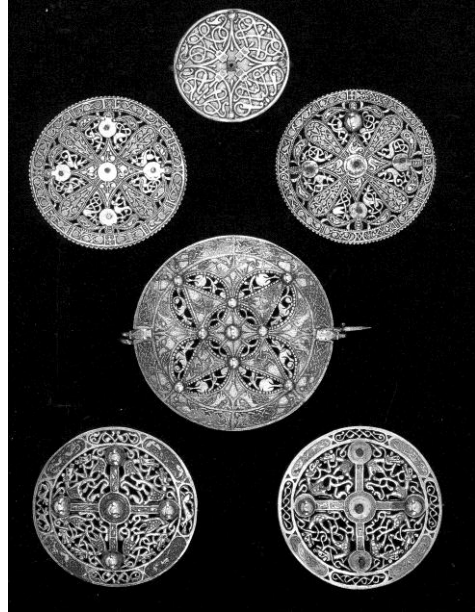
**4.124 The Pentney brooches, eighth century,
Pentney, Norfolk, British Museum, London
(Webster and Backhouse, 1991: nos. 187a–f)**

**4.125 Ivory plaque fragment, ninth century,
Larling, Castle Museum, Norwich
(Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 139)**

**4.126 Inhabited plant-scroll, drawing of the Ormside bowl,
eighth century, Yorkshire Museum, York
(Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 134)**
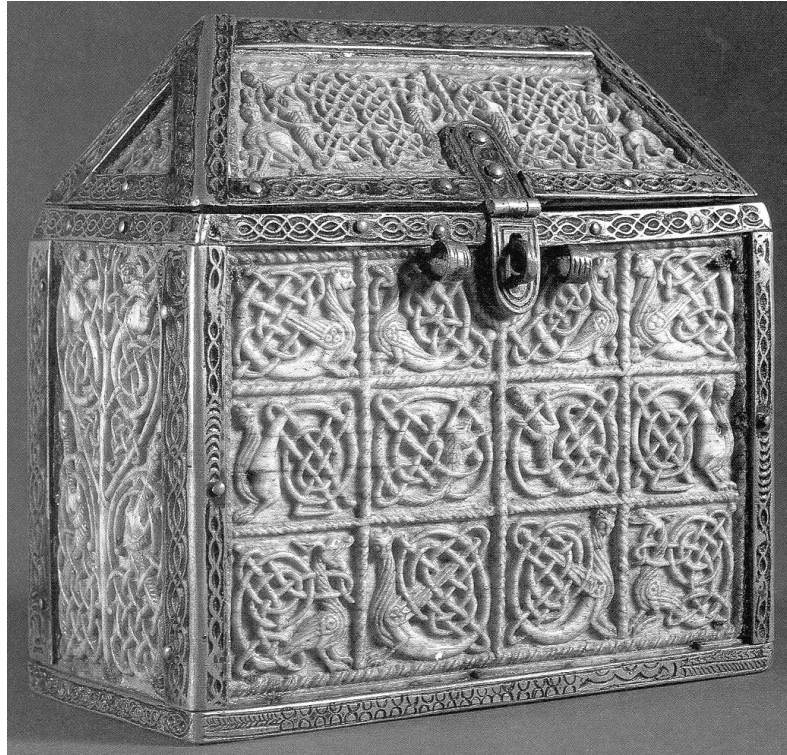
**4.127 The Gandersheim casket (front view), late eighth century,
Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig
(Beckwith, 1972: pl. 10)**

**4.128 The Gandersheim casket (back view), late eighth century,
Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig
(Beckwith, 1972: pl. 13)**

4.130 Animal-headed terminal, cross-shaft (detail, north cross, south face), ninth century, Sandbach, Cheshire (Hawkes, 2002a: fig. 2.28)
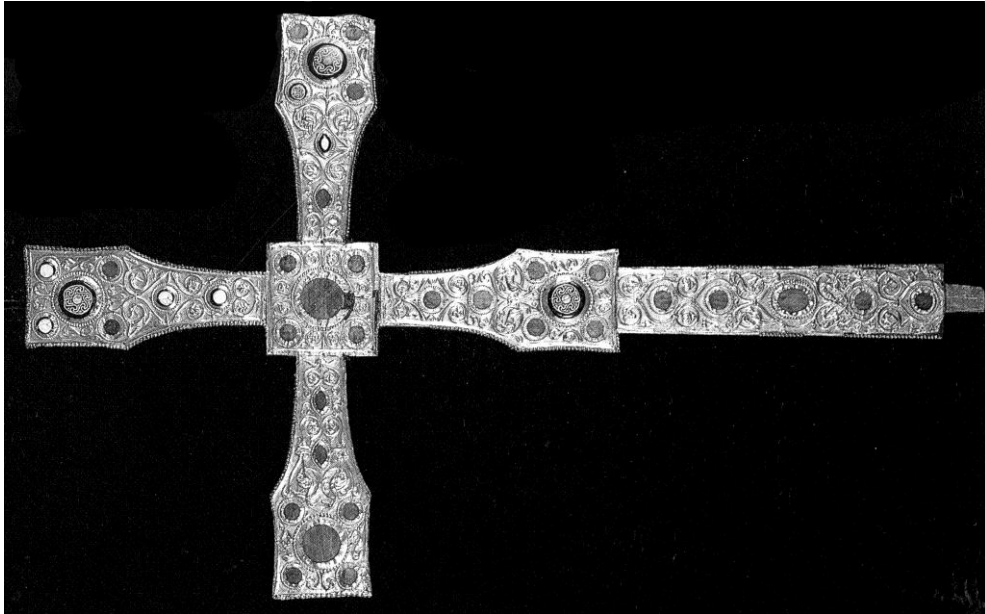
4.129 The Rupertus cross, eighth century, Bischofshofen, Diocesan Museum, Salzburg (Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 133)

4.132 Silver strip mount, Trewhiddle hoard, ninth century, British Museum, London (Wilson, 1964: pl. 36)

4.131 Plant-scroll, cross-shaft fragment, ninth century, All Saints church, Bradbourne, Derbyshire (Routh. 1937: pl. VIIIb)

4.134 Tiberius Bede, early ninth century, BL, Cotton Tiberius. C.II, fol. 5v (Brown, 2007b: pl. 46)

4.133 Mark incipit page, Barberini Gospels, c. 800, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. lat. 570, fol. 51r (Brown, 2007b: pl. 45)

**4.135 Royal Prayerbook (detail), ninth century,
BL, Royal, MS 2.A.xx, fol. 17r
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**4.136 Book of Nunnaminster (detail), ninth century,
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(Brown, 2007b: pl. 48)**

**4.137 Incipit of a prayer (detail), Book of Cerne, ninth century,
Cambridge, University Library, MS Ll.I.10, fol. 43r
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**4.138 Incipit of John's Gospel (detail), Book of Cerne, ninth century,
Cambridge, University Library, MS Ll.I.10, fols. 22r and 32r
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4.140 Mark miniature, Book of Cerne, ninth century, Cambridge, University Library, MS Ll.I.10, fols. 12v (Brown, 1996: pl. IIIa)

4.139 Matthew miniature, Book of Cerne, ninth century, Cambridge, University Library, MS Ll.I.10, fols. 2v (Brown, 1996: pl. IIa)
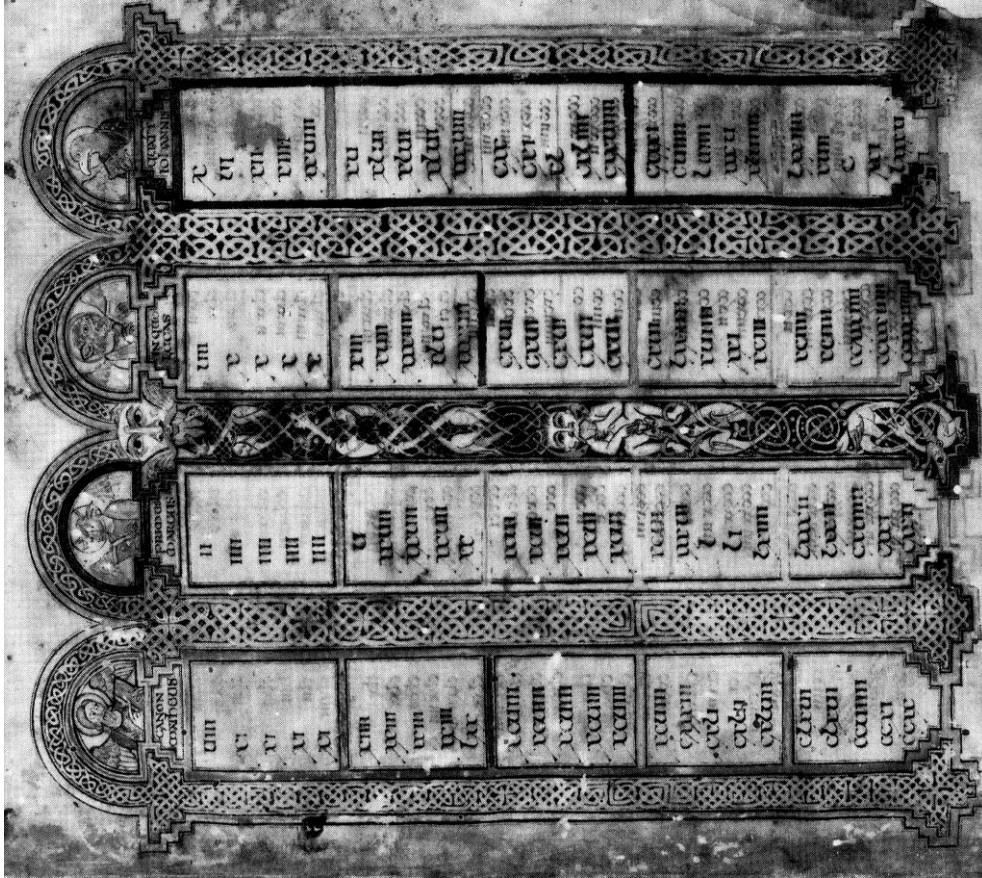
4.142 Canon Table, Barberini Gospels, c. 800, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. lat. 570, fol. Ir (Brown, 1996: fig. 36)
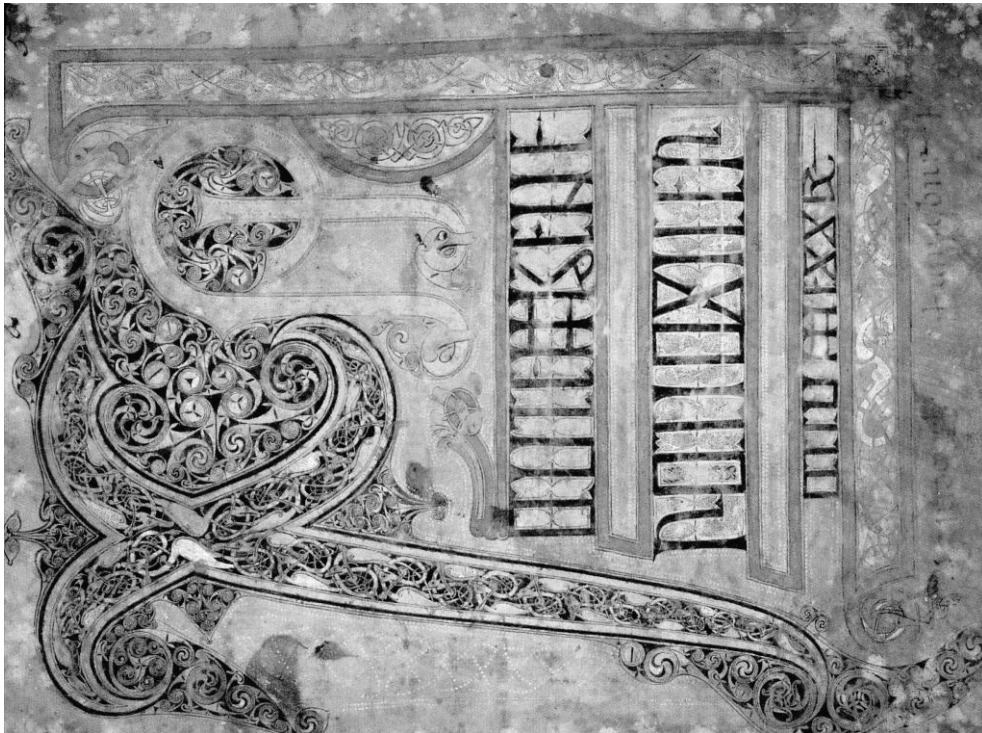
4.141 Chi-rho page, Lichfield Gospels, ninth century, Lichfield, Cathedral Library, MS I, p. 5 (Brown, 2007b: pl. 31)

**4.143 Shrine panel fragments, ninth century,
St. Mary and All Saints church, South Kyme, Lincolnshire
(Everson and Stocker, 1999: ill. 339)**

**4.144 The Lechmere Stone, grave marker, ninth century, Hanley Castle, Worcestershire
(Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 210)**
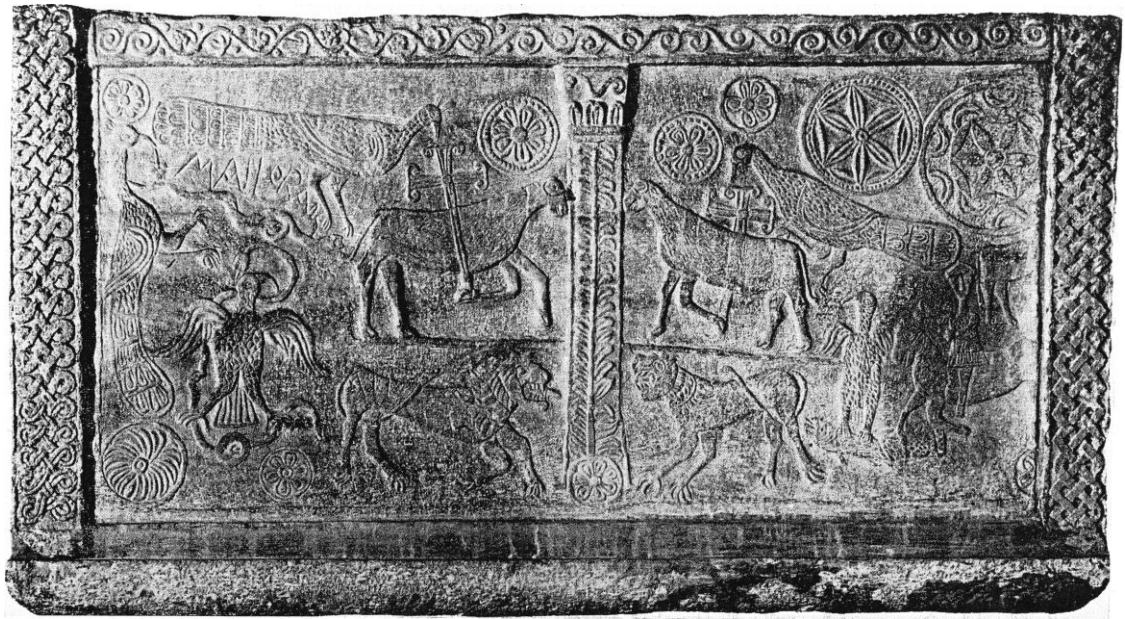
**5.1 Sarcophagus panel, eighth century, Gussago, Lombardy
(Panazza and Tagliaferri, 1966: pl. LXIV)**
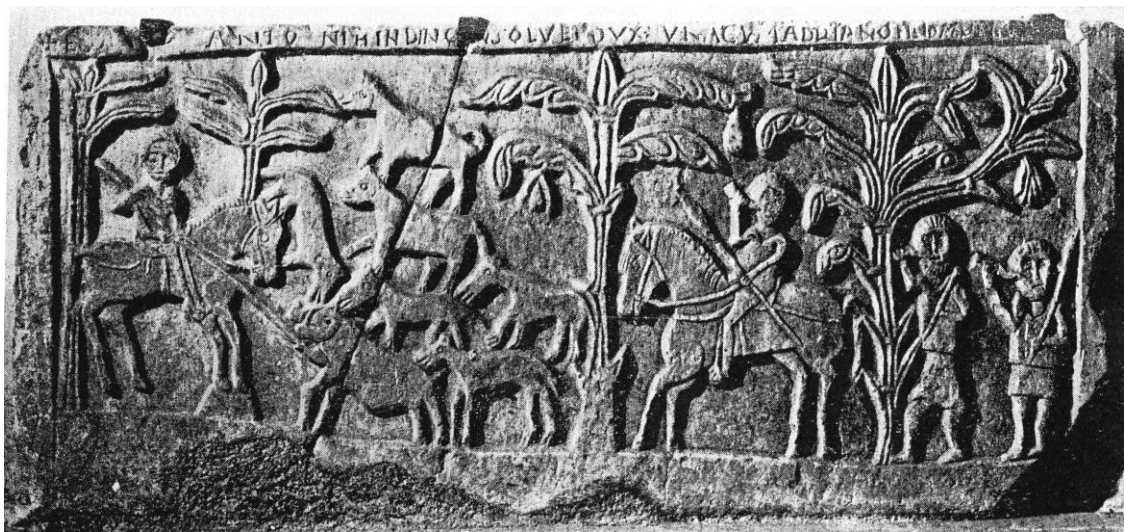
**5.2 Sarcophagus panel, eighth century, Civitá Castellana, Lazio
(Serra, 1974: pl. XXXI)**

**5.3 Christ washing the Disciples' feet, Roassano Gospel, late sixth century,
Calabria, Museo del Arcievescovado, MS 50, f. 3r
(Schiller, 1972: pl. 69)**
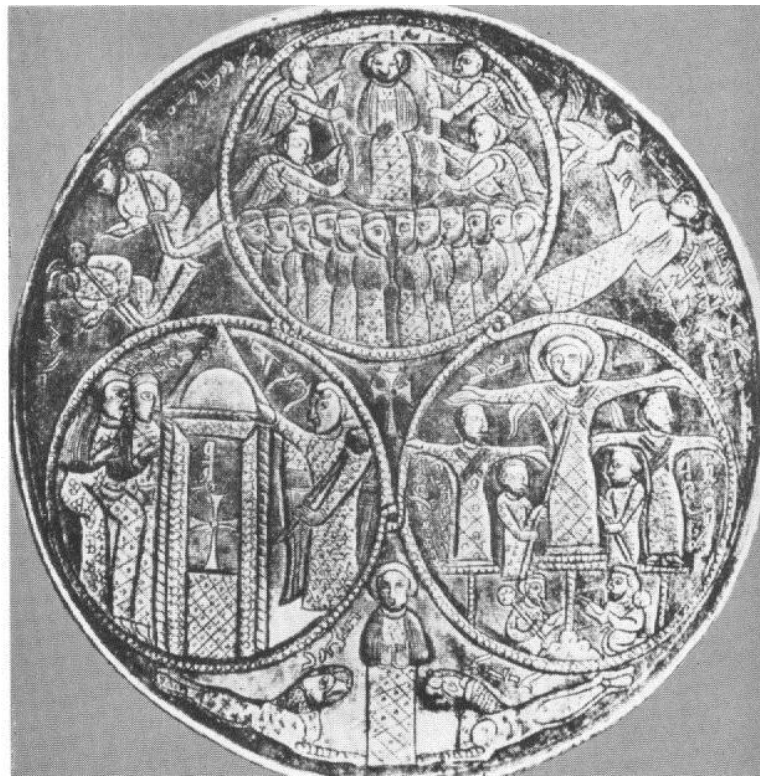
**5.4 Embossed silver plate, sixth century, Syria,
State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg
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5.5 Sarcophagus (front), fourth century, Terme Museum, Rome
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5.6 Sarcophagus (front), fourth century, Lateran, Rome
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**5.7 Sarcophagus, late ninth century, St. Alkmund's church, Derby
(Radford, 1976: pl. 4)**

**5.8 The Engers Reliquary, early ninth century,
Preussischer kulturbesitz, Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin
(Schutz, 2004: pls. 23a and b)**

**5.9 Sarcophagus (front), late fourth century, S. Francesco, Ravenna
(Photo: G. Dales)**

5.11 David and Gregory the Great, ivory diptych, ninth century, Museo e Tesoro, Monza (Bertelli and Brogolio, 2000: no. 241)

5.10 Projecta's Casket, fourth century, Esquiline Treasure, British Museum, London (Cormack and Vassilaki, 2008: no. 12)

5.12 Apostle, panel fragment, ninth century, Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)

5.13 Tree sarcophagus (front), fifth century, Musée d'Arles Antique, Arles
(Coburn Soper, 1937: fig. 45)
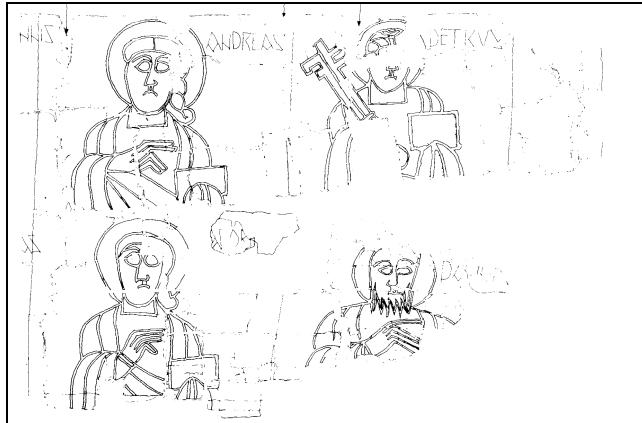
**5.14 Apostle busts, line drawing of St. Cuthbert's coffin (side), late seventh century,
Cathedral church of Christ and Blessed Mary the Virgin, Durham, County Durham
(Cronyn and Horie, 1989: fig. 19)**

**5.15 Silver book cover, late sixth or early seventh century,
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
(Beckwith, 1970: fig. 48)**

5.16 Cenotaph, ninth century, Cathedral church of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Andrew, Peterborough, Huntingdonshire
(Photo: G. Dales)

5.17 Cenotaph fragments, ninth century,
All Saints church, Bakewell, Derbyshire
(Routh, 1937: pl. VIa)

**5.18 Figure panel, ninth century,
Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**5.19 Cat-like creature, panel fragment,
ninth century, Breedon, Leicestershire
(Photo: G. Dales)**

**5.20 Drawing of cross-shaft, ninth century, Lypiatt, Gloucestershire
(Bryant, 1990: fig. 1.10)**

5.21 Cross-shaft (faces a–d), ninth century, Newent, Gloucestershire
(Photo: S. Pitcher, 1944/5, English Heritage NMR A44/12283–5 and B45/2408)

Appendices

Appendix I

Catalogue of Mercian Sculpture

All image references are to thesis illustration numbers, unless stated otherwise.

Catalogue abbreviations:
HER – *Historic Environment Record*
VCH – *Victoria County History*
RB – Romano-British
RCHM(E) – *Royal Commission for the Historical Monuments, England*

Catalogue Number	1
Site Name	Acton Beauchamp
County	Herefordshire
GIS Eastings	367900
GIS Northings	250300
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Giles
Date Range	c. 800
Principal Design Elements	Inhabited vine-scroll
Stylistic Relatives	Cropthorne (Worcs.), Wroxeter (Salop)
Bibliographic Sources	Jope, 1964: 106; Finberg, 1972: 139; Cramp, 1977: 225, 227; Parsons, 1995: 65; Bailey, 1996b: 109–10; Blair, 2001.
Notes on Monument	Re-set as door lintel in tower.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.72
Site Type	Minster
Notes on Site	Charters for land grants at Acton Beauchamp in 716 (King Æthelbald to St. Mary's, Evesham) and 718 (King Æthelbald to Buca).

Catalogue Number	2
Site Name	Alstonefield
County	Staffordshire
GIS Eastings	413200
GIS Northings	355300
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Peter
Date Range	Tenth century
Principal Design Elements	Figural carving
Stylistic Relatives	Derivative of Sandbach/Bakewell style
Bibliographic Sources	Hawkes, 2002a: 141; Plunkett, 1984: 355.
Notes on Monument	In north aisle of church. Scandinavian influence in style.
Image Reference	Plunkett, 1984: pl. 36
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	3
Site Name	Asfordby
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	470700
GIS Northings	318900
Monument Type	Cross sculpture
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Figural carving and vine-scroll
Stylistic Relatives	Leek (Staffs.)
Bibliographic Sources	Plunkett, 1984: 351; Cramp, 2010: 1, fig. 2.
Notes on Monument	In the south aisle of the church.
Image Reference	Plunkett, 1984: pl. 21.
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	4
Site Name	Bakewell
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	421500
GIS Northings	368400
Monument Type	Cross sculpture
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Late eighth- early ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Narrative scenes; figures in arched niches; vine-scroll
Stylistic Relatives	Bradbourne, Eyam (Derbys.)
Bibliographic Sources	Page, 1905: 280; Routh, 1937: 1–42; Kendrick, 1938: 164; Cramp, 1977; Morgan, 1978: 272; Bailey, 1988; Rollason, 1996: 5–8, 10–17; Hawkes, 2007: 431–47; HER.
Notes on Monument	Standing in the churchyard.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.75 and 4.76
Site Type	Early tenth-century *Chronicle* record that Edward the Elder founded a burgh at Bakewell. Domesday records a church with two priests.
Notes on Site	Neolithic and Bronze Age axes found nearby. Bole Hill lies to the south-east – a cairn with cists and inhumations of unknown date. Area surrounding Bakewell dotted with barrow sites. Two-handled amphora shaped urn, probably Roman, discovered in 1808 containing bones and a bronze bell. Domesday records a church with two priests.

Catalogue Number	5
Site Name	Bakewell
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	421500
GIS Northings	368400
Monument Type	Cenotaph fragment
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Late eighth to ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Transfiguration? 'Stepped framework sprouting fronds held by figures'. Inhabited vine-scroll.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach (Chesh.); Wirksworth and Derbyshire group crosses
Bibliographic Sources	Page, 1905: 280; Morgan, 1978: 272; Hawkes, 2002a: 52, 72, 138–41; Routh 1937: 1–42; Clapham, 1930: 76.
Notes on Monument	Fragmentary coped stone, now in Sheffield museum (over 40 other sculpture fragments preserved in the church).
Image Reference	Ill. 5.17
Site Type	See cat. no. 4.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 4.

Catalogue Number	6
Site Name	Bedford
County	Bedfordshire
GIS Eastings	504900
GIS Northings	249700
Monument Type	Cross sculpture?
Church Dedication	St. Peter.
Date Range	c.800.
Principal Design Elements	Winged bipeds with protruding tongues and interlacing tails.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach; Gloucester; Breedon cross-shaft.
Bibliographic Sources	Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 58–60; Pevsner, 1968; Plunkett, 1984: 349; Tweddle *et al.*, 1995: 206–7; Bailey, 1996: 18.
Notes on Monument	Built upside-down into north jamb of church tower doorway. Taylor and Taylor, 1965: fig. 28; Plunkett, 1984: pl. 12;
Image Reference	Tweddle *et al.*, 1995: ills. 265–7.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	Church preserves extant Saxon fabric.

Catalogue Number	7
Site Name	Berkeley church
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	368521.2
GIS Northings	199205
Monument Type	Architectural fragments
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	Ninth or tenth century?
Principal Design Elements	Fret decoration
Stylistic Relatives	Unknown
Bibliographic Sources	Verey, 1970: 98–101; Heighway, 1987: 112; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 239.
Notes on Monument	One of few examples of architectural sculpture surviving in west and south-west Mercia.
Image Reference	Heighway, 1987: fig. 1.
Site Type	Abbey.
Notes on Site	Eighth-century Abbey. Two abbots became bishops of Worcester in the eighth and tenth centuries.

Catalogue Number	8
Site Name	Berkeley Castle
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	368500
GIS Northings	198900
Monument Type	Panel fragment?
Church Dedication	N/A
Date Range	Ninth century?
Principal Design Elements	Carved head of a figure.
Stylistic Relatives	Pershore (Worcs.).
Bibliographic Sources	Portway Dobson, 1933: 271; Verey, 1970: 101–2.
Notes on Monument	Fragmentary.
Image Reference	Portway Dobson, 1933: fig. 13.
Site Type	Castle.
Notes on Site	Castle of eleventh-century foundation. But see, nearby Berkeley church (above).

Catalogue Number	9
Site Name	Birstall
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	459500
GIS Northings	309000
Monument Type	Panel?
Church Dedication	St James
Date Range	Later ninth to tenth century
Principal Design Elements	Leonine beast.
Stylistic Relatives	Bedford.
Bibliographic Sources	Plunkett, 1984: 352.
Notes on Monument	Mounted in the nave.
Image Reference	Plunkett, 1984: pl. 25; Online: http://birstall.leicestershireparishcouncils.org/thebeastofbirstall.html.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	10
Site Name	Bisley
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	390300
GIS Northings	205900
Monument Type	Cross-arm fragment
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Early ninth-century
Principal Design Elements	Two figures busts with stylised drapery, one female: Adam and Eve?
Stylistic Relatives	Derbyshire cross-sculpture; Fletton frieze; Newent cross-collar.
Bibliographic Sources	Baddeley, 1929; Portway Dobson, 1933: 272; Clifford, 1938: 298; Toynbee, 1976: 93; Verey, 1979: 175; Heighway, 1987: 98–9; Bryant, 1990; Bell, 2005: 175, 223; Henig, 1993: 252, pl. 60; Herbert, VCH, Glos., **11**: 1, 32; RCHM(E), Glos., **1**: 14–16.
Notes on Monument	Lower arm of cross-head? Formerly at Lypiatt Estate in the chapel. Now in Stroud district museum. Thought to be a Roman altar. Several RB altars were preserved in the chapel. Lypiatt cross stands on the parish boundary and on the Stroud-Bisley road.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.24
Site Type	Minster.
Notes on Site	Recorded with two priests at Domesday. Has a large parish. Site associated with RB activity. Possible RB cult centre. RB villa complex found 1.5 miles from church in field 'Church Piece'.

Catalogue Number	11
Site Name	Bisley
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	390300
GIS Northings	205900
Monument Type	Frieze fragment
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Early ninth-century
Principal Design Elements	Two figures busts under arcading.
Stylistic Relatives	Newent cross-collar; Fletton frieze.
Bibliographic Sources	Portway Dobson, 1933: 272; Bell, 2005: 175, 223.
Notes on Monument	Rebuilt into the church porch.
Image Reference	Portway Dobson, 1933: fig. 14.
Site Type	Minster.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 10.

Catalogue Number	12
Site Name	Bradbourne
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	420800
GIS Northings	352700
Monument Type	Cross sculpture
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Late eighth to ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Vine-scroll with archer (W. face); vine-scroll with reclining figure (E. face); Crucifixion scene (S. face); Two niches containing busts with a man and a bird below (N. face).
Stylistic Relatives	Bakewell.
Bibliographic Sources	Routh 1937: 19–23; Pevsner, 1953: 66–7; Morgan, 1978: 274; Rollason, 1996: 9, 18–27; Hawkes, 2007; HER; VCH, Derbs., **1**: 281.
Notes on Monument	Standing in the churchyard. Made from gritstone. Rectangular section.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.74 and 4.131
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	No documentary evidence for pre-Conquest period. Domesday records a church and a priest. Fragments of a possible cross-head loose in the nave. Site is in proximity to barrows: Wigber Low and Standlow. Two other tumuli both called 'Moot Lowe' nearby.

Catalogue Number	13
Site Name	Breedon
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	440186
GIS Northings	322652
Monument Type	Narrow frieze fragments
Church Dedication	St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range	775–825
Principal Design Elements	Continuous vine-scroll
Stylistic Relatives	Derbyshire cross-shafts, Fletton frieze
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1928: 219–38; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1970: 53–6; Hart, 1975: 67; Cramp, 1977; Dornier, 1977; Bailey, 1980b; Jewell, 1982; Jewell, 1986; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument	Mounted internally in the east end wall behind the altar; in the south wall of the tower and in the south wall. 0.17m in height.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.38–4.45
Site Type	Satellite monastic site within Peterborough federation.
Notes on Site	Charter granting land to Peterborough by king Wulfhere, c. 644. Excavations at Breedon have revealed an Iron Age settlement.

Catalogue Number   14
Site Name   Breedon
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   440186
GIS Northings   322652
Monument Type   Broad frieze fragments
Church Dedication   St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range   775–825
Principal Design Elements   Inhabited vine-scroll; geometric ornament; paired and animate beasts; birds and men.
Stylistic Relatives   Fletton frieze fragments, South Kyme, Peterborough cenotaph.
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1928: 219–38; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1970: 53–6; Hart, 1975: 67; Cramp, 1977; Dornier, 1977; Bailey, 1980b; Jewell, 1982; Jewell, 1986; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument   In the tower, the south aisle, the spandrels of the nave arches and the north aisle. 0.22m in height.
Image Reference   Ills. 4.46–4.61
Site Type   See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site   See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number   15
Site Name   Breedon
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   440186
GIS Northings   322652
Monument Type   Figure panel
Church Dedication   St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range   775–825
Principal Design Elements   Full length blessing angel stepping out of arched niche.
Stylistic Relatives   Lichfield; Fletton.
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1928: 219–38; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1970: 53–6; Hart, 1975: 67; Parsons, 1976–7; Cramp, 1977; Dornier, 1977; Bailey, 1980b; Jewell, 1982; Jewell, 1986; Jewell, 2001; Cramp, 2006; Mitchell, 2010, forthcoming.
Notes on Monument   In the tower. Replica mounted in western end of south aisle. Dimensions: 0.945m by 0.535m.
Image Reference   Ill. 4.32
Site Type   See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site   See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number   16
Site Name   Breedon
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   440186
GIS Northings   322652
Monument Type   Cross-sculpture
Church Dedication   St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range   865–896
Principal Design Elements   Winged biped; Adam and Eve; The sacrifice of Isaac.
Stylistic Relatives   Elstow, Gloucester, Newent.
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1928; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1977; Dornier, 1977; Jewell, 1986, 77: pl. 35b; Bailey, 1996b: 18–19; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument   Two fragments of cross-shafts now in the north aisle.
Image Reference   Bailey, 1996b: fig.8.
Site Type   See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site   See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number   17
Site Name   Breedon
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   440186
GIS Northings   322652
Monument Type   Panel fragment
Church Dedication   St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range   Eighth century
Principal Design Elements   Partial cat-like creature on bottom right.
Stylistic Relatives   Creature's face comparable to animals on frieze fragments at the same site.
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1928; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; Dornier, 1977; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument   Mounted in the wall of the south aisle.
Image Reference   Ill. 5.19
Site Type   See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site   See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number   18
Site Name   Breedon
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   440186
GIS Northings   322652
Monument Type   Panel
Church Dedication   St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range   Eighth- ninth century
Principal Design Elements   Square panel with a heraldic lion
Stylistic Relatives   May be compared with leonine animals in frieze fragments at the same site.
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1928; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; Dornier, 1977; 1996; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument   Mounted in the wall of the south aisle. 0.51m by 0.63m.
Image Reference   Ill. 4.79
Site Type   See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site   See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number   19
Site Name   Breedon
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   440186
GIS Northings   322652
Monument Type   Panel
Church Dedication   St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range   Late eighth-, early ninth-century
Principal Design Elements   Panel with two robed figures holding plants.
Stylistic Relatives   Peterborough group, Ingleby (Derbs.)
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1928: 219–40; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; Dornier, 1977; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument   Mounted in the wall of the south aisle.
Image Reference   Ill. 5.18
Site Type   See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site   See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number	20
Site Name	Breedon
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	440186
GIS Northings	322652
Monument Type	Shrine panels
Church Dedication	St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range	Late eighth-, early ninth-century
Principal Design Elements	Three panels with robed figures in arcading.
Stylistic Relatives	Peterborough; Fletton; Castor.
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1928, pl. 39; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Dornier, 1977; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; Lang, 1999; Jewell, 2001; Mitchell, forthcoming.
Notes on Monument	Mounted in the wall of the east end of the south aisle.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.113–4.115
Site Type	See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number	21
Site Name	Breedon
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	440186
GIS Northings	322652
Monument Type	Panel
Church Dedication	St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range	Early ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Bust of the Virgin, holding a book, under an arch.
Stylistic Relatives	Pershore, Derbyshire cross-sculpture, Peterborough, Fletton.
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1927; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Dornier, 1977; Cramp, 1977; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument	Mounted in the east end wall of the south aisle. 0.6m by 0.46m.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.2
Site Type	See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number	22
Site Name	Breedon
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	440186
GIS Northings	322652
Monument Type	Narrative panel fragment
Church Dedication	St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range	Late eighth-, early ninth century.
Principal Design Elements	Fragment depicting scene of Miracle at Cana
Stylistic Relatives	None.
Bibliographic Sources	Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1977; Dornier, 1977; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument	In south aisle. Fragment of larger panel. 0.28m by 0.23m
Image Reference	Ills. 4.1 and 4.4
Site Type	See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number	23
Site Name	Breedon
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	440185
GIS Northings	322652
Monument Type	Panel fragment
Church Dedication	St. Mary and St. Hardulph
Date Range	Late eighth-, early ninth century
Principal Design Elements	A nimbed robed figure gesturing towards an architectural feature or part of a cross.
Stylistic Relatives	Castor, Fletton, Peterborough.
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1928; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 97–8; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; Dornier, 1977; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument	Mounted in the wall of the south aisle.
Image Reference	Ill. 5.12
Site Type	See cat. no. 13.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 13.

Catalogue Number	24
Site Name	Bromyard
County	Herefordshire
GIS Eastings	365500
GIS Northings	254900
Monument Type	Panel
Church Dedication	St. Peter
Date Range	Tenth to eleventh century
Principal Design Elements	Figure panel of St. Peter with the Keys
Stylistic Relatives	Churcham, Glos. (Henig, 1993: 78, pl. 59).
Bibliographic Sources	RCHM(E) (Heref.), 1932, **II**: 36–8; Thorn and Thorn, 1983: 182; Henig, 1993: 79.
Notes on Monument	Re-set above the door into the church.
Image Reference	RCHM(E) (Heref.), 1932, **II**: pl. 18.
Site Type	Minster
Notes on Site	Fabric of the church dates from the early twelfth century. Domesday records two priests and a chaplain.

Catalogue Number	25
Site Name	Castor
County	Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings	514300
GIS Northings	298700
Monument Type	Cross-heads
Church Dedication	St. Kyneburg
Date Range	Unknown
Principal Design Elements	Unknown
Stylistic Relatives	Unknown
Bibliographic Sources	HER website.
Notes on Monument	Two cross-heads, now lost. Found in the garden of Ferry House, Milton Park to the east of Castor. Thought to have originated from Castor or Longthorpe.
Image Reference	None
Site Type	Minster, built near the site of an earlier Roman settlement.
Notes on Site	Excavations in 1957–8 revealed remains of Roman buildings and Middle Saxon settlement site. Cropmarks suggests a possible Roman or Prehistoric house, or a barrow site. Ipswich ware recovered. Unique dedication, to daughter of Peada founder of Peterborough Abbey.

Catalogue Number	26
Site Name	Castor
County	Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings	512500
GIS Northings	298500
Monument Type	Figure panel
Church Dedication	St. Kyneburg
Date Range	775–825
Principal Design Elements	Full length nimbed robed figure with a pallium, holding an elaborately carved book. Part of a second figure is visible. Both figures are under continuous arcading.
Stylistic Relatives	Peterborough cenotaph, Fletton figure panels, Breedon figure panels.
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1928: 219–40; Pevsner, 1968: 229; Thorn and Thorn, 1979: 6, 7; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; VCH (Hunts.), **1**: 225; VCH (Northants.), **2**: 472; Henderson, I., 1997: 216–32; Bell, 2005: 203.
Notes on Monument	Rebuilt inside in the east wall of the north aisle. In good condition. 0.5m by 0.275m.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.10
Site Type	See cat. no. 25.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 25.

Catalogue Number	27
Site Name	Castor
County	Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings	512500
GIS Northings	298500
Monument Type	Cross-base?
Church Dedication	St. Kyneburg
Date Range	Eighth century
Principal Design Elements	Animal ornament: lower bodies descending into interlace
Stylistic Relatives	Peterborough cenotaph; South Hayling (Hants.)
Bibliographic Sources	Allen, 1887–8: 409–10; Larkby, 1902; Brøndsted, 1924; Pevsner, 1968: 229; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; VCH (Hunts.), **1**: 225; VCH (Northants.), **2**: 472; Thorn and Thorn, 1979: 6, 7; Henderson, I., 1997: 216–32; Bell, 2005: 203; Mitchell, forthcoming.
Notes on Monument	Very worn part of possible cross-base in the north aisle. Curious bulges at upper corners.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.123
Site Type	See cat. no. 25.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 25.

Catalogue Number	28
Site Name	Chesterton
County	Staffordshire
GIS Eastings	383100
GIS Northings	349400
Monument Type	Cross fragment
Church Dedication	St. Andrew
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Cross-bearing figure depicting the Road to Calvary.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach.
Bibliographic Sources	Hawkes, 2002a: 140
Notes on Monument	None.
Image Reference	Hawkes, 2002a: fig. 5.6
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	29
Site Name	Cropthorne
County	Worcestershire
GIS Eastings	400000
GIS Northings	245100
Monument Type	Cross-head
Church Dedication	St. Michael
Date Range	Early ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Animal-headed terminals; inhabited vine-scroll; fret ornament.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach; Acton Beauchamp; Wroxeter.
Bibliographic Sources	VCH (Worcs.), 1906, **II**: 183–4; Baldwin Brown, 1937: 277–8, pl. CVI; Kendrick, 1938: 186; Pevsner, 1968b: 13, 128–9; Cramp, 1977: 225–30; Plunkett, 1984: pl. 3; Wilson, 1984: 105; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 209; Bailey, 1996b: 109, fig. 56.
Notes on Monument	Equal-armed cross carved on all faces of its arms. Uniquely aniconic design. It had previously been built into the church wall and preserves damage from that time.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.71
Site Type	Minster and royal *vill*.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	30
Site Name	Deerhurst
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	386978
GIS Northings	229528
Monument Type	Arch terminals
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Ornamental animal heads
Stylistic Relatives	Elstow, Gloucester.
Bibliographic Sources	Birch, 1885: no. 313; Portway Dobson, 1933: 266–8; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 193–209; Verey, 1970: 166–9; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 241; Gem *et al*., 2008: 109–64.
Notes on Monument	Sculptured and painted terminals on chancel arch, preserving original paintwork.
Image Reference	Webster and Backhouse, 1991: fig. 27
Site Type	Monastic.
Notes on Site	Lands bequeathed to Deerhurst for a *congregatio* in 804.

Catalogue Number	31
Site Name	Derby
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	435200
GIS Northings	336500
Monument Type	Sarcophagus
Church Dedication	St. Alkmund
Date Range	Late eighth, ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Geometric ornament.
Stylistic Relatives	Govan.
Bibliographic Sources	Routh, 1937; Pevsner, 1953: 114; Radford 1976: 26–61; Cramp, 1978; Hawkes, 2007; VCH (Derbs.), **1**: 281; **2**: 87–8.
Notes on Monument	Found in the south-east corner of the nave with its upper edge level with the twelfth-century surface of the church pavement. Several other pre-Conquest fragments survive at the church.
Image Reference	Ill. 5.7
Site Type	Royal cult site?
Notes on Site	Alkmund, a Northumbrian prince, died c. 800. Radford inferred from the archaeological evidence that the origins of the church were in the period before 800.

Catalogue Number	32
Site Name	Edenham
County	Lincolnshire
GIS Eastings	506200
GIS Northings	321800
Monument Type	Cross shaft
Church Dedication	St. Michael
Date Range	Mid ninth-century
Principal Design Elements	Figure in architectural setting; interlacing.
Stylistic Relatives	Nassington (Northants.)
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1930: 70, pl. 2; Clapham, 1946; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 157–60.
Notes on Monument	Greatly weathered. In the west end of the nave.
Image Reference	Everson and Stocker, 1999: ills. 162–7.
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	33
Site Name	Edenham
County	Lincolnshire
GIS Eastings	506200
GIS Northings	321800
Monument Type	Decorative roundels
Church Dedication	St. Michael
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Ornamental roundels in deep relief
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon frieze fragments
Bibliographic Sources	Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 242; Plunkett, 1998: 211; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 160–2, ills. 168–9; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument	Two roundels, one incomplete. One contains spiralling stylised leaves, the other a cruciform design.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.93 and 4.94
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number   34
Site Name   Ely
County   Cambridgeshire
GIS Eastings   554000
GIS Northings   280100
Monument Type   Frieze fragment
Church Dedication   N/A
Date Range   Eighth century?
Principal Design Elements Man blowing a trumpet sitting on an ox
Stylistic Relatives   Breedon and Fletton frieze fragments
Bibliographic Sources   Cobbett, 1934: 62–3; Pevsner, 1954: 306; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 239; Henderson, 1997: 217; Crook, 2001: 77.
Notes on Monument   Re-set into the barn wall of a farm on St. John's road. Greatly weathered.
Image Reference   Henderson, 1997: 217.
Site Type   Royal monastic
Notes on Site   Possibly part of Æthelthryth's abbey founded 673.

Catalogue Number   35
Site Name   Eyam
County   Derbyshire
GIS Eastings   421700
GIS Northings   376400
Monument Type   Cross-shaft
Church Dedication   St. Lawrence
Date Range   Ninth century
Principal Design Elements Vine-scroll; niched figures; geometric ornament; angels.
Stylistic Relatives   Bradbourne, Bakwell, Fletton, Sandbach.
Bibliographic Sources   Clapham, 1930: 67; Routh, 1937; Kendrick, 1938: 164; Pevsner, 1953: 136; HER website; Cramp, 1977: 219; Bailey 1990: 2; VCH (Derbs.), **1**: 282; Rollason, 1996: 9, 28–34; Hawkes, 2002: 113.
Notes on Monument   Standing in the churchyard, south of the church.
Image Reference   Ills. 4.18 and 4.23
Site Type   Unknown
Notes on Site   No documentary evidence for pre-Conquest period. Bronze Age stone circle and Bronze Age round barrow nearby.

Catalogue Number   36
Site Name   Fletton
County   Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings   519700
GIS Northings   297100
Monument Type   Frieze fragments
Church Dedication   St. Margaret
Date Range   775–825
Principal Design Elements Vine-scroll; geometric ornament; figure-busts; *pelta* ornament
Stylistic Relatives   Breedon, Peterborough, Castor
Bibliographic Sources   Irvine, 1891–3; Clapham, 1928: 219–40; Pevsner, 1968: 245–7; Cramp, 1977: 191–231; VCH (Huntingdon), **2**: 169; Okasha, 1983; Taylor, 1983.
Notes on Monument   Seven sections of frieze, 0.19m in height. Mounted in the east end wall. Originally mounted externally. Pink colour from exposure to heat.
Image Reference   Ills. 4.27–4.30 and 4.121
Site Type   Unknown
Notes on Site   None

Catalogue Number   37
Site Name   Fletton
County   Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings   519700
GIS Northings   297100
Monument Type   Figure panels
Church Dedication   St. Margaret
Date Range   775–825
Principal Design Elements   Two panels, each depicting a full-length figure in a niche. One figure is winged, holding a long sceptre; the other is an apostle holding a scroll.
Stylistic Relatives   Peterborough, Castor.
Bibliographic Sources   Irvine, 1891–3; Clapham, 1928: 219–40; Cramp, 1977; Okasha, 1983: 92; Henderson, I., 1997; Mitchell, 2010 and forthcoming; VCH (Hunts.), III: 169–71.
Notes on Monument   Set into the south chancel wall; one panel bears inscription SCS Michael. Winged figure: 0.625m by 0.23m. Apostle: 0.755m by 0.29m.
Image Reference   Ills. 4.11 and 4.12
Site Type   Unknown
Notes on Site   None

Catalogue Number   38
Site Name   Gloucester
County   Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings   383100
GIS Northings   218700
Monument Type   Cross shaft
Church Dedication   St. Oswald
Date Range   820–865/875
Principal Design Elements   Animals with textured bodies dissolving into interlace.
Stylistic Relatives   Acton Beauchamp
Bibliographic Sources   Brøndsted, 1924: 229–30; Portway Dobson, 1933: 266–8; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 239; Cramp, 1977: 230.
Notes on Monument   None.
Image Reference   Webster and Backhouse, 1991: fig. 25.
Site Type   Central monastic.
Notes on Site   None.

Catalogue Number   39
Site Name   Great Glen
County   Leicestershire
GIS Eastings   465200
GIS Northings   297800
Monument Type   Figure panel
Church Dedication   St. Cuthbert
Date Range   Ninth century
Principal Design Elements   Lazarus scene?
Stylistic Relatives   Bakewell
Bibliographic Sources   Bailey, 1988: 2–3; Cramp, 2010: 11.
Notes on Monument   Fragment in St Cuthbert's church showing part of two figures.
Image Reference   Bailey, 1988: fig. 2; Cramp, 2010: fig. 8.
Site Type   Unknown.
Notes on Site   None.

Catalogue Number	40
Site Name	Haddenham
County	Cambridgeshire
GIS Eastings	546300
GIS Northings	275500
Monument Type	Cross sculpture
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	After seventh century
Principal Design Elements	Inscription for Ovin
Stylistic Relatives	Ely monastery
Bibliographic Sources	Okasha, 1971: 74–5; Henderson, 1997: 218.
Notes on Monument	Inscribed intercession for Ovin, head of Æthelthryth's household and later monk at Lichfield when Chad was bishop. Inscription post dates the seventh century. Now in Ely cathedral
Image Reference	Okasha, 1971: ill. 43.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	41
Site Name	Ingleby
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	434800
GIS Northings	327000
Monument Type	Cross fragment
Church Dedication	N/A
Date Range	Tenth century
Principal Design Elements	'stepped framework sprouting fronds held by figures'; plait-work; man with cap holding/picking a vine.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach, Breedon.
Bibliographic Sources	Routh 1937: 29–33; Hawkes, 2002a: 72.
Notes on Monument	Now in Repton church. Exhibits Scandinavian influences.
Image Reference	Routh, 1937: pl. XVI.
Site Type	Ingleby was one of Repton's chapels.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	42
Site Name	Lechmere
County	Worcestershire
GIS Eastings	383800
GIS Northings	241900
Monument Type	Grave-marker
Church Dedication	N/A
Date Range	Early ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Full-length figure in round-headed niche with cruciform nimbus.
Stylistic Relatives	Whitchurch, Peterborough group
Bibliographic Sources	Baldwin Brown, 1931: 226–8, pl. XXVII; Webster & Backhouse, 1991: no. 210.
Notes on Monument	Figure is thought to be Christ. The reverse of the monument bears an incised cross-design. Made of local Oolite.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.144
Site Type	Private residence (Hanley Castle).
Notes on Site	No record of how the stone came to be privately owned.

Catalogue Number	43
Site Name	Leek
County	Staffordshire
GIS Eastings	398500
GIS Northings	365600
Monument Type	Cross-sculpture
Church Dedication	St. Edward
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Profile of a cross-bearing figure with ornamental pellets.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach.
Bibliographic Sources	Hawkes, 2002a: 140.
Notes on Monument	Thought to depict a 'Road to Calvary' scene.
Image Reference	Hawkes, 2002a: fig. 5.5.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	44
Site Name	Lichfield
County	Staffordshire
GIS Eastings	410985
GIS Northings	309839
Monument Type	Angel panel
Church Dedication	St. Chad and St. Mary
Date Range	c.800
Principal Design Elements	Full length alighting angel.
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon, Fletton
Bibliographic Sources	Cramp, 2006a; Rodwell, 2006; Rodwell *et al*., 2008.
Notes on Monument	Discovered beneath the nave of the cathedral. 0.60m by 0.40m. A fragment of a coped, panelled shrine.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.25
Site Type	Diocesan cathedral, one time archbishopric of Mercia.
Notes on Site	Centre for the cult of St. Chad, one of its bishops.

Catalogue Number	45
Site Name	Lypiatt
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	393500
GIS Northings	208500
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	N/A
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Full-length niched figures.
Stylistic Relatives	Northumbrian crosses; Newent.
Bibliographic Sources	Baddeley, 1929: 103–7; Anonymous, 1933: 9–10; Portway Dobson, 1933: 265–6; Heighway, 1987: 98; Bryant, 1990: 44–6.
Notes on Monument	Originally thought to be positioned at a nearby crossroads of two ancient roads on the boundary of the Bisley parish.
Image Reference	Ill. 5.20
Site Type	Meeting point?
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	46
Site Name	Nassington
County	Northamptonshire
GIS Eastings	506500
GIS Northings	296500
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Late ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Figural scenes; interlace.
Stylistic Relatives	Bakewell; Newent; Edenham cross-shaft.
Bibliographic Sources	Pevsner, 1961; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 455; Franklin, 1985: 69–88; Bailey, 1988: 2; Coatsworth, 1988: 171, pl. IIA; Stocker and Everson, 1999: 159; RCHM(E) (Northants.), **1**: 67–9, **6**: 119–123.
Notes on Monument	Crucifixion scene with the sun and the moon, and spear bearers.
Image Reference	Bailey, 1988: fig. 1.
Site Type	Minster.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	47
Site Name	Newent
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	372300
GIS Northings	226000
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	820–865/875
Principal Design Elements	Narrative scenes; figure busts; plant and animal ornament.
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon cross-sculpture; Fletton frieze; Sandbach.
Bibliographic Sources	Conder, 1905–7: 478–9; Allen, 1907: 197–200; Portway Dobson, 1933: 265; Kendrick, 1938; Verey, 1970: 303 Cramp, 1977; Jewell, 2001.
Notes on Monument	Unusual collar around upper portion of cross-shaft. Tapering cross-section. Discovered during alterations to the churchyard in 1907.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.31 and 5.21
Site Type	Minster?
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	48
Site Name	Newent
County	Gloucestershire
GIS Eastings	372300
GIS Northings	226000
Monument Type	Funerary slab
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	Tenth to eleventh century
Principal Design Elements	Two sided slab with figural carving.
Stylistic Relatives	Bromyard; Churcham.
Bibliographic Sources	Portway Dobson, 1933: 272–3; Zarnecki, 1953: 49–55; Verey, 1970: 303; Okasha, 1971.
Notes on Monument	Discovered in a grave, beneath the skull of a skeleton. Now in Gloucester museum. The slab bears an inscription on its edges. One side shows a crucifixion scene, the other a robed ecclesiastic with the name Edred. Sides bear the names of Evangelists and Edred.
Image Reference	Zarnecki, 1953: pls. III, IV and V.
Site Type	Minster?
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	49
Site Name	Overchurch
County	Cheshire
GIS Eastings	340800
GIS Northings	369100
Monument Type	Shrine cover?
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	c.800
Principal Design Elements	Winged beast dissolving into interlace.
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach
Bibliographic Sources	Hawkes, 2002a: 89; Bu'Lock, 1972: 48–9; Bailey, 2010: 91–4.
Notes on Monument	Built into the church at Upton. Now kept in the Grosvenor museum. Runic inscription on the monument suggests it was a memorial for 'Æthelmund'.
Image Reference	Bu'Lock, 1972: fig. 10
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	50
Site Name	Pershore
County	Worcestershire
GIS Eastings	394974
GIS Northings	245748
Monument Type	Panel
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Figure bust in an architectural setting
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon Virgin; Berkeley Castle (Glos.).
Bibliographic Sources	Finberg, 1972: 86; King, 1992: 129–134.
Notes on Monument	Fragmentary. Mounted in the east wall of north aisle. Figure depicted within an architectural setting, holding 'coiled object'.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.83
Site Type	Monastic
Notes on Site	St. Andrew's church is just to the east of the Abbey church at Pershore, which was founded c. 689.

Catalogue Number	51
Site Name	Peterborough
County	Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings	519402
GIS Northings	298735
Monument Type	Figure panel
Church Dedication	St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Andrew
Date Range	775–825
Principal Design Elements	Panel with two helmeted figures either side of a palm tree.
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon, Castor, Fletton.
Bibliographic Sources	Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 491–4; Hart, 1966: 110; Stenton, 1970: 179–92; Hart, 1975: 55, 67, 68; Cramp, 1977; Whitelock, 1979: 252.
Notes on Monument	Mounted in the twelfth-century west wall of the north transept. 0.66m by 0.44m. No evidence for discovery.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.87
Site Type	Central royal monastic
Notes on Site	There are over forty charters relating to the foundation of Peterborough, most of which have now been identified as post-Conquest forgeries.

Catalogue Number	52
Site Name	Peterborough
County	Huntingdonshire
GIS Eastings	519402
GIS Northings	298735
Monument Type	Cenotaph
Church Dedication	St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Andrew
Date Range	775–825
Principal Design Elements	Apostles, Christ and the Virgin in arcading on both long faces; animal and interlacing ornament on upper coped surfaces.
Stylistic Relatives	Castor, Fletton, Breedon.
Bibliographic Sources	Irvine, 1883–4; Irvine, 1891–3; Brøndsted, 1924; Clapham, 1930: 76; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 491–4; Hart, 1966: 110; Pevsner, 1968: 318; Stenton, 1970: 179–92; Hart, 1975: 55, 67, 68; Cramp, 1977; Whitelock, 1979: 252; Bailey, 1996: 9, 58–9; Plunkett, 1998.
Notes on Monument	Standing at the east end in the ambulatory. 1.04m length, 0.71m height, 0.34m depth. No evidence for discovery. Greatly weathered and with damage.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.9 and 5.16
Site Type	See cat. no. 51.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 51.

Catalogue Number	53
Site Name	Repton
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	430520
GIS Northings	327006
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Wystan
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Figure riding horse on broad face, and a devouring serpent on the narrow face.
Stylistic Relatives	Bakewell and Breedon cross-shafts; Breedon frieze
Bibliographic Sources	Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 510–16; Metcalf, 1977: 96; Morgan, 1978: 272; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 1985: 233–92; HER; Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle, 2001: 45–96; Crook, 2001: 62–3.
Notes on Monument	Discovered in 1979 in a pit outside the eastern window of the crypt.
Image Reference	Ills. 4.34 and 4.35
Site Type	Royal monastic
Notes on Site	Double monastery for men and women. Used as a Viking camp. Recorded as being the king's land in Domesday. Anglo-Saxon coin of eighth-century date found nearby. Guthlac retired to Repton c. 699. ASC records that king Æthelbald was buried there in 757. Danish host wintered there 873 and 874.

Catalogue Number	54
Site Name	Repton
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	430520
GIS Northings	327006
Monument Type	Grave-slab
Church Dedication	St. Wystan
Date Range	Ninth-century
Principal Design Elements	'Trewhiddle-style' animal ornament
Stylistic Relatives	Sandbach; Gloucester.
Bibliographic Sources	Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 212; Hawkes, 2002a: 127; VCH (Derbs.) **1**: 283.
Notes on Monument	Example of a late Mercian coped funerary slab.
Image Reference	Webster and Backhouse, 1991: no. 212.
Site Type	See cat. no. 53.
Notes on Site	See cat. no. 53.

Catalogue Number	55
Site Name	Rowlestone
County	Herefordshire
GIS Eastings	337300
GIS Northings	227100
Monument Type	Imposts
Church Dedication	St. Peter
Date Range	Ninth century or later.
Principal Design Elements	Imposts carved with plant ornament
Stylistic Relatives	Derbyshire cross-sculpture
Bibliographic Sources	Gethyn-Jones, 1979; Parsons, 1995.
Notes on Monument	Set above later 'Herefordshire school' imposts in the church porch
Image Reference	Gethyn-Jones, 1979: ill. 41a.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number 56
Site Name Rugby
County Warwickshire
GIS Eastings 450300
GIS Northings 275100
Monument Type Cross sculpture
Church Dedication N/A
Date Range Ninth century
Principal Design Elements Vine-scroll; figure-busts in architectural settings.
Stylistic Relatives Derbyshire cross-sculpture
Bibliographic Sources Cottrill, 1935b: 475.
Notes on Monument Now in Warwick museum
Image Reference Ill. 4.19
Site Type Unknown.
Notes on Site None.

Catalogue Number 57
Site Name Sandbach
County Cheshire
GIS Eastings 375700
GIS Northings 360700
Monument Type Cross-sculpture
Church Dedication St. Mary
Date Range Early to mid-ninth century for standing crosses.
Principal Design Elements Figural scenes; plant motifs; geometric ornament.
Stylistic Relatives Leek, Overchurch, Derbyshire cross-sculpture.
Bibliographic Sources Bu'Lock, 1972: 45–7; Hawkes, 2002a; Bailey, 2010.
Notes on Monument Compartmentalisation over architectural division. Mix of late antique, insular and continental influences
Image Reference Ill. 4.130
Site Type Unknown.
Notes on Site None.

Catalogue Number 58
Site Name Sandbach
County Cheshire
GIS Eastings 375700
GIS Northings 360700
Monument Type Cross-sculpture
Church Dedication St. Mary
Date Range Later ninth century
Principal Design Elements Figural and plant motifs
Stylistic Relatives Leek, Overchurch, Derbyshire cross-sculpture.
Bibliographic Sources Bu'Lock, 1972: 45–7; Hawkes, 2002a; Bailey, 2010.
Notes on Monument Five Fragments in the churchyard.
Image Reference Hawkes, 2002a: figs. 4.1–4.5.
Site Type Unknown.
Notes on Site None.

Catalogue Number	59
Site Name	Scalford
County	Leicestershire
GIS Eastings	476200
GIS Northings	324100
Monument Type	Frieze fragment
Church Dedication	St. Egelwin
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Inhabited vine-scroll
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon, South Leverton.
Bibliographic Sources	Mellows, 1949; Butler, 1986: 48; Parsons, 1996: 17.
Notes on Monument	Greatly weathered and fragmentary. Approximately 30cm in length.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.80
Site Type	Minster?
Notes on Site	Church dedicated to St. Egelwin, the only dedication of its kind in the country.

Catalogue Number	60
Site Name	Sheffield
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	435500
GIS Northings	387500
Monument Type	Cross-sculpture
Church Dedication	N/A
Date Range	820–865/875
Principal Design Elements	Vine-scroll; archer.
Stylistic Relatives	St. Andrew Auckland (co. Durham); Eyam; Bakewell; Bradbourne.
Bibliographic Sources	Cramp, 1977: 218, 224; Sidebottom, 1994: 77–9, 152, 154, 268; Coatsworth, 2008: 246–9.
Notes on Monument	Now in the British Museum. Tapering cross-section.
Image Reference	Coatsworth, 2008: ills. 692–5.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	61
Site Name	Shelford
County	Nottinghamshire
GIS Eastings	466100
GIS Northings	342300
Monument Type	Figure panel
Church Dedication	St. Peter and St. Paul
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Virgin and child in a niched frame
Stylistic Relatives	Lechmere Stone.
Bibliographic Sources	Pevsner, 1951: 156–7.
Notes on Monument	Highly stylised drapery. Figures have disproportionally small heads. Ornate niche setting with pellet design.
Image Reference	Pevsner, 1951: fig. 34b.
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	Twelfth-century priory nearby.

Catalogue Number	62
Site Name	South Kyme
County	Lincolnshire
GIS Eastings	516800
GIS Northings	349700
Monument Type	Panel fragments
Church Dedication	St. Mary and All Saints
Date Range	c.800
Principal Design Elements	Bordered geometric ornament, triskele patterning, vine-scroll and animal ornament.
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon; Peterborough; Wroxeter.
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham,1923: 118–21; Pevsner, 1964: 664–5; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 365–6; Cramp, 1977: 205, 218; Plunkett, 1984: 82–9; Thorn, 1986: 1; Bailey, 1996b: 12; Everson and Stocker, 1999: 248–51; HER website.
Notes on Monument	Fragments of a possible shrine. Mounted in two rows in the north wall of the church.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.143
Site Type	Minster
Notes on Site	Domesday records two churches and a priest. Built on an island in the Fen, paralleling Bardney and Crowland. Augustinian priory founded on site before 1156. Church formed the south aisle and part of the nave of the priory church. Bronze Age axes and possible round barrows with enclosures identified nearby.

Catalogue Number	63
Site Name	South Leverton
County	Nottinghamshire
GIS Eastings	478300
GIS Northings	381100
Monument Type	Cross-shaft fragments
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Inhabited vine-scroll
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon, Sandbach
Bibliographic Sources	Everson and Stocker, 2007: 33–49.
Notes on Monument	Two fragments mounted into wall.
Image Reference	Everson and Stocker, 2007: figs. 2–3, pl. 1.
Site Type	Monastic
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	64
Site Name	Stapleford
County	Nottinghamshire
GIS Eastings	488600
GIS Northings	357500
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Mary Magdalene
Date Range	Late ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Figural carving
Stylistic Relatives	Ilkley (Yorks.), Wirksworth.
Bibliographic Sources	Clapham, 1930: 70; Kendrick, 1949: 68: 71–2; Pevsner, 1951: 174–5.
Notes on Monument	None.
Image Reference	Kendrick, 1949: pl. XLVI.4
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	65
Site Name	Tenbury
County	Worcestershire
GIS Eastings	359400
GIS Northings	268300
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Animal dissolving into interlace.
Stylistic Relatives	Gloucester
Bibliographic Sources	Plunkett, 1984; Bailey, 1996b: 20
Notes on Monument	Part of the 'Colerne school'
Image Reference	Plunkett, 1984: pl. 65
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	66
Site Name	Whitchurch
County	Hampshire
GIS Eastings	445900
GIS Northings	147700
Monument Type	Grave marker
Church Dedication	All Saints
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Rounded top, Christ holding a book
Stylistic Relatives	Lechmere Stone, Breedon Virgin, Fletton.
Bibliographic Sources	Kendrick, 1938: pl. LXXVII.2; Plunkett, 1984: pl. 58; Wilson, 1984: pls. 132 and 133; Webster and Backhouse, 1991: 245; Tweddle *et al.*, 1995.
Notes on Monument	Bears a memorial inscription. Incised tree-scroll with terminal leaves on the reverse face.
Image Reference	Tweddle *et al.*, 1995: ills. 483 and 484
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	67
Site Name	Wilne
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	444800
GIS Northings	331800
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Chad
Date Range	Ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Tree scroll, winged beast with interlacing tail
Stylistic Relatives	Fletton, Peterborough, Bakewell.
Bibliographic Sources	Routh, 1937: 39; VCH (Derbs.) **1**: 283; Pevsner, 1953: 243–4.
Notes on Monument	Re-used as a font.
Image Reference	Routh, 1937: pl. 21.
Site Type	Unknown.
Notes on Site	None.

Catalogue Number	68
Site Name	Wirksworth
County	Derbyshire
GIS Eastings	428700
GIS Northings	353900
Monument Type	Grave slab
Church Dedication	St. Mary
Date Range	Late eighth-, early ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Narrative scenes
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon; Sandbach.
Bibliographic Sources	Kurth, 1945: 114–21; Pevsner, 1953: 246–7; Cockerton, 1962: 1–20;Harbison, 1987: 36–40; Bailey, 1988; Hawkes, 1995: 246–77; Rollason, 1996: 8, 35–48; Jewell, 2001; Hawkes, 2002a; VCH (Derbs.) **1**: 284.
Notes on Monument	Discovered beneath the paving below the altar in 1820–1, inverted and covering a grave.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.26
Site Type	Monastic
Notes on Site	Important area for lead mining in the pre-Conquest period. The monastery at Repton held land at Wirksworth.

Catalogue Number	69
Site Name	Wolverhampton
County	Staffordshire
GIS Eastings	399800
GIS Northings	299400
Monument Type	Cross-shaft
Church Dedication	St. Peter
Date Range	Late ninth century
Principal Design Elements	Animal and plant ornament
Stylistic Relatives	Reculver
Bibliographic Sources	Cramp, 1975: 187; Wilson, 1984: pls. 124 and 125
Notes on Monument	Round cross-shaft
Image Reference	Cramp, 1975: pls. XVI, XVII
Site Type	Unknown
Notes on Site	None

Catalogue Number	70
Site Name	Wroxeter
County	Shropshire
GIS Eastings	356300
GIS Northings	308200
Monument Type	Cross-sculpture
Church Dedication	Holy Trinity
Date Range	c. 800
Principal Design Elements	Animal and geometric ornament; vine-scroll.
Stylistic Relatives	Breedon, Cropthorne, Acton Beauchamp.
Bibliographic Sources	Cottrill, 1935a: 144–51; Kendrick, 1938: 186–8; Taylor and Taylor, 1965: 694–5; Cramp, 1977: 191–232; Plunkett, 1984: pl. 4; Moffett, 1989: 1–14; Bailey, 1996b; Dales, 2006.
Notes on Monument	Antiquarian illustrations depict composition of the fragments.
Image Reference	Ill. 4.73
Site Type	Minster
Notes on Site	The church is associated with the RB site of *Viroconium*. Archaeological evidence exists for continuity of use at the site into the Anglo-Saxon period.

Appendix II

The Burial Evidence for Mercia

Warwickshire

The earliest pagan burial sites, those that contain material suggestive of a fifth to sixth century date are most numerous in southern and eastern Warwickshire. Despite the ambiguous nature of many of the reports recording the excavation of these early burial sites, the evidence suggests they were community cemeteries where cremation and inhumation often, but not always, occurred on the same site. At Churchover on the western border of Warwickshire with Leicestershire, excavations in the early nineteenth century uncovered 'a number of human skeletons' accompanied by weapons, brooches and what were recorded as 'feminine ornaments'.[1] One cremation urn was also recovered suggesting that this might have been a mixed rite cemetery, although the descriptions of the material found are not particularly diagnostic. The remains of four more skeletons were found in the vicinity in 1958, one of which was accompanied by an iron sword and an annular brooch.[2] To the south-west at Baginton, similar evidence for a fifth to six-century mixed-rite cemetery was discovered in the early 1930s in the form of 42 fairly complete cremation urns and an unspecified number of inhumations.[3] Evidence of a possible mixed-rite cemetery was also found at Marton, to the south-east, in the mid-nineteenth century during the construction of the Rugby and Leamington railway.[4] Here, several cremation urns and parts of human skeletons were found with associated weapons and the remains of several annular brooches.

In the same region, cremation burials thought to date to the fifth and sixth centuries were found in the mid-nineteenth century at Princethorpe and Brinklow.[5] The remains of an inhumation cemetery thought to date from the same period were discovered in the late eighteenth century at Halford Bridge though the accounts are vague and the accompanying grave goods are simply described as 'weapons'.[6]

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[1] Page, 1907: 222–3. For the use of grave-goods in Anglo-Saxon burials, see Geake, 1997.
[2] Wilson and Hurst, 1959: 300.
[3] Leeds, 1935: 1–3.
[4] Doubleday and Page, 1904: 255.
[5] Burgess, 1876b: 79; Burgess, 1876c: 378; Doubleday and Page, 1904: 256.
[6] Doubleday and Page, 1904: 259.

Similarly, the records relating to the early nineteenth century discovery of 'two urns and a skeleton' at Alcester would suggest the presence of mixed-rite cemetery.[1]

Only three of these early pagan community burial sites show continuity of use from an earlier period, and in particular suggest a focus on Romano-British structures. At Stratford on Avon, Wasperton and Stretton on Fosse large mixed-rite cemeteries have provided evidence of possible British connections. At Stretton on Fosse excavations in the late 1960s revealed that the cemetery, which contained 53 inhumations, was secondary to a rectangular structure and a ditched enclosure dated by associated finds to the Late Romano-British period.[2] At Stratford on Avon excavations in the 1930s and 1970s recovered numerous penannular brooches, often associated with British burials, and part of an enclosure that bounded the cemetery was dated to the late Roman period and showed evidence of modification in the fifth or sixth centuries.[3] The site at Wasperton was first excavated in the early 1980s and showed that the sixth-century mixed-rite cemetery, which contained at least 124 burials, overlay an earlier Romano-British cemetery and included over 40 burials described as 'British'.[4] Sixth-century inhumation cemeteries were also found in the late eighteenth century at Offchurch;[5] in the late nineteenth century at Warwick, Kineton and Leamington.[6] In addition, it is possible to infer the existence of potential inhumation cemeteries at Bascote, where quarrying in the late nineteenth century uncovered numerous 'Anglo-Saxon weapons', and at Napton where quarrying in the early 1920s revealed 'a few Saxon skeletons', at least three of which had accompanying weapons.[7]

In contrast to these community cemeteries, there are a number of isolated inhumations in Warwickshire which can be grouped by the indeterminate nature of the records detailing their discovery. Two of these isolated burials are presumed to be male due to the discovery of weapons in the grave: in 1957 an 'Anglo-Saxon inhumation with shield-boss, spearhead and ferrule' was found at Clopton;[8] and in 1891 part of an iron spearhead was found during digging at Farnborough.[9] A third indeterminate burial was located in 1846 with the discovery of a hanging bowl to the north of the church at

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[1] Anonymous, 1814: 332–3.
[2] Wilson and Hurst, 1970: 163; Wilson and Moorhouse, 1971: 134.
[3] Wilson and Moorhouse, 1971: 134; Webster and Cherry, 1972: 164.
[4] Youngs and Clark, 1982: 211; Youngs, *et al.*, 1983: 206; Youngs and Clark, 1984: 245; Carver, Hills and Scheschkewitz, 2009.
[5] Burgess, 1876a: 464–7.
[6] Burgess, 1876b: 78; Burgess, 1876c: 378; Annonymous, 1876: 106–11; Shirely, 1862: 119; Way, 1879: 179.
[7] Burgess, 1876a: 465; Meaney, 1964: 261.
[8] Meaney, 1964: 261.
[9] *op. cit.*, 260.

Lighthorne.[10] This group of what could be described as 'indeterminate sixth-century burials' also includes a number of isolated high status female burials all of which are located in the south west of the county. At both Arrow and Bidford on Avon isolated female burials were identified by a lack of weapons and the inclusion of unusual or rich dress fittings. The female burial found in 1833 at Arrow contained several brooches including one of Kentish design, and a bronze needle case.[11] At Bidford on Avon, a female burial was found in the 1920's isolated from an earlier community cemetery.[12] Amongst the grave assemblage were found several brooches, a bronze wristlet clasp and what are described as other 'personal ornaments'.[13] The third of these indeterminate female burials was found in 1851 at Aston Cantlow during ploughing. Of particular interest in the grave assemblage was the unusual inclusion of a white stone bead thought to have been placed on the abdomen at burial.[14]

There are two sites in this Warwickshire group at which potential early seventh-century isolated burials might be identified. These are at Burton Dassett, where a very brief report from the early twentieth century describes the discovery of a seventh-century scramasax, and at Stoke Golding in western Leicestershire where a hanging bowl was found in the remains of a grave during the 1930's.[15] Only two potential 'Final phase' cemeteries can be located in Warwickshire: at Newton and at Compton Verney.[16] Although there does not seem to be a clear definition of what characterises 'Final phase' cemeteries it is broadly agreed that they reflect a transition period of experimental and diverse burial practices.[17] Broadly there appears to have been a shift from the use of grave goods such as brooches and weapons to pins, pendants and chatelaines with accessories or no grave goods at all as the influence of the Christian unfurnished burial rite increased.[18] Certainly at Compton Verney there is evidence for several female burials with rich pendants and other dress fittings.[19]

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[10] Way, 1846: 161.
[11] Doubleday and Page, 1904: 265–6.
[12] Humphreys *et al.*, 1923: 96; Humphreys *et al.*, 1925: 275.
[13] Humphreys *et al.*, 1925: 275.
[14] Fetherston, 1867: 424; Doubleday and Page, 1904: 265.
[15] Meaney, 1964: 259; Anonymous, 1932: 174–5.
[16] Pegge, 1775: 371–5; Doubleday and Page, 1904: 264; Doubleday and Page, 1904: 252.
[17] For discussion of the 'Final Phase' model and its application to cemeteries, particularly Winnall I and Winnall II, see Boddington, 1990: 177–99.
[18] Geake, 1992: 84–5.
[19] Pegge, 1775: 371.

The Trent Basin

In comparison to the large number of burial sites known to us in Warwickshire, there are only six sites in the Trent basin of southern Derbyshire and eastern Staffordshire that can be ascribed to the pre-Conversion period. All of these sites contain material indicative of fifth to sixth-century community cemeteries. The most northerly site of this group is that at Stretton where vague reports of excavations in the late nineteenth century during the construction of the North Staffordshire Railway describe the discovery of several cremation urns and at least one skeleton which are suggestive of a mixed-rite cemetery.[20] More conclusive evidence for a mixed-rite cemetery was found at Stapenhill in 1881, where over thirty inhumations, furnished with weapons and brooches were uncovered alongside numerous cremation urns.[21] Similarly, at Swarkestone in southern Derbyshire north of the river Trent evidence of a mixed-rite cemetery was discovered during partial excavation in the 1950s. Remains of possible cremation urns were found in what appears to be a large ploughed out prehistoric barrow, and in the surrounding ditch were found 'pagan burials', of which only two were excavated.[22] One of these inhumations produced a cruciform brooch dated on stylistic grounds to c. A. D. 500.[23]

A possible inhumation cemetery was discovered at Borrowash in the mid-nineteenth century during the construction of the Midland Railway, but the report merely states that eighty skeletons were recovered with some accompanying grave goods including a brooch.[24] Evidence for another inhumation cemetery was found at Wichnor on the Staffordshire-Derbyshire border at the end of the nineteenth century. Various weapons and shield bosses were recovered, and in one grave the remains of a small late sixth-century bronze bucket were found.[25] The last community cemetery in this group was found at Barton under Needwood in the mid-nineteenth by workers of the Midland Railway Company.[26] It was recorded that 'a great number of urns containing human bones' were discovered but unfortunately the associated grave-goods, described as a small number of iron weapons, were only briefly mentioned in the report and make it impossible to date the burials beyond ascribing them to the fifth or sixth century.[27]

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[20] Page, 1908: 206.
[21] Anonymous, 1881: 119–20.
[22] Posnansky, 1955: 128–9.
[23] *op. cit.*, 135.
[24] Anonymous, 1851: 362–3.
[25] Page, 1908: 205.
[26] *op. cit.*, 204.
[27] *op. cit.*

Northern Staffordshire and Western Derbyshire

In contrast to the burial sites in both the Warwickshire group and those in the Trent basin, the third group of sites on the northern Staffordshire-Derbyshire border are conspicuous in their lack of fifth- to sixth-century community cemeteries. The only possible exception is the cemetery found at Claver Low which lacks any diagnostic material with which to date it. The report states that in the late nineteenth century five unfurnished inhumations were found and implies that the graves were rock cut, possibly indicative of a Christian British cemetery.[28] To the west of the Staffordshire border in this region there is a group of isolated sixth-century burials with indeterminate features comparable to those discussed in Warwickshire. The main distinction with this northern group is that they are often, though not always, associated with barrows. At Fairfieldhead a secondary burial was exposed during excavation of a prehistoric barrow in 1980.[29] Although no finds were reported the burial was described as Anglian. Similarly at Calton there is evidence to suggest that the inhumation burial discovered in the mid-nineteenth century was secondary to a prehistoric barrow, but there is a lack of diagnostic material available in the report.[30] The remains of a skeleton found in a barrow in 1849 near Blore also fit this pattern as do the burials found in barrows at Cauldon Hills in 1849, Ramshorn in 1848, Wetton, Musden and Barlaston in 1851.[31] None of these burials have flamboyant grave assemblages but are grouped for their shared characteristic of being single isolated inhumations.

Quite distinct from this group are the small number of late sixth- to seventh-century isolated burials which form a cluster along the county boundary in this region. Again, these sites demonstrate a preoccupation with the use of barrows but have produced material which makes it possible to identify a number of them as being high status burials. The most famous of these burials is that at Benty Grange where in 1848 the remains of a primary inhumation were found within a barrow.[32] Although no bones were recovered the grave was richly furnished with an assemblage comparable to that found at Sutton Hoo in East Anglia, particularly in the unusual discovery of a helmet.[33] In addition, fragments of silver ornament from a drinking cup and silver-bound circular

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[28] Bateman, 1861: 107–9.
[29] Youngs and Clark, 1981: 177.
[30] Bateman, 1861: 128–9.
[31] Page, 1908: 208–10; Bateman, 1861: 172, 201, 122–3, 148–52, 153.
[32] Bateman, 1861: 28–32.
[33] Cramp, 1957: 59; Bruce-Mitford and Luscombe, 1974: 223–52.

enamels were recovered.[34] At Cold Eaton a comparable primary burial was discovered in 1851 which contained two bone combs and 28 bone gaming pieces.[35] Such gaming pieces have been found in other high status seventh-century burials, mostly notably at Asthall in Oxfordshire which, like Cold Eaton, was a cremation burial.[36] Of slightly more dubious nature are the burials at Tissington and Brundcliffe both of which demonstrate elements that could place them within this group of high status barrow burials. In 1848 excavations at Brundcliffe uncovered the remains of an inhumation with traces of wood around it, thought to be remnants of a coffin, and a late sixth-century Frankish jug not seen outside burials in Kent.[37] The gender of the burial remains unknown as no diagnostic objects were recorded. Equally dubious is the barrow burial at Tissington, also thought to date to the late sixth century, where in 1848 the remains of a primary inhumation burial were uncovered.[38] As at Brundcliffe, no diagnostic objects were mentioned in the report. Similarly, at Garrat's Piece escutcheons and the remains of bronze bowl were discovered in a primary barrow inhumation, but the reports imply no diagnostic material was recovered.[39]

What distinguishes the group of burials in this region from those in Warwickshire and the Trent valley is the large number of high status female barrow burials dating from the seventh to eighth centuries which all lie to the east of the earlier burials discussed above. In 1846 a secondary female inhumation was found within a barrow at Cow Low.[40] With the burial were found a pin suite and the remains of a wooden box with bronze hinges containing several objects including a green glass vessel and eleven pendants for a necklace. This assemblage parallels that found during excavations carried out in the 1960's of a female bed burial at Swallowcliffe Down in Wiltshire, where the remains of a casket containing beads, silver spoons and other accoutrements, dating to the seventh century were found.[41] Evidence for a seventh- to eighth-century bed burial in the Derbyshire group has been found in the form of iron cleats and fragments of wood at Lapwing, although there was no indication that the burial was female.[42] At Grindlow the remains of a bronze bowl and enamel and silver pendants were recovered from a much mutilated secondary barrow inhumation in

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[34] Bateman, 1861: 28–9.
[35] *op. cit.*, 179–81.
[36] See Leeds, 1924: 113–24 for the original excavation report. For more recent discussion on the association of gaming pieces with male prestige burials see Dickinson and Speake, 1992: 109–10.
[37] Fowler 1954: 147.
[38] Bateman, 1861: 27.
[39] Pegge, 1789: 189–91.
[40] Fowler, 1954: 147.
[41] Speake, 1989: 24–54.
[42] Bateman, 1861: 68–70.

1849.[43] High status jewellery was also found in a secondary barrow burial at Galley Low, in the form of thirteen gold pendants dated to the seventh century, eleven of which had garnet settings and at White Low in a primary barrow burial, where a gold and garnet brooch or pendant was found in the eighteenth century.[44] Less satisfactory records indicate that comparable pendants were found at the barrow burials at Wigber Low in 1869, the primary barrow inhumation at Wyaston in 1853 where a pin suite was also recovered and in 1845 at Stand Low.[45] These sites can be compared to the recently discovered high status burials at Street House Farm where several gold pendants, at least one with garnet cloisonné, were found.[46] The last site to be mentioned in this group of high status burials is that at Hurdlow where in 1849 a primary female inhumation was discovered in which was found remnants of a bronze work box, still containing thread, and a silver-plated bronze chatelaine.[47] These finds can be compared to those from Edix Hill in Cambridgeshire where chatelaines were found in a number of female burials dated to the seventh and early eighth centuries.[48]

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[43] *op. cit.*, 48.
[44] Mander, 1775: 274–5; Fowler, 1954: 146–7.
[45] Meaney, 1964: 79; Bateman, 1861: 188; Fowler, 1954: 148.
[46] Sherlock and Simmons, 2008: 30–7.
[47] Bateman, 1861: 52–4.
[48] Malim and Hines, 1998: 207–12, 282–6.