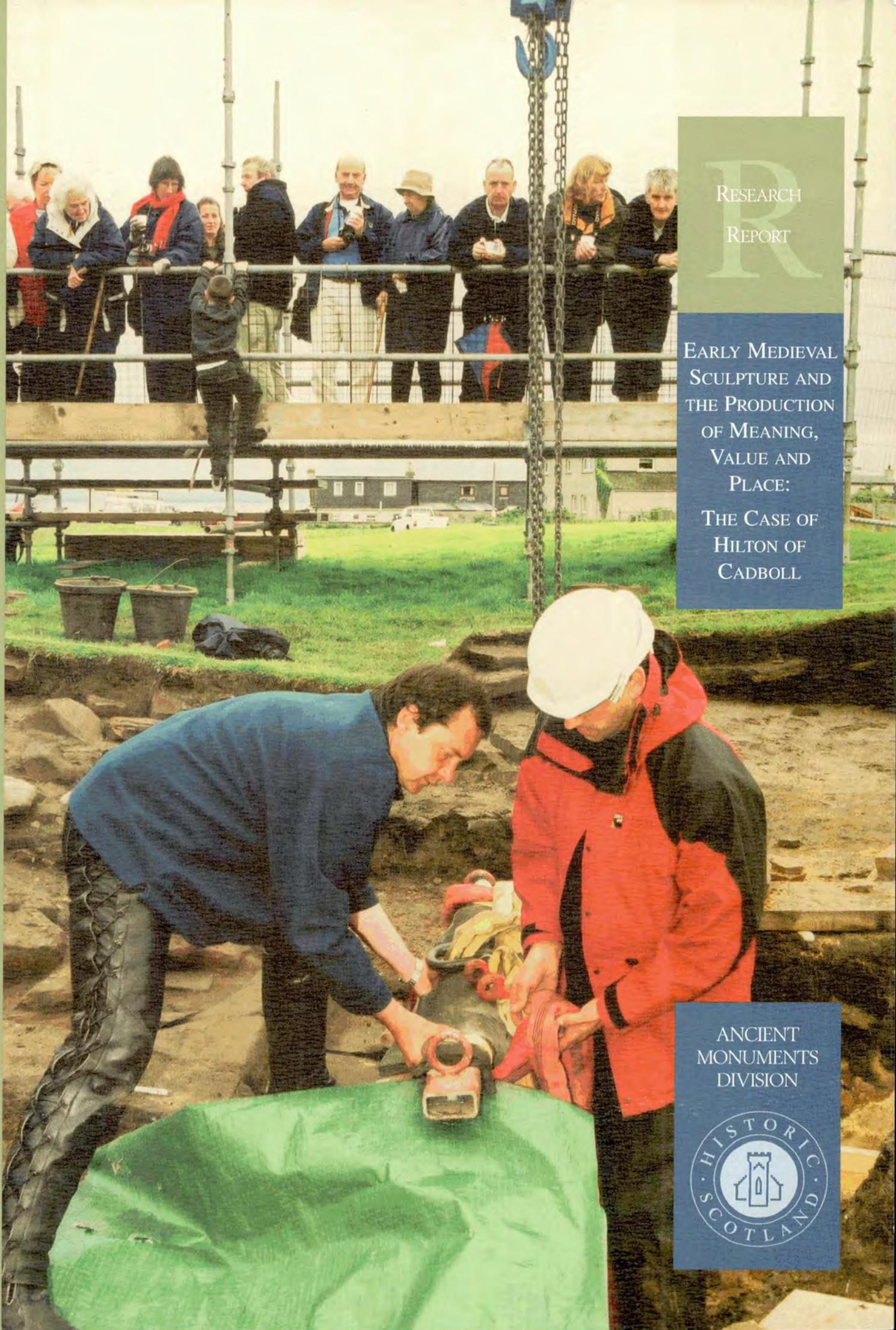


RESEARCH
REPORT

EARLY MEDIEVAL
SCULPTURE AND
THE PRODUCTION
OF MEANING,
VALUE AND
PLACE:
THE CASE OF
HILTON OF
CADBOLL

ANCIENT
MONUMENTS
DIVISION





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THE CASE OF
HILTON OF
CADBOLL

by
Siân Jones

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Cover photograph

Colin Muir (Historic Scotland) and Barry Grove prepare the uplift of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, summer 2001 (Crown copyright: Historic Scotland).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Names and identities

Carrying out social research in relation to the biography of a monument of national renown with a unique biography raises specific problems not dissimilar from those addressed by Sharon Macdonald (2002, 13) in her ethnography of the Science Museum. It is not feasible to conceal the identity of the monument and by association the communities and institutions with which it is connected. The monument is named after the village of Hilton of Cadboll, and national and regional heritage agencies, such as Historic Scotland and the Highland Council Archaeology Section, play specific roles in relation to it by virtue of their institutional remits. Neither can the identities of some of the individuals closely associated with it be easily disguised, at least in terms of their public and/or professional roles. Indeed, many of those who have contributed to this research have expressed a desire for their authorship to be acknowledged. With these issues in mind I have used people's real names here in the acknowledgements and in the main text when referring to a public or professional context. However, due to the conflict surrounding the monument I have not used individual names when quoting from interviews and drawing on private conversations; preferring to use pseudonyms, or in some cases no reference whatsoever. In this way I hope to strike a balance between acknowledging the immense contribution of people who were prepared to share their thoughts and feelings, whilst also maintaining a degree of protection from the intrusion that such a study can impose.

Thanks and acknowledgements:

I am immensely indebted to the many people who have participated in this project, without whom the research would not have been possible. First and foremost thanks to the inhabitants of the seaboard villages of Easter Ross, and particularly Hilton, who displayed an enormous amount of warmth, openness, insight and trust. Jackie and Mike Palfreman provided marvelous lodgings in 2001/2002, and were very generous in accommodating my specific needs for phone, fax and internet access. In 2003 Mary and Hugh Mackenzie, Ellie Kuiff and Isobel Wilson allowed me to stay in their lovely houses in Hilton. Ellen Smith and Trish Woods at Community House facilitated my initial introduction to the seaboard. Will Aitken contributed a

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The project also incorporated a web of people extending well beyond the seaboard villages whom I wish to thank for their thoughtful and candid contributions. Richard Durham (the local Councillor for the seaboard) provided a wealth of information about the activity surrounding the monument in the last decade, particularly the reconstruction project, which had been initiated in great part by his mother, the late Jane Durham. James Paterson (former local Councillor and the late Jane Durham's brother) provided information on similar aspects, as well as offering his perspective as former owner of Cadboll house and the land on which the chapel site is located. Barry Grove, who sculpted the reconstruction, provided a unique insight into the history of that project and its impact on the villages, as well as into the design, imagery and production of early medieval sculpture. Richard Easson offered insights into similar aspects, and provided information about the role of Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust in the reconstruction project. The following individuals from heritage organisations, museums, local government departments, and development agencies also contributed invaluable insights from their

different perspectives: David Alston (Cromarty Courthouse Museum and Nigg Trust), David Breeze (Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic Scotland), David Clarke (Keeper of Archaeology, National Museums of Scotland), Patricia Hamilton (Ross and Cromarty Enterprise), Fraser Hunter (National Museums of Scotland), Andy McCann (Area Development Manager: Ross and Cromarty, Highland Council), George McQuarrie (former Manager, Tarbat Discovery Centre), Colin Muir (Stone Conservator, Historic Scotland), Estelle Quirk (Curator, Tain and District Museum), Susan Seright (Curator, Groam House Museum), Graham Watson (Area Service Manager, Culture and Leisure Services, Highland Council), Richard Welander (Collections Manager, Historic Scotland), John Wood (Senior Archaeologist, Highland Council).

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provided a broader perspective on the history and politics of the region, as well as introducing me to wider aspects of the sociology of rural Scotland. Information on the history of the Hilton of Cadboll monument during its stay at Invergordon was provided by Charles Pearson. William Morrison of the North Star allowed me to raid his archive of local news coverage of the Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction and excavations. Angus Mackintosh was long-suffering in the production of the figures. Barry Grove, GUARD, and the National Museums of Scotland kindly gave permission for the use of their images, or images of objects in their collection (specific credits can be found in captions to the illustrations). My parents provided much enthusiasm and meticulous proof-reading. As ever, Dot Kirkham did a superb job transcribing the interviews.

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Finally there are two people who have been vital to this project and whose contributions are immeasurable. First, I owe a great debt to Sally Foster (Senior Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic Scotland) who introduced me to the fascinating biography of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and without whose encouragement this project would not have taken place. Her detailed knowledge of the complex history of heritage management surrounding early medieval sculpture has been invaluable, as have her detailed comments on the text. Second, I am immensely indebted to Dolly Macdonald for her friendship, humour, generosity and support. Without Dolly's insight and eloquence my understanding of the background and complexity of the current conflict, as well as the history of Hilton and the campaign for the Stone, would be greatly diminished. I wish to extend especial thanks to them both.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND INTERVIEW CITATION CONVENTIONS

Abbreviations and acronyms

GUARD	Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division
HS	Historic Scotland
NMS	National Museums of Scotland
Q&LTR	Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer
RACE	Ross and Cromarty Enterprise
RCAHMS	Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

Conventions for interview citations

Quotations longer than 15 words are indented as a separate paragraph. In such cases quotation marks are not used.

Quotations from textual sources are in normal typescript.

Quotations from interviews and field notes are italicised.

The interviews carried out for the project were taped and the italicised quotes are from the resulting transcripts. Where repetitions or diversions have been cut for the purposes of clarity and conciseness these are indicated by [...], whereas ... refers to an actual pause during the interview.

Modes of speaking, hesitations and pauses, as well as colloquial and regional words and phrases, are important in terms of the production of meaning and the expression of identity. For instance, they can reveal areas of tension and the dynamic, inter-subjective production of meaning in a particular context. Different modes of expression also inform the production of diverse cultural and professional identities. Consequently, the interviews have been transcribed as spoken. Except where necessary for the purposes of clarity, they have not been 'cleaned-up' in terms of grammar, pauses or hesitations (often expressed by Hmmm, erm etc). Occasionally I have added explanatory words or phrases in square brackets for clarification

All names used in the text in relation to interview material are pseudonyms. The only exception is in the case of public statements by individuals in official positions, where actual names are used.

FOREWORD

Historic Scotland has been very pleased to support Dr Siân Jones' community study at Hilton of Cadboll chapel, an ancient monument cared for by Historic Scotland on behalf of Scottish Ministers. The project arose through a fortunate co-incidence of interests: Dr Jones' reputation in this innovative area of research and Historic Scotland's recognition that our future work at Hilton would provide an excellent opportunity for such an approach to be further developed in Scotland, and for us to be able to benefit from its findings.

The benefits exist at several levels. On the one hand, this is a critical assessment of aspects of the wider practices of heritage management, with implications for all involved in this. It is now recognised as important to embrace social value and broader cultural significance, as well as have the tools and means to do this. This study provides an excellent case-study of one way in which this might be done. It is particularly timely as Historic Scotland and others involved in the conservation of monuments now operate in an environment in which formal assessment of the significance of monuments is becoming the standard first step in the development of conservation plans.

This study is also timely and apposite because Historic Scotland has, over the last couple of years, been further developing its policy and guidance for carved stones in general. At the time of writing, our draft *Carved Stones: Historic Scotland's Approach* is out for public consultation (the finished guidance will hopefully be published late in 2004). While Dr Jones' study and its recommendations relate specifically to early medieval sculpture, there is much that is relevant here to other

types of sculpture in Scotland. We have already been able to learn from and build on her recommendations in revisions to our earlier 1992 policy.

Finally, and by no means least, from this study we have learnt an enormous amount about Hilton of Cadboll chapel site itself, and what this means to its immediate residents, the community at Hilton, as well as others. This knowledge has fed into, and will continue to inform, how we interpret and present this monument in the future. We also have an exciting new story to tell on the basis of the archaeological discoveries and the art-historical analysis of significant parts of the missing sculpture. This research will be published in the near future, and will inform not only the interpretation of the chapel site, but also the newly discovered lower portion of the cross-slab, wherever this is ultimately displayed.

The circumstances at Hilton of Cadboll are of course unique to this place, and the controversy raised by the discovery of the lower portion of the cross-slab is by no means typical. Nevertheless it is a good example of the difficulties of determining the correct home for an object, while such extreme circumstances have provided here a most productive test-bed for a community study. In publishing this in our Research Report series we are acknowledging not just the specific benefits of this project, but also its wider methodological, practical and political implications.

Professor David J. Breeze
Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments
February 2004

SUMMARY

The Hilton of Cadboll Pictish cross-slab is regarded as one of the finest examples of early medieval sculpture in Scotland. The upper portion of the cross-slab is a prime exhibit in the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, where such sculpture is portrayed as the 'high art' associated with the origins of the Scottish nation. At a local level, attachment to the cross-slab on the east Ross Shire seaboard (modern Highland) has remained strong since its removal in the mid-19th century. So much so, that a full-size reconstruction was commissioned and erected at the medieval chapel site, next to the village of Hilton of Cadboll, in 2000. However, discovery and excavation of the missing lower portion of the cross-slab in 2001 re-ignited controversy over its ownership and presentation and created tensions between national and local interests and identities.

Early medieval sculpture frequently arouses strong public opinion and controversy over how it should be conserved, managed and presented. Thus, despite its complicated biography, Hilton of Cadboll is far from unique. In general, controversy usually revolves around the problem of how and where early medieval sculpture should be preserved. Should we treat pieces of sculpture like Hilton of Cadboll as artefacts or monuments? Should they be conserved and presented in museums or within the landscape? How can their local value in relation to their historic contexts be evaluated alongside national interests and the international tourist market?

In the past, early medieval sculpture has tended to be placed in museums, often in the National Museum of Antiquities (now the Museum of Scotland), at the expense of local interests and attachments. More recently, there has been a trend towards maintaining such monuments within the landscape through the use of shelters, or at least in the locality by placing them in a local historic building. Lending relationships between the National Museums of Scotland (NMS) and local museums/heritage centres are also increasing in number. Furthermore, Historic Scotland's (hereafter HS) policy on carved stone is to maintain it *in situ* or within the locality.

Despite these recent trends, the controversy surrounding attempts to manage early medieval sculpture persists, and as yet the reasons why such monuments should be such a prominent focus of public

attachment and debate are poorly understood. One reason for this poor level of understanding is that the assessment of contemporary social value is still only a minor aspect of routine heritage management, where decision-making remains largely tied in to the assessment of historic, aesthetic and scientific value.

This project is designed to gain an understanding of the meanings and values surrounding early medieval sculpture and the basis of conflict between various interest groups. The insights gained are intended to contribute to a broader understanding of the social value of archaeological monuments in Britain, particularly in terms of the production of identities and people's sense of place. The results are also intended to inform heritage management and conservation policies and practices, in particular HS's development of an operational policy for carved stones.

The project is informed by research elsewhere in the world concerning social value and heritage management, as well as recent research on monuments, place and identity. A variety of methods are involved including participant observation and in-depth, qualitative interviewing. An intensive period of research took place between August and November 2001 overlapping with the excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab, followed by two further phases in 2002 and 2003. The research primarily involved local residents of Easter Ross, but also included government officials, heritage/museum professionals, archaeologists, art-historians, and artists who were involved with the excavations or with the cross-slab itself. As a result, it was possible to examine how archaeological monuments become a focus of conflicts between national and local identities and interests, as well as how people's engagement with them is mediated by heritage management practices, archaeological research, local government policies and so on.

The research demonstrates that to understand the kinds of conflict generated by early medieval sculpture it is necessary to gain insight into the meanings and values surrounding particular monuments. The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is imbued with a wide range of meanings within a number of different narratives derived from heritage management, art history, archaeology, and popular conceptions of the Picts. At another level, the meaning of the cross-slab is bound up

in local oral history and folklore, both of which embed the monument in intimate relationships with the landscape and with other Pictish stones in the vicinity. Furthermore, these oral historical and folkloric narratives, exist alongside art-historical and archaeological accounts, despite the contradictions between them.

In addition to these 'obvious' meanings, the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is also imbued with deep metaphorical and symbolic meanings within local contexts. The cross-slab and the reconstruction are both symbolically construed within local discourses as living things, and indeed as living members of the community, having been 'born' in Hilton, and thus grounded in kin relations and notions of 'belonging'. These meanings are given further symbolic weight through intimate association between the different forms of the monument and the ground or earth, whether that is through the excavation of the lower portion and fragments, or through erection of the reconstruction. The earth is perceived as providing a source of well-being or nourishment for the stone and tangible, physical evidence for the 'birth' of the monument in Hilton.

As a result of this symbolism the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab acts as a medium for the reproduction and negotiation of relationships within the community, and also for the symbolic construction of community as a whole. It also plays a fundamental role in the production of a sense of place; the monument simultaneously providing an icon of both place and displacement. In the context of a deep sense of pride in place coupled with economic decline and geographical/social marginality, the monument plays a crucial role in the symbolic construction of Hilton as a 'place of significance'. At the same time, in the context of historical displacement encompassed by the Clearances, loss of association with land, and emigration, the fragmented biography of the monument provides an icon for these complex processes of dislocation. Resistance to the removal of the lower portion, is thus a means of symbolically resisting such historical processes of displacement and the kinds of people and organisations perceived to be responsible for them.

Much of the local social value of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is derived from the meanings it is attributed in local contexts, and the ways in which these meanings inform people's sense of place. The monument provides a sense of connection with the past and acts as a reference point for the production of community identities. The events and activities surrounding the monument in the last decade – in essence the reconstruction project, the excavations, and the local campaign to keep the lower portion of the monument in Hilton – have further enhanced many aspects of its social value. In this respect the monument also helps provide a disempowered group of people with a sense of historical engagement and agency. In addition to its immense social value in local contexts, the *Hilton of Cadboll monument* is also seen as having significant economic value in the sphere of local and regional development.

The conflict surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll excavations and the newly discovered lower portion of the cross-slab was overtly focused on procedural and legal frameworks relating to Treasure Trove and conservation. However, this research shows that these were merely the surface manifestation of more fundamental conflicts of meaning and value. The crux of the conflict lies in the distinct discourses of meaning and value surrounding the monument in local contexts in contrast with the spheres of heritage management and national patrimony. This is particularly acute in the attribution of 'ownership', which threatens to disrupt and undermine perceived relationships of 'belonging' between monument, community and place.

Overall, this research provides clear and unequivocal evidence that the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab as a whole, and by default the lower portion, possesses immense social value in local contexts. It therefore reinforces the value of retaining early medieval sculpture as close as possible to its historic locality *from the perspective of local communities*. However, it also reveals that issues surrounding ownership and presentation are highly complex, and that the meanings and values surrounding specific monuments need to be examined as an integral part of the heritage management process if conflict is to be minimised. The report concludes with an outline of the implications for heritage management policy and practice arising from the study.

1 SETTING THE SCENE: BACKGROUND, RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY

... if our ancient monuments be all destroyed, it will be nothing to us that those of England or Ireland or France or Scandinavia are still preserved, for Scotland's antiquities are not the same as those of Scandinavia or England [...] They belong to Scotland because they are inseparable features of her individuality; and they belong to Scotchmen in general in a sense in which they can never belong to the holders of the lands on which they are placed [i.e. private landowners].

(Anderson 1881, 9)

Though the rhetoric of heritage management in general is suffused with statements concerning responsibilities towards an abstracted, faceless 'public', there is less clearly stated resolve towards the face-to-face claims of individuals challenging our authority.

(Walderhaug Saetersdal 2000, 173)

1.1 Early medieval sculpture

Scotland possesses a rich body of early medieval sculpture, which has become a highly valued part of its archaeological heritage. Seen as a product of a formative period in the history of the Scottish nation, many such monuments have been attributed national and international significance by museums and heritage bodies. NMS has a substantial collection and its role in the active construction of a sense of national identity was underlined by Joseph Anderson, Keeper of the National Museum of Antiquities (1869-1913) in his Rhind Lectures:

The formation of such a gallery of art materials [i.e. of early medieval sculpture] in the country to which they are indigenous would [...] restore to the native genius of the Scots the original elements of that system of design which are its special inheritance.

(Anderson 1881, 134)

Given such significance, it is not surprising that early medieval sculpture has been subject to a lengthy history of attempts to preserve it from weathering and present it in a manner perceived to be fit to its importance. Those involved in these activities include private landowners and other individuals, antiquarian, archaeological and ecclesiastical societies, charitable trusts, NMS, HS, and County Councils, amongst

others. Conservation has been a particular concern as early medieval sculpture is vulnerable to a range of naturally-occurring threats, particularly from water, frost action and storm damage, as well as to a lesser extent accidental and deliberate human actions (see Historic Scotland 2001a; Muir 1998). However, attempts to conserve, manage and present this body of sculpture have been characterised by controversy and conflict (for a detailed discussion see Foster 2001).

Contention has revolved around the problem of how and where such sculpture should be conserved and presented, and the terms of this debate can be traced back to the late 19th century at least. At one end of the spectrum is the stance adopted by Anderson (1881; and Allen and Anderson 1903) who argued that the formation of concentrated collections in museums not only serves to protect the sculpture, but also to further comparative scholarly study and to educate museum visitors in an important period in the history of Scottish art. At the other end, is the position advocated by an equally prominent contemporary of Anderson's, namely Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers. Pitt Rivers argued that:

[T]he concentration of antiquities [specifically sculpted stones] in one place is objectionable on many grounds; firstly, as depriving the country places of their old associations, and of the objects of interest which serve to draw people to the localities; secondly as causing minor Monuments of interest to be overlooked, when they are collected together with a number of others [...]; thirdly, as tending to keep out of view the distribution of the various forms and classes of monuments [...]; fourthly as being impracticable under a permissive [Ancient Monuments] Act [...] because the owners of the Monuments are unwilling to part with them.

(Pitt Rivers 1889, reproduced in full in Foster 2001, 36-9)

As Foster (2001, 3-14) has argued, this debate is underpinned by the question of whether early medieval sculpture should be classed as artefact or monument, and therefore whether or not the appropriate location for conservation and presentation is in a museum or within its landscape context. Associated with this classificatory question are tensions between national and local values, interests and identities. On the one hand, removal to museums, either NMS or regional

museums, is often criticized for depriving landscapes of their specific archaeological heritage and ignoring local interests and attachments. On the other hand, a 'monument approach', involving preservation *in situ* in the landscape can be seen as privileging local attachments over conservation demands and the broader national 'public good' (ibid.).

Until recently it was common practice for early medieval sculpture to be incorporated into museum collections. This practice resulted in the creation of a substantial national collection in Edinburgh, as the National Museum of Antiquities was often regarded as the appropriate repository for such items of sculpture by the landowners and officials involved, particularly in the 19th century and first half of the 20th century. In recent decades new discoveries or monumental sculptures requiring active conservation have increasingly either been incorporated into local or regional museum collections, moved into nearby historic buildings, or preserved within the landscape. There are a number of factors underlying this shift:

- First, those bodies concerned with disposal of new finds such as the Treasure Trove Advisory Panel, and HS's Finds Disposal Panel, now place greater emphasis on allocating new archaeological finds locally 'unless a convincing argument for presenting it elsewhere is presented' (Scottish Executive 1999, 7). Exceptions include cases where material from the same site (or the same object) is already part of a museum collection in which case subsequent finds are normally allocated to the same museum to maintain the integrity of the assemblage (ibid., 6). They also include cases where material is considered to be of 'national importance' in which case the key role of NMS is taken into account in the allocation process (ibid., 7). Nevertheless, despite these exceptions more material is now being allocated to local and regional museums (Saville 2002: 798).
- Secondly, regional and local museums have proliferated and become more active in bidding for, and acquiring, archaeological remains from their area. In such cases, NMS does not necessarily compete for the objects concerned (e.g. as in the case of the Kirriemuir cross-slab, which was recently acquired by Angus Museums). Furthermore, in some cases NMS curatorial staff have even initiated or mediated the removal of early medieval sculpture to a local or regional museum (e.g. as in the case of Benvie, which was recently removed to Dundee Museum, D. Clarke *pers. comm.*).
- Thirdly, where pieces of early medieval sculpture have recently been allocated to NMS (usually in cases where material from the same site is already in the NMS collection), lending arrangements between NMS and local museums or heritage centres have often been established (e.g. at Tarbat Discovery

Centre in Easter Ross and Groam House Museum, in the Black Isle; see Figure 1 for locations).

- Fourthly, HS's policy regarding early medieval sculpture under its jurisdiction is to maintain it *in situ* in the landscape or in the immediate vicinity (see Foster 2001; Breeze 2000). To this end a range of structures have been used for conservation purposes, including purpose-built shelters or glass cases in the landscape (e.g. Sueno's Stone), or existing historic buildings (often churches) in the locality (e.g. Dupplin Cross). HS has also given scheduled monument consent to local Trusts wishing to employ similar conservation strategies, for instance the Shandwick Cross is protected by a glass case (see Figure 19). Furthermore, even in the case of fragments of early medieval sculpture from guardianship sites (whether derived from excavations or chance finds), emphasis is placed on maintaining finds in association with the monument where suitable facilities exist.

Despite the shift towards regional or local conservation and display, controversy still reigns with many cases arousing public dissent and debate about the appropriate treatment of early medieval sculpture. Strong feelings can be aroused whatever the conservation strategies involved, ranging from removal to museums or nearby historic buildings, the use of shelters or glass cases in the landscape, or even no action at all. Thus, conservation principles and strategies clearly intersect, and at times conflict, with the current cultural meanings and social values attached to early medieval sculpture. The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, which is the focus of the present study, arouses controversy and conflict equal to most examples, being considered one of the finest surviving pieces of early medieval Pictish sculpture.

Hilton of Cadboll has a complex and fragmented biography (for a more detailed discussion see chapter 2). Its original location remains a focus of debate, but at some point it was erected at the site of the Hilton of Cadboll chapel (see Figure 1), where, in 1676, it was re-used as a gravestone. In the mid-19th century it was removed by the landowner, Robert Bruce Aeneas Macleod, to Invergordon Castle (see Figure 2; also Figure 1 for location). His son, Captain Roderick Willoughby Macleod of Cadboll, gave it to the British Museum in London in 1921, from where, in response to widespread protest, it was returned to Scotland and placed in the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh. It is now a prominent feature of the 'Early People' exhibition in the new Museum of Scotland which opened in 1998 (see Figure 3). Meanwhile, during the late 1990s, a full-size reconstruction was commissioned by the Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust from sculptor Barry Grove, and was erected close to the chapel site in Hilton of Cadboll in 2000. However, recent archaeological research at the Hilton of Cadboll

chapel located further fragmented remains including the missing lower portion of the cross-slab *in situ* (James 2002; Kirkdale Archaeology 1998 and 2001). These finds re-ignited controversy over the appropriate location of the cross-slab and tensions between conservation and public interests.

The complex and fragmented biography of Hilton of Cadboll raises some specific heritage management issues (see chapter 2), but it is not uncommon for early medieval sculpture, in Scotland and elsewhere, to have

been broken, moved, and even reassembled on more than one occasion (see Burström 1996; Foster 2001; Hall *et al.* 2000; Orton 1998). Furthermore, the fragmented nature of its biography serves to highlight public reactions to a range of environmental contexts and associated strategies for preserving, managing and presenting such monuments. These factors in addition to the intense ongoing activity and debate surrounding the monument make it an ideal focus for community research regarding the meanings and values that are attributed to such monuments.

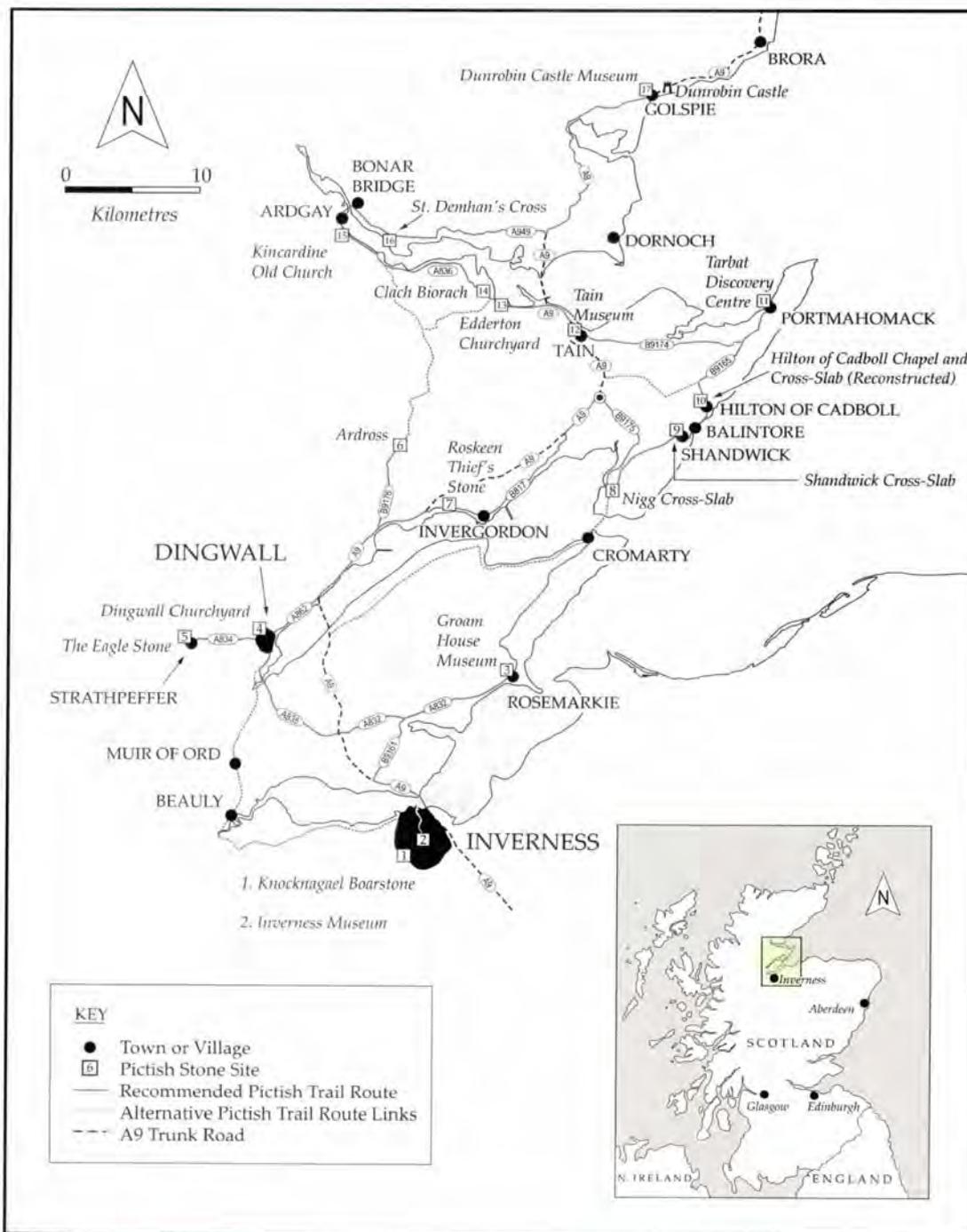




Figure 2: The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab in the American Gardens at Invergordon Castle (courtesy of Richard Easson, photographer unknown).



Figure 3: The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab in the Museum of Scotland (photograph, the author; © The National Museums of Scotland).

1.2 Conservation and social value: broader issues

The specific kinds of issues which are raised by the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and other examples of early medieval sculpture in Scotland, are echoed in conflict and debate surrounding the conservation and management of carved stone, parietal rock art, and archaeological monuments generally, on a world-wide scale (see Hall and Jeppson 1989; Holtorf and Schadla-Hall 1999; Loubser 1990; Walderhaug Saetersdal 2000). Underlying specific conservation problems pertaining to carved stone and rock art are broader issues of principle concerning the need to conserve, the nature of authenticity, and the importance of heritage for present and future generations. The development of techniques for digital three dimensional modelling of sculptured stone, as a mode of conservation and presentation adds further complexity to these issues (see Jeffrey 2003), as do tensions between different cultural traditions, and between local, regional and national identities and interests.

A number of international documents define the broad principles of conservation that are intended to frame the policies and practices of heritage organisations around the world (see Bell 1997). The *Venice Charter* (ICOMOS 1964) set out a strong, detailed and methodical framework for conservation of historic buildings and monuments, based on a traditional concern with historic and aesthetic value. From the mid-1970s onwards, however, greater emphasis started to be placed on the emotional and social effects of our surroundings (Bell 1997, 9). For instance, the *Amsterdam Charter* (Council of Europe 1975, 3) states that 'architectural heritage is a capital of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social and economic value'. The *Burra Charter* (ICOMOS Australia 1979, latest revised version 1999) deals with the conservation and management of places of cultural significance, including their 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations' (ibid., 3), and states that:

Places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences.

The various charters specify that decisions concerning what to conserve and how to conserve it must be based not only on an evaluation of the physical fabric of the site, but also on an investigation of the site's significance. For instance, the *Burra Charter* (ibid., 6) states that:

the cultural significance of a place [...] are best understood by a sequence of collecting and analysing information before making decisions. Understanding cultural significance comes first,

then development of policy and finally management of place in accordance with policy.

However, the means of assessing the social, spiritual, educational and economic aspects of a site's significance frequently remain elusive and such Charters have tended to leave the means of assessment, and the criteria on which it should be based, to individual national authorities.

In countries with a former colonial history and vocal indigenous minorities, conflicting beliefs about the cultural significance of heritage sites and how they should be treated can be stark and the focus of considerable publicity. A good example is the conflict between the prevailing heritage management principle of preservation for posterity with minimal interference in the fabric of a site, and the Australian Aboriginal tradition of re-painting rock art (see Maynard 1975; Mowaljarlai *et al.* 1988; Mowaljarlai and Watchman 1989). Such conflicts have tended to stimulate the development of specific and detailed modes of assessing social and spiritual value. So, for instance, the Australian Heritage Commission has sponsored a series of workshops, discussion papers, and publications dealing with the significance of place and the assessment of social value (e.g. see Johnston 1994; Domicelj and Marshall 1994). Similarly in the United States, attention has gradually turned to assessing the social and spiritual value of sites and landscapes to present communities. The modes of assessment developed by the National Parks Service, for instance, focus on ethnographic research and social and spiritual values are seen as 'ethnographic resources' (see Evans *et al.* 2001; Peña 2001). The Getty Institute has also been instrumental in setting up an international research project on values and economics in cultural heritage (see Avrami and Mason (eds) 2000; de la Torre (ed.) 2002; and for background on the project, <http://www.getty.edu/conservation/resources/reports.html>).

In Europe, however, there has been less concern with the development of detailed modes of assessing the emotional and social value of heritage and incorporating such assessment within the conservation process to date (although English Heritage has collaborated in the Getty Institute project discussed above). There is no question that national authorities do acknowledge the social, spiritual, economic and educational value of heritage to past, present and future communities (e.g. English Heritage 1997; Historic Scotland 2001a; 2001b, 7; 2002). For instance, the *Stirling Charter* states that:

In addition to its own intrinsic worth, the heritage is vital to an understanding of our archaeology, history and architecture. It provides a sense of

place and national identity and contributes to the fascinating diversity of townscape, landscape, ecology and culture in Scotland. It is also an important social, economic, recreational and educational resource. It is a rich source of enjoyment and inspiration, touching most aspects of everyday life and offering lessons from the past.

(Historic Scotland 2000a, 1)

Social and economic values are also specified as essential components in the makeup of conservation plans which act as management tools for specific sites (Historic Scotland 2000b). Nevertheless, there is little by way of direct guidance on modes of assessing social, economic and educational value, and at present deliberation tends to be based upon the personal knowledge and perceptiveness of individual heritage managers without any specific investigation of such values. Consequently, *in practice* historic and aesthetic values tend to override others, such as social value, in heritage significance assessment. As Bell (1997) argues, this situation is perpetuated by the 'familiarity and relative simplicity' of classifying historic and aesthetic value (*ibid.*, 17), but also because there is an emphasis on academic authority which directs concern away from assessment of 'the benefits which the population might be able to gain from the "cultural heritage" by and for themselves' (*ibid.*, 14; de la Torre and Mason 2002, 3 make a similar point).

The last decade has seen publication of a number of ethnographic and sociological studies of how people engage with archaeological monuments in the UK and other parts of Europe (see Bender 1998; Herzfeld 1991; Ronayne 2000; Yalouri 2001). However, archaeological practice and heritage management in western European countries has been largely unaffected by this research or by developments in post-colonial contexts further afield (for instance despite Parker Pearson's challenge there is a notable absence of such research from Hunter and Ralston (eds) 1993). Currently, heritage management agencies conduct questionnaire-based surveys (often modelled on consumer research) and visitor counts as part of the planning process, particularly in relation to properties in care. However, qualitative interview and ethnographic research aimed at uncovering the cultural ties between archaeological heritage and communities is rare (cf. Taplin *et al.* 2002, 80). The over-riding tendency, as Walderhaug Saetersdal (2000, 176) argues, is to simply continue to exercise powers of stewardship on behalf of the state creating a monopolisation which alienates and pacifies the public, and in some cases leads to outright conflict (for example, as at Seahenge in Norfolk).

1.3 Rationale, aims and objectives

This project has been initiated to mitigate against the picture painted by Walderhaug Saetersdal (2000) and others (e.g. Parker Pearson 1993). In the absence of an existing body of community archaeology research relevant to early medieval sculpture in Scotland, it is designed to increase our understanding of the meanings and values surrounding such sculpture and provide insights into the basis of conflict between various interest groups. The results of the project are intended in part to inform heritage management and conservation policies, in particular HS's development of an operational policy for carved stones (Historic Scotland 2003). In this latter respect the project is in keeping with the *Stirling Charter*, which under Article 5.2 states that conservation of Scotland's built heritage should 'be founded on full awareness and consideration of its cultural significance and *all* phases of its development' (my emphasis).

The broad aim of the project is thus to investigate the meanings, values and interests associated with the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and the ways in which these are manifested in the debates and commentaries concerning its conservation, location and presentation. The specific objectives are to:

- Gain insight into the beliefs, values and interests of the local community regarding the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish cross-slab and its location, conservation and presentation.
- Examine how these beliefs, values and interests inform attitudes towards archaeological research and management, and the individuals and organisations associated with these activities.
- Examine how the excavation process impacts on people's understanding of the historical landscape providing a locus for the production of potentially multiple forms of knowledge and for the debate and negotiation of competing interests, values and beliefs.
- Assess awareness of conservation issues and sources of threat to the Hilton of Cadboll remains in particular, and early medieval sculpture in general, amongst local and visitor communities.
- Examine the views and attitudes of the various professionals associated with the Hilton of Cadboll sculpture (including archaeologists, museum curators, heritage managers, local and national government officials), and how they respond to public interest and the claims of various groups.
- Consider how local/regional museums, heritage centres, and heritage organisations, as well as the Museum of Scotland, engage with this particular excavation and the material retrieved.

- Examine the representations and discourses produced by local, regional and national media and how these impact upon people's knowledge of, and attitudes towards, the excavation, as well as the broader conservation and presentation of such sites.
- Assess how open days and other forms of public presentation and outreach associated with the excavation are received by local and visitor communities.
- Examine how notions of authenticity inform the assumptions, ideas and arguments of all the individuals and organisations which take an interest in the Pictish sculpture and the excavation.
- Ensure appropriate contextualisation of all of the above in relation to the history of the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish sculpture in particular, and the treatment of early medieval sculpture in general.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology employed for the project draws upon a range of anthropological and sociological modes of enquiry, in particular, participant observation and in-depth qualitative interviews. Whilst by no means commonplace in the study of heritage, these methods have become increasingly popular during the last decade in research focusing on the meanings and values attached to historic remains. Anthropologists and sociologists have turned their attention to the study of heritage management (e.g. Herzfeld 1991; Bender 1998). Archaeologists have employed them in an emerging tradition of 'community archaeology', which acknowledges that excavations themselves are not the only 'sites' where knowledge about the past is produced, and that all excavation projects are embedded in wider social, political, cultural and historical contexts (see Bartu 1998; Hodder 1999; Moser 1999). Finally, qualitative and participatory research has been used in the context of heritage management and development projects, although such methods are usually confined to non-European contexts (e.g. Hackenburg 2002; Low 2002; Taplin *et al.* 2002).

The range of methods employed in this project includes semi-structured interviews, participant observation and the study of historical and contemporary documents. For the most part, a *qualitative* rather than a *quantitative* approach has been adopted (see Mason 2002, 15). There has been no attempt, for instance, to produce statistical measures of the proportion of local residents holding particular views about the ownership and display of the monument as might be gained through use of a highly structured questionnaire. Instead, the intention has been to increase our *understanding* of the range of perspectives surrounding the monument through the use of methods that can

shed light on the diverse meanings and values attached to it in various social and historical contexts (*ibid.*, 16). Furthermore, the methods employed facilitate understanding of how particular meanings are *used* by various factions and individuals in producing narratives about the monument and in negotiating positions of authority in relation to it.

Historical and contemporary documentary sources provide important contextual information for the project. These documents include: local history literature, social and economic development policy documents and surveys, newspaper articles, private letters and papers, the minutes and papers of local trusts and committees, and heritage management documents. The insights derived from this material both informed the development of the qualitative fieldwork and were crucial in analysis of the resulting interviews and fieldnotes. The documentary sources also provide a very important basis for contextualising the meanings and values revealed through the interviews and participant observation. In particular, disparities between different sources are crucial to understanding the nature of the conflict surrounding the monument.

The field research for this project, specifically the interviews and participant observation, was carried out in the seaboard villages over a period of about three months between August and November 2001, with two follow-up phases in 2002 and 2003, amounting to a further three months of fieldwork. Living in the seaboard villages during the field research was essential in terms of understanding the place of the monument, the chapel site, the excavations and the reconstruction in the everyday lives of local residents. Participant observation involved observing daily activities, particularly as regards the Park and the excavations, participating in some of these daily activities, as well as in casual daily conversation, and carrying out informal unstructured interviews, which complemented the in-depth, semi-structured interviews discussed below.

During 2001, 46 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were carried out involving 51 people who are associated with the monument in one capacity or another (most interviews involved only one interviewee, but a few involved two or three people, usually from the same family). A further 6 follow-up interviews involving 7 people were carried out in 2002 (field research in 2003 consisted entirely of participant observation for a period of two months). These interviewees included: local residents from Hilton and the surrounding area; government officials; social and economic development officers; heritage/museum professionals; field archaeologists; and people with artistic and/or art-historical training. The semi-structured interviews were arranged by appointment

and were conducted at a variety of locations. The interview design was deliberately informal and conversational in style, with interviewees encouraged to use their own language and set their own agendas. At the same time, prompts were used to ensure that certain key themes were always addressed. In interviews with local residents these themes broadly focused on:

- Knowledge of the history and archaeology of Hilton, the other seaboard villages, and the surrounding region.
- Knowledge of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and attitudes towards its location, conservation and presentation.
- Attitudes towards the excavation, the excavators and the archaeological/heritage organisations involved (including GUARD, HS, and NMS).
- Where and how members of local communities gain their knowledge of the excavation and the cross-slab, and whether they participate in any public programmes, meetings or exhibitions associated with the excavation.
- Perceptions of potential threat to the cross-slab, the fragments and the lower portion, and attitudes towards conservation.
- Broad knowledge of, and attitudes to, the past in general and archaeological remains in particular.

Interviews with archaeological, museum, heritage and government professionals connected with the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and the excavation were adjusted as appropriate, but also covered themes relevant to the project objectives. At the end of all the interviews general demographic and biographical information relating to the interviewee was recorded in written form on a pre-prepared form.

None of the various groups identified as relevant to the project at the outset are homogeneous, static or

exclusive. Ethnographic approaches are designed to take such issues into account, but in the case of the semi-structured interviews, the sampling process and their content was deliberately flexible and fluid. The sampling process was based on the snowballing method, whereby the sample evolves in an organic fashion through contacts and word of mouth, with the aim of covering as wide a range of perspectives as possible. The broader ethnographic research facilitated this approach, allowing it to evolve in a knowledgeable fashion. It should be stressed that the sample is not intended to be statistically representative of the population of the seaboard villages as a whole, or of particular professional interest groups. Instead it is intended to increase understanding of the situation through more in-depth research with a smaller sample of local residents.

The material produced takes the form of detailed fieldnotes, tape recordings, contextual documents, reports, newspaper articles, and photographs as appropriate to the situation. Pseudonyms have been used to protect anonymity, except in cases where individuals are speaking in a public/official capacity (see p.iii for more details on use of pseudonyms). In the case of both the participant observation and the semi-structured interviewing the principle of informed consent was used (see the Association of Social Anthropologists Ethics Guidelines for further information on informed consent, <http://www.theasa.org/ethics.htm>). The interviews have been transcribed for the purposes of analysis and subsequent archiving. A variety of forms of qualitative analysis and interpretation have been used, informed by anthropological, sociological and heritage management theory as appropriate, and in the case of the interviews utilising the qualitative data analysis software, QSR Nud*ist.

2 THE HILTON OF CADBOLL CROSS-SLAB: BIOGRAPHICAL FRAGMENTS

As noted in chapter 1, the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish cross-slab arouses controversy and conflict equal to, or exceeding, most examples of early medieval sculpture. Furthermore, the fragmented nature of its biography also serves to highlight public reactions to a range of environmental contexts and related strategies for preserving, managing and presenting such monuments. However, as we shall see the complex history of the monument also raises some highly specific curatorial issues in relation to the ownership, conservation and presentation of the recently discovered lower portion. This chapter provides an overview of its biography and the ways in which people have engaged with the monument over time, in particular detailing events leading up to, and following, the discovery and excavation of the long-lost lower portion of the cross-slab during 2001.

2.1 Early history: archaeological and art-historical perspectives

The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is a Pictish, symbol-bearing cross-slab (a so-called Class II sculpture), which is dated to c. 800 AD on the basis of art-historical analysis. The cross-slab has been subject to considerable damage during its life. It was broken into three sections: an upper portion with approximately three-quarters of the carving; a lower portion, which

was missing until February 2001, and an uncarved basal tenon, which is still missing. In addition the cross-face of the upper portion was completely defaced during, or prior to, 1676. The surviving side of the upper portion depicts a hunting scene with a woman riding side saddle, and numerous Pictish symbols including a mirror and comb, a crescent and V-rod, a double disc, and a double disc and Z-rod. These are framed by a border of vine scroll ornament inhabited by winged beasts, griffins (Allen and Anderson 1903 [1993], 62; see Figures 2 and 13). Despite destruction of the carving on one side, the cross-slab is widely acknowledged to be of exceptional quality and interest (Henderson 2001). As a Pictish, symbol-bearing cross-slab with Christian iconography, Hilton of Cadboll is regarded by art-historians as a major 'document' in the history of Christian art in Scotland. Furthermore, it is seen as an integral part of the Easter Ross sculpture group, which also includes the Nigg and Shandwick cross-slabs, as well as sculptural fragments from Tarbat. As such, Hilton of Cadboll is considered to be of immense importance in terms of the study of this 'school of sculpture' and the prestigious community connected with it (see Carver 1998a; see pp.27-9 for further discussion of the art-historical and archaeological meanings and values attached to the monument).



Figure 4: Hilton of Cadboll chapel site in the late 1980s, prior to excavation and erection of the reconstruction cross-slab (Crown copyright: Historic Scotland)

The primary location of the cross-slab is still unconfirmed. Prior to the excavation of the *in situ* lower portion of the sculpture in the summer of 2001, it had been suggested that the Hilton of Cadboll chapel (see Figures 4 and 16) was unlikely to have been the primary location. This argument, strongly promoted by Carver (1998a, 8-9), is based on the theory that such monuments partly functioned as landscape markers for the Picts, and therefore that a geographical position above the raised beach on top of the cliff would have been a more suitable location (see Figure 16). The excavations in summer 2001 did not resolve the question of the primary location once and for all, but they did produce evidence which cast doubt on this argument (see James 2002; James forthcoming; also Figure 5).

The excavations revealed the lower portion of the cross slab *in situ* in a vertical position set in the ground and supported by packing stones (see Figure 6). This lower

portion exhibits near pristine carving, including the lower section of the vine scroll border on one side and the base of the cross on the other (see p.28 for further discussion). This section was found to be broken along the bottom, as well as across the top, and the basal tenon typical of such cross-slabs was missing, demonstrating that the current setting was not the original one: the cross slab had been re-erected in the setting in which the lower portion was discovered (James 2002, 17-19). However, an earlier setting for the cross-slab was found 0.40m to the east of where the lower portion stood (see Figure 7). Evidence for this setting included a large broken slab which was probably a collar-stone or part of a composite stone setting (ibid., 20). Beneath this stone slab were a number of large packing stones, one of which was dressed and may have been part of the original basal tenon (ibid.). A further large cut slab, about 4m from the stone settings, may well have been the other collar-stone.



Figure 5: Excavations carried out by GUARD at the Hilton of Cadboll chapel site, summer 2001. (Photograph by S. Jeffrey, © GUARD).



Figure 6: Lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab in situ in its setting outside the west gable end of the Hilton of Cadboll chapel (photograph, the author).



Figure 7: The proposed earlier setting of the cross-slab with packing stones and collar-stone to rear (photograph, the author).

Although on current evidence it cannot be argued categorically that the earlier setting is the original setting (James 2002, 24), the discovery of this setting and the probable collar-stones casts doubt on the argument that the primary location was some distance away and supports an argument in favour of the chapel site as the primary location. Furthermore, James (ibid.) argues that the medieval chapel appears stratigraphically to post-date the re-erection of the stone. Thus, at the very least it can be argued that the cross-slab had been at the site since the medieval period – a considerable proportion of its life.

2.2 Fragmentation and displacement: 1676 - 1990

The first written source directly pertaining to the cross-slab was inscribed on its own body, when the cross-face of the stone was removed and a memorial to Alexander Duff and his three wives carved in its place in 1676; an act which led Hugh Miller (1835 [1994], 40) to famously condemn the 'barbarous mason' involved. The carved fragments from the cross-face excavated by Kirkdale in 1998 and 2001, and GUARD in 2001, demonstrate that the cross-face was dressed-off at the chapel site either during or prior to 1676 (see Figure 8). The cross-slab was next recorded by Cordiner in his *Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Scotland* (1780, 66) as lying on its face 'near the ruins of a chapel [...] dedicated to the Virgin Mary'. Cordiner's remarks also provide the first suggestion of active concern for the preservation/presentation of the monument, suggesting that 'the proprietor from veneration for the consecrated ground, has enclosed it with some rows of trees; and it is well worthy of his care, for the obelisk is one of the most beautiful pieces of ancient sculpture that has ever been discovered in Scotland' (1780, 66). Others subsequently refer to the cross-slab lying on its sculptured face a few hundred yards from the seashore, although by 1856 Stuart notes that 'it lies within a shed, the wall of which is believed to form part of an ancient chapel' (1856, 10).

Sometime during the mid-19th century, subsequent to Stuart's reference in 1856, but prior to the production of the Ordnance Survey *Original Object Name Book* for Ross Shire in 1872, Robert Bruce Aeneas Macleod, the proprietor of the Cadboll Estate, took the upper portion of the cross-slab to his Castle in Invergordon. Oral historical accounts acquired during this project refer to the Stone being taken away on a wagon pulled by oxen and that the men of the village marched behind the wagon in protest as far as Invergordon. At Invergordon Castle the cross-slab was erected in the grounds alongside the main driveway (see Figure 2) within the newly designed 'American Gardens' (1st Edition of Ordnance Survey map for Rosskeen Parish, 1872).



Figure 8: One of the carved stone fragments from the cross-face of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, excavated by GUARD August 2001 (photograph, the author).

On selling up Invergordon Castle, Roderick Willoughby Macleod of Cadboll, son of R.B.A. Macleod, gave the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab to the British Museum in February 1921. Almost instantaneously this act aroused widespread protest and condemnation in national and regional newspapers initiated by concerned individuals and scholarly societies. Much of the debate is couched in terms of national patrimony, identity and loyalty, illustrating the place of early medieval sculpture, and the Hilton of Cadboll Stone in particular, in the representation of Scottish national identity. Thus, the Saint Andrew Society writes in the *Scotsman* on 8th March 1921 that 'the removal forth of Scotland of the Hilton of Cadboll and other similar relics [...] cannot be justified on any grounds whatsoever. Such monuments [...] are national possessions, and it should not be within the power of any individual to dispose of them arbitrarily'. Amidst these protests, with the support of the Duke of Atholl, Captain Macleod re-donated the monument to the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh and it was transported there within the year. The cross-slab remains in Edinburgh to this day and is now a prime exhibit in the new Museum of Scotland (see Figure 3). However, whilst this satisfied demands for the

monument to be returned to Scotland, opinion was divided as to whether it should be placed in the museum in Edinburgh or returned to the locality. The Ancient Monuments Board, for instance, was of the opinion that the cross-slab should either be placed in the National Museum of Antiquities or returned to the 'ancient site' at Hilton of Cadboll, and a number of articles in local newspapers suggested that Ross Shire would be a more suitable destination, being its 'native and natural home', than the National Museum in Edinburgh (e.g. *Invergordon Times* 22 April 1921; *Ross Shire Journal*, 18 February 1921, 2; *Inverness Courier*, 18 March 1921, 5).

Oral historical accounts attest to a continuing attachment to the cross-slab in the seaboard villages of Easter Ross, particularly Hilton of Cadboll, and a sense of grievance that the monument was removed. Indeed the indication of the 'site of' the cross-slab on the 1872 Ordinance Survey map for Fearn Parish (and its discussion in the *Original Object Name Book* in relation to the chapel site) after its removal to Invergordon, suggests it was a prominent aspect of social memory at the time (S. Foster pers. comm.). It is clear that the absence of the cross-slab was a continuing source of comment locally; something which was routinely mentioned in relation to the history of the village of Hilton and passed down from generation to generation. Its absence was reinforced by the presence of other magnificent cross-slabs in the villages of Shandwick and Nigg, and by the widely known folklore, which binds the three together in a narrative about three Norwegian princes (see pp.30-31). A number of local residents were involved in attempts to locate the missing base, which some believed still rested at the chapel site, while others claimed it had been incorporated into the lintel of a house (D. Macdonald and others pers. comm.). Such activities clearly date back to the 1960s at least, as they are reported in *Down to the Sea*, a locally-produced history of the seaboard first published in 1971:

Its base is said to have been left behind at Hilton, to have been dressed and incorporated into the lintel of a house and, in spite of much searching it has never been discovered.

(Macdonald and Gordon 1971, 15).

Requests were also made to NMS for the upper portion of the monument to be returned to the chapel site. Most of these requests seem to have been informal verbal approaches to staff at the National Museum of Antiquities by Hilton residents visiting the Museum, but more recently, in 1994, the Highland Council approached NMS to explore the possibility of returning the stone to Hilton (J. Wood, Highland Council Senior Archaeologist, pers. comm.; also Highland Council Archaeology Service web site 'Latest News',

12/11/01). When this last request failed, attention turned to the possibility of erecting a replica/reconstruction at the site in place of the original.

2.3 Recent developments: reconstruction and rediscovery

Between 1994 and 1997 the reconstruction project was spearheaded by the late Mrs Jane Durham, a Commissioner of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments, who had been actively involved in attempts to locate the missing base and to repatriate the upper portion from Edinburgh. The Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust (initially under the Presidency of Jane Durham and later, following her death, Richard Easson) took a lead role in negotiations regarding the project, in consultation with the Fearn, Balintore and Hilton Community Council, the Highland Council, HS and NMS. In discussions with NMS the idea of a fibreglass replica cast from the original was rejected in favour of a carved reconstruction. Sculptor Barry Grove was commissioned to produce a full-scale reconstruction (see Figure 9), which was carved over a period of 14 months during 1998 and 1999 in a large secure shed on the premises of William Paterson & Son in the village of Hilton. This 'studio' became a feature of daily life amongst residents in the village who would call in to watch the carving and to see the stone 'come alive' and 'grow' (see p.35, and pp.42-3). The project was also publicised through local newspapers and at museums in the area and there were more than 2000 visitors to the 'studio' in total (Grove 2001). By the time it was erected in 2000, with an official opening on 2nd September accompanied by considerable ceremony and celebration, the reconstruction had become a source of great pride locally, and is widely considered to be one of the most significant happenings in the recent history of Hilton (see p.43).

The first phase of the project involved carving one face of the cross-slab based directly on the surviving face of the original sculpture. Whilst working as closely as possible with the original design, sympathetic interpretation was necessary in reconstructing the missing lower part of the design and other sections where weathering had resulted in damage (see Grove 2001). Earlier designs for the other side of the reconstruction (Phase 2 of the project) had been based either on a sympathetic interpretation in the Pictish style, or a format which incorporated images relating to the history of the cross-slab and the village, including images of its recent biography, as well as the economy of the village, primarily fishing and oil rig construction (see chapter 3). However, subsequent events, specifically the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab and thousands of carved



Figure 9: Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction standing to the west of the chapel site with the excavations to the rear (photograph, the author).

fragments from the cross-face, resulted in the production of a new design directly informed by the archaeological evidence (see Figure 10).

The excavations leading to the discovery of the missing lower portion of the cross-slab and the carved fragments stemmed directly from the local interest in the site and the reconstruction project. As early as 1994 the local Community Council had approached Ross and Cromarty District Council enquiring about the possibility of an excavation at the site. By 1997, an archaeological assessment and project design was under way led by Professor Martin Carver of University of York, with Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust acting as grant-holder and co-ordinator. The assessment was funded by the Cadboll Estate and the Highland Council with a topographic survey contributed by the RCAHMS. In addition to the topographic survey it included geophysical survey, an assessment of the human remains found in the seaboard villages, a review of documentary and toponymic evidence, and a dowsing survey (see Carver 1998a). The resulting project design integrated the reconstruction project and development of the site for public presentation, with an ambitious programme of research into early historic Easter Ross, as can be seen at Tarbat.

Full investigation of the ruined chapel site has not materialised to date, but evaluation at the site prior to erection of the reconstruction resulted in three small-scale excavations between 1998 and 2001. In deliberation about where the reconstruction should be erected, there was overriding feeling that it should be placed as close as possible to where the original monument had come from. Attention focused on the area just outside of the west gable wall of the chapel, informed by the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map, oral

history and the predictions of a dowser (D.L. Bates) who was brought in for the purpose of determining where the original had stood (see Carver 1998a for a copy of the dowsing report). Being a scheduled monument in their care, HS commissioned a trial excavation from Kirkdale Archaeology in 1998, which resulted in the retrieval of about 40 carved fragments (Kirkdale 1998). The reconstruction was thus erected further away from the chapel, on its western side, in a less archaeologically sensitive area in accordance with the recommendations of international conservation charters concerning the relationship between original remains and reconstructions. Nevertheless, having located some of the carved fragments, HS commissioned a further excavation from Kirkdale Archaeology in 2001 to recover the remaining fragments with financial support from local bodies on the basis that the recovered fragments could inform the cross-face of the reconstruction. The ensuing excavation led to the discovery of the lower portion of the cross-slab *in situ* (Kirkdale 2001), and this in turn was excavated, along with thousands more fragments by GUARD between 12th August and 10th September 2001 (James 2002).

Despite local attachment to the reconstruction, these archaeological discoveries, particularly the location of the lower portion, re-ignited controversy over the ownership and display of the original monument. By late spring, concern was already emerging about what would happen to the lower portion; whether it would be excavated, and if so who would be the owners and where would it be located. A local petition reportedly raised over 200 hundred signatures from Hilton alone, and a leaflet was produced by Mrs Dolly Macdonald (in conjunction with Community House, see p.22), who had been actively involved in earlier attempts to locate the missing base and to have the upper portion

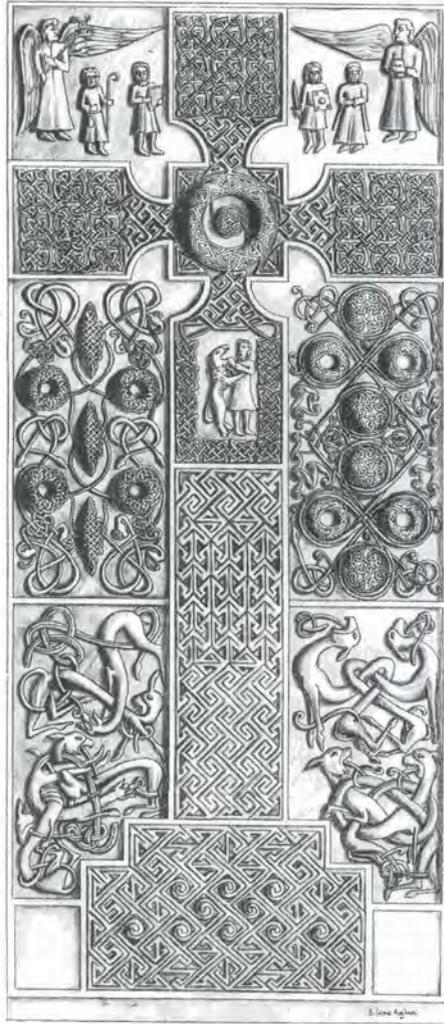


Figure 10: Barry Grove's final design for the cross-face of the reconstruction (© Barry Grove 2002).

repatriated (see Macdonald 2001). The scheduling of the excavations for August 2001 caused widespread concern and anger in Hilton and the other seaboard villages, including threats to stop the uplift of the lower portion or to spirit it away. A local action group 'Historic Hilton' was formed to campaign for local retention of the lower portion, and HS responded by organising a public meeting to discuss its future on 28th August.

The public meeting took place at the excavation site on a cold, drizzly evening and was attended by about 120 people, including local residents, local and regional politicians, representatives of the landowners, Glenmorangie plc, and all the funding bodies: HS, NMS, Highland Council, and Ross and Cromarty Enterprise (RACE) (see Figure 11). After some heated discussion, a compromise was proposed by Dr David Breeze, Chief Inspector of Historic Monuments for HS. If local residents would allow the stump to be lifted, then HS would retain it within the village for its immediate conservation until decisions about its ownership and display had been reached through appropriate legal channels, initially the Treasure Trove system. This was agreed and the lower portion was subsequently lifted and placed in a secure building on the premises of Paterson and Son, where the reconstruction had been carved. Here its immediate conservation needs were taken care of by a HS conservator and a temporary plinth was constructed for the purposes of display (see Figures 12 and 13). HS funded public viewing of the lower portion every Saturday afternoon throughout most of the winter of 2001-02, and during the summer of 2002 the Highland Council paid for a guide to show the lower portion to visitors, supported by additional staffing provided by the Historic Hilton Trust. Some 1,127 visitors were



Figure 11: Local residents at the Hilton of Cadboll excavation public meeting, 28 August 2001 (photograph, the author).

recorded over a period of two and a half months in the summer of 2002 (mid July – September).

Following the installation of the lower portion on William Paterson's premises, Historic Hilton, which had formed as a local action group, rapidly mobilized itself to form a charitable trust. The Historic Hilton Trust was registered on 14th December 2001, and subsequently acquired ownership of the chapel site at Hilton from Glenmorangie plc. The land within the Guardianship agreement (i.e. in state care) was transferred for the token sum of £1 through the ancient Ceremony of Sasines which was carried out on 30th March 2002 (*Seaboard News*, May 2002, 1-2). The Trust also entered into a drawn-out process of communication with various bodies regarding the ownership of the lower portion of the cross-slab.

The situation regarding ownership is complex and has been subject to much confusion about what procedures applied and who would be deciding ownership. It is clear that from the outset HS anticipated that the lower portion of the cross-slab and the fragments would be treated as portable artefacts and allocated to NMS through the Treasure Trove system, or their own Finds Disposal System, to ensure that the integrity of the cross-slab as a whole was maintained (see Foster 2001, 16). This standpoint explains why NMS was invited to be a partner in funding the excavations, and it was publicised in the excavation leaflet produced by GUARD on behalf of the funding bodies:

Finds from a site, let alone the same object, will not be split and allocation will normally be made to the museum which already possesses the earlier finds – the National Museums of Scotland in the case of the Hilton cross-slab.

This position at first glance seems to diverge from HS's normal policy regarding early medieval sculpture under their jurisdiction, which is to maintain it *in situ* within the landscape, or in the immediate vicinity (p.2). However, as Foster points out (2001, 16) the

divergence is a product of the specific history of the Hilton of Cadboll monument and the fact that the upper portion of the cross-slab had already been moved and incorporated into the NMS collections (see Foster 2001). The new discoveries were therefore being subject to routine Treasure Trove and finds allocation procedures which privilege the integrity of the object or assemblage above other considerations (see p.2). Indeed, the carved fragments and other material from the 1998 and February 2001 excavations had already been allocated through HS's own Finds Disposal system in May 2001 (having not been claimed as Treasure Trove).

Nevertheless, ownership of the lower portion of the cross-slab prior to excavation was ambiguous to say the least. It was discovered *in situ* in its setting within the enclosure of the chapel site (which is both a scheduled ancient monument and a guardianship property, i.e. a 'Property in Care'). There was much debate therefore, amongst both professionals and non-professionals, about whether the lower portion should be classed as a monument or an artefact, particularly prior to its up-lift (see 6.3). As a monument it would clearly be subject to HS's jurisdiction. But even as an artefact it would fall under their remit, as the deed of guardianship for the chapel site states that HS, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, are entitled to retain all objects of historical, traditional or archaeological interest discovered at the site. Indeed, guardianship of the chapel site and ownership of any finds derived from it was stressed at the public meeting by the Chief Inspector for Historic Monuments, Dr David Breeze:

Scottish Ministers have in care the chapel site [...] which was placed in the care of Scottish Ministers [...] by the land owner in a mutually acceptable deed of guardianship which is a legal document which [...] states that any artefacts found on the site through excavation or otherwise shall fall to the ownership of the now Scottish Ministers.



Figure 12: The 'front' of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab: cross-face showing the base of the cross (photograph by kind permission of Barry Grove).



Figure 13: The 'back' of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab: reverse face showing the bottom of the vine scroll border (photograph by kind permission of Barry Grove).

Furthermore, it was HS who entered into an agreement with local residents to maintain the lower portion in Hilton until its future ownership had been determined through appropriate legal channels. Meanwhile, at the same public meeting the Keeper of Antiquities at the National Museum of Scotland, Dr David Clarke, only claimed ownership of the upper portion and specifically denied ownership of the newly discovered lower portion:

The simple fact is that whether we agree with it, and most of you don't agree with it, the legal position that the Museum operates under says that at the moment we own the big piece of the stone, not this piece [the lower portion] but the big piece.

Once the cross-slab had been up-lifted all attention turned to the Treasure Trove system on the assumption that it would provide the legal context within which future ownership would be determined. Thus the Historic Hilton Trust entered into correspondence with the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (Q<R: the Crown's representative in the sphere of Treasure Trove), the Treasure Trove Advisory Panel and the local Procurator Fiscal in Tain. Ironically, however, in the early half of 2002 the Q<R declared it to be outside the remit of Treasure Trove as Treasure Trove only relates to portable objects whose original owner, or rightful heir, cannot be identified or traced, and the Crown did not regard the lower portion of the

cross-slab 'ownerless'.

The identity of the owner was not initially specified in communications from the Crown Office, but it was widely assumed that the Crown considers the owner of the lower portion to be NMS as it already owns the upper portion following the historic gift in 1921. Subsequently, in 2003, the Q<R has formally acknowledged NMS as the owner of the upper portion of the cross-slab and therefore, by default, the lower portion. At what point in this saga NMS would legally have been recognised as the owner of the lower portion (or indeed all the fragments from the cross-slab) is still unclear (when it was discovered, when it was up-lifted, and so forth). Nevertheless, on this basis, NMS and the Historic Hilton Trust are currently negotiating a compromise solution to the conflict regarding the lower portion of the cross-slab that recognises NMS ownership, and therefore long-term curatorial responsibility, but also acknowledges the local meaning and value of the lower portion through long-term local display. The implications of these developments will be discussed in chapters 6 and 7, and as will become clear, ownership is still a problematic and contentious issue. Meanwhile (February 2004), conditions regarding physical security, environmental controls and access in the context of local display are being discussed by representatives of NMS and the Historic Hilton Trust.

3 HILTON AND THE SEABOARD: GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXTS

3.1 Geography

The village of Hilton of Cadboll (Hilton) lies on the Moray Firth coastline of the Easter Ross peninsula, in the county of Ross Shire (modern Highland). It is one of three villages now often referred to collectively as the seaboard villages, the other two being Balintore and Shandwick (see Figure 14). Balintore and Hilton are located in the parish of Fearn, whereas Shandwick is located in the Parish of Nigg.

The surrounding countryside consists of gently undulating, high quality agricultural land, divided up into large farms derived from traditional estates (see Figure 15). Arable agriculture dominates and the main crops are wheat, malting barley, oil seed rape, and potatoes. The landscape, which is uncharacteristic of the Highlands, is referred to along with the Black Isle as the 'Lowland Highlands'.

A marked characteristic of the landscape, and one of particular importance for this study, are the low-lying red sandstone cliffs some 30-50m high which run along the coastline. Beneath this cliff about half way along the inner Moray Firth coast is a narrow strip of raised beach where the three villages are located. Sitting beneath the cliffs, the villages are barely visible from inland, and most of the houses face out towards the sea (see Figures 16 and 17). The effect is particularly marked in the case of Hilton where the village is closely flanked by steep cliffs which also encircle the 'Park', where the Hilton of Cadboll chapel site is located (see Figures 16 and 18).

The coastal environment is recognised for its natural heritage and landscape value. Shandwick Bay is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. Several adjacent areas are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Surveys carried out by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Seaboard Community Development Group (Revill and Rowlands 1995), as well as the current study, reveal that residents of the seaboard villages also place great value on the landscape, and that perception and appreciation of archaeological remains is embedded in this broader context.

3.2 History

Archaeological remains indicate human activity in the Easter Ross peninsula from the Neolithic period onwards. Chambered cairns and standing stones are

located on the lower slopes of the hills inland, whereas the seaboard area of the peninsula is particularly well-known for its Pictish monuments. In the immediate area of the seaboard villages a number of burials have been located (see Carver 1998a), including some short cist burials containing cremations of likely Bronze Age date. The importance of the area in the early medieval period is indicated by the Shandwick, Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll cross-slabs, and medieval remains include, the Hilton of Cadboll chapel, Old Shandwick Castle, and Cadboll Castle (RCAHMS 1979).

The origins of the contemporary settlements, however, lie with their fishing heritage, and their present makeup is partly a product of the history of population movements during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The Cadboll Estate papers refer to the 'fishers' receiving land from Fearn Abbey between 1561-66 for the purposes of dwelling and furnishing fish to the place and the County (*Origines Parochiales Scotiae* 1855, 438; Macdonald and Gordon 1971, 6). The *First* and *Second Statistical Accounts of Scotland* contain poor coverage for the Parish of Fearn, where Hilton and Balintore are located. However, the *First Account* (Sinclair 1781-91, 292-3) suggests that the villages were very small and their inhabitants almost entirely concerned with fishing, having 3 fishing boats each, with six men per boat. The Cadboll Estate maps of 1813 still refer to the shore settlement as 'Fishertown of Hilltown' and show a 'Hilltown' located above the raised beach cliff (Carver 1998a).

Between 1750 and 1850 the Highlands underwent massive change in the name of agricultural 'improvement'. One of the most overriding transformations was the massive depopulation of the region to make way for sheep farming, a process referred to as the Clearances. As Richards (2000, 6) points out, the phrase 'Highland Clearances' has come to act as an umbrella for any kind of displacement of occupants by Highland landlords, 'small and large evictions, voluntary and forced removals, ... outright expulsion of tenants and resettlement plans'. One aspect of the Clearances was planned and unplanned re-settlement of people on the most marginal land, often coastal margins where it was assumed they would take up fishing or kelp-working.

Although the seaboard villages were not planned Clearance coastal settlements like Helmsdale or

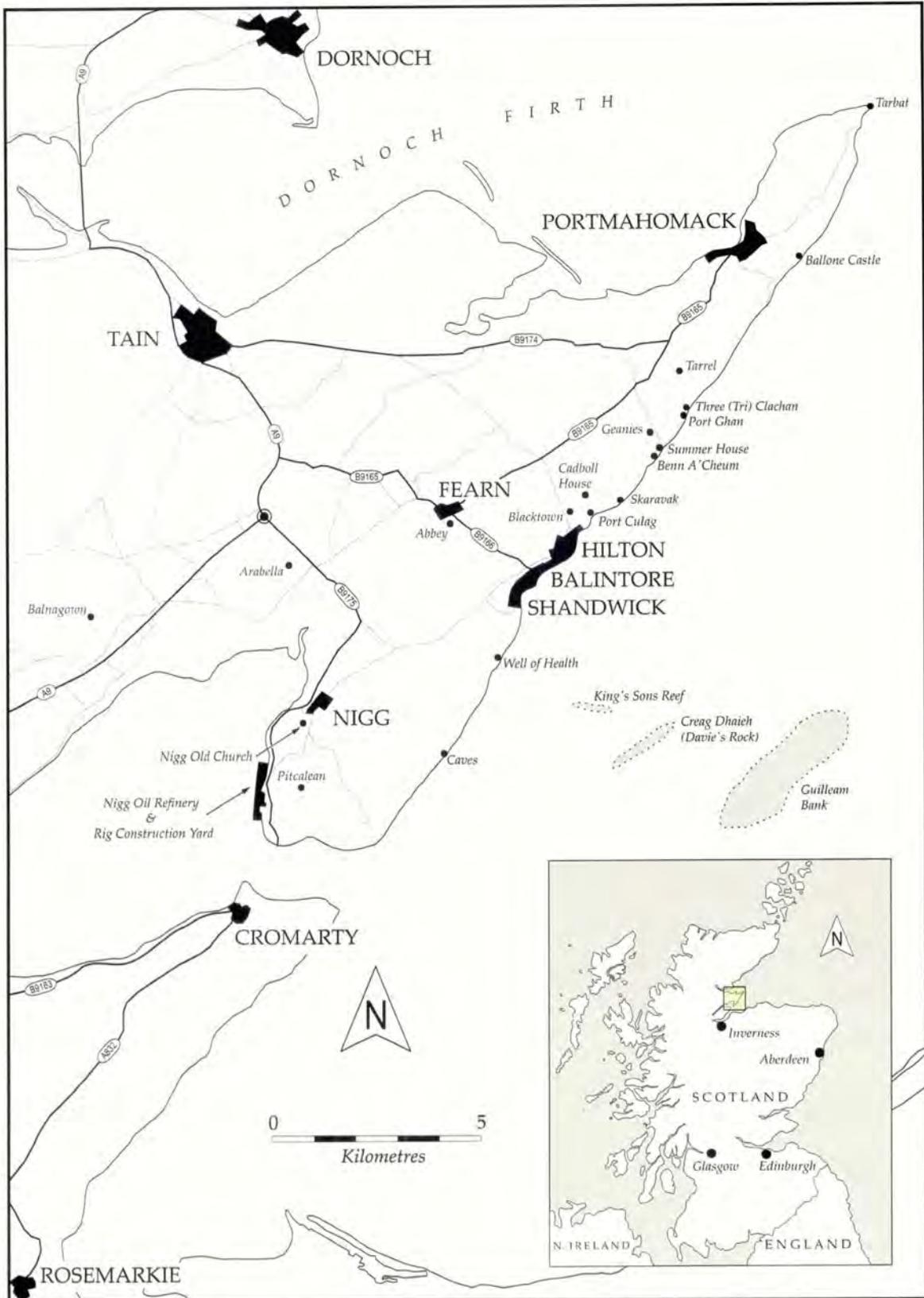


Figure 14: Map of Easter Ross showing main settlements and local landmarks (drawn by A. Mackintosh).



Figure 15: View inland across the Easter Ross peninsula (photograph, the author).

Golspie, they provided a refuge for displaced people during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and grew rapidly as a result. A plan of Hilton in 1813 shows two streets with twenty four houses, but by 1832 there were fifty eight families (Macdonald and Gordon 1971, 18). Shandwick is regarded as having provided a haven for the Rosses evicted from Glencalvie near Ardgay, and Hilton for the MacKays displaced from Sutherland (ibid.). Oral history and genealogy are prominent aspects of social discourse amongst those older inhabitants of the villages who were born and bred there, and a number of informants and interviewees provided detailed personal testimonies as to the connections between Hilton and Sutherland.

The Clearances have become a prominent aspect of social memory within the Highlands, Scotland as a whole, and amongst Scottish diaspora communities abroad (Basu 1997; Richards 2000; Withers 1996). Richards (2000, 311) notes that 'one of the abiding characteristics of the remnants of Highland society has been its sustained anger against the Clearances. The story has been retold with the accumulated bitterness of posterity in the oral record of the Highlands'. Hilton is no exception, and in addition to personal genealogical accounts of displacement, a number of participants in this project expressed a sense of loss in relation to displacement, and anger against Clearance landlords and their memorials. Basu (1997) reveals a similar situation through his research at Dunbeath, and highlights the ways in which known ruins provide a means for social memory to be mapped onto the landscape; a process also evident at Hilton.

3.3 Economy

Until the early 1970s employment in the villages centred around fishing and seasonal farm labouring. Prior to the First World War the main focus was on herring fishing when in season and line fishing for the rest of the year. Between the Wars the focus of fishing changed to white fishing, but the use of seine-net boats in the 1930s decimated the white fish population in the Moray Firth and fishing declined from then onwards (Macdonald and Gordon 1971). Today people fish the Firth in small boats during the summer, mainly for pleasure and personal consumption, although a few still engage in commercial fishing with active salmon stations, lobster creels and prawn trawling. Fishing remains a prominent feature of social discourse and of the identity of the villages, and many people still have an intimate knowledge of the Firth and the seaboard coast.

Tourism had been a minor aspect of the economy of the villages from the mid-20th century. This reached a peak in the late 1960s with accommodation provided by one caravan site, several informal camping and caravan sites, two hotels and a large number of households providing seasonal bed and breakfast (Revill and Rowlands 1995, 3). By the early 21st century tourism had declined to a very small level with only the two hotels and a couple of bed and breakfasts offering accommodation (although several other B&Bs lie in a 11km radius of the villages). Nevertheless, despite this decline, tourism is seen as the main focus for economic development, by both development agencies and local residents (see below).

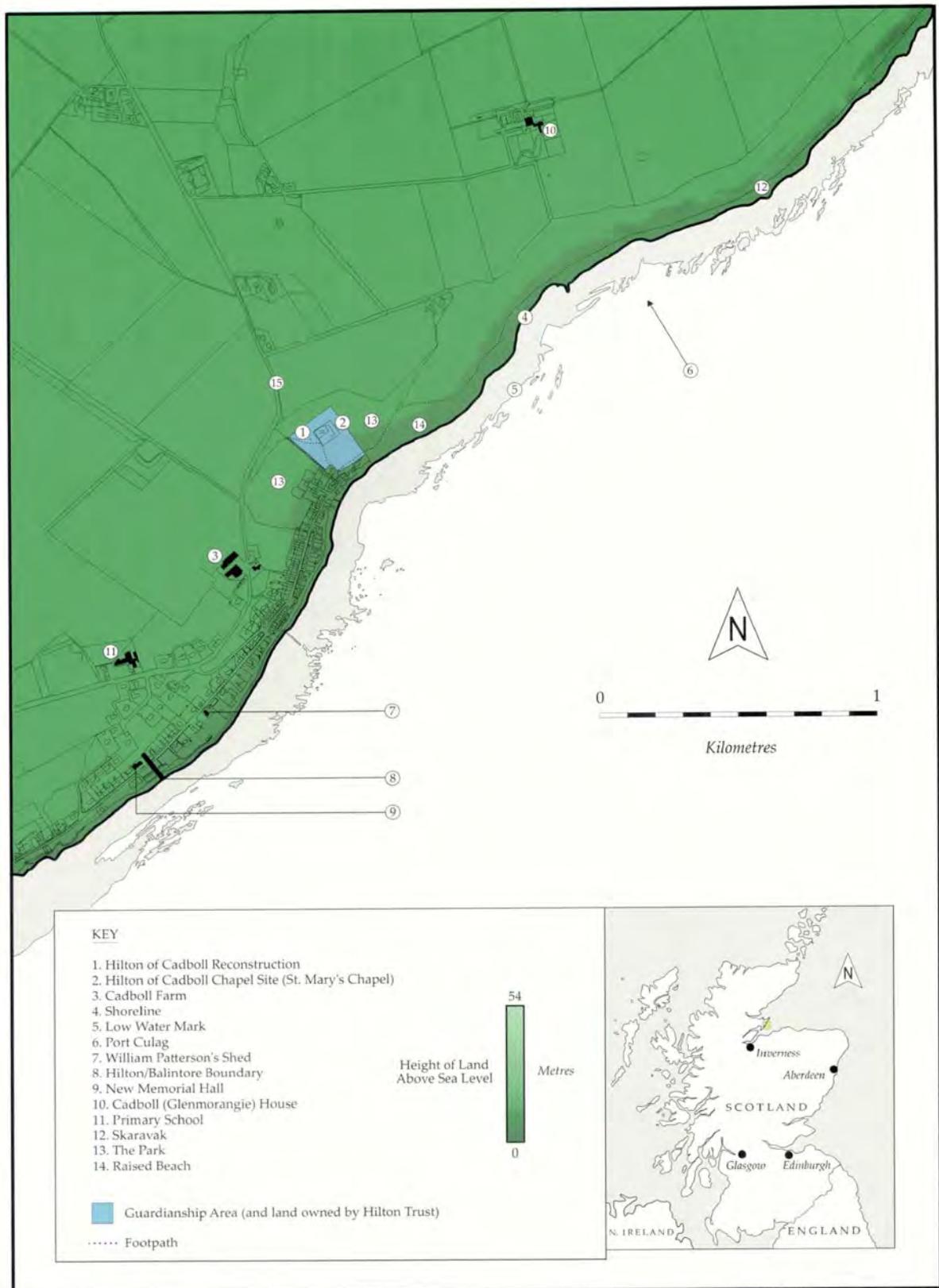


Figure 16: Detailed map of Hilton of Cadboll village, Easter Ross. Local landmarks and places mentioned in the text are indicated on the map (drawn by A. Mackintosh).



Figure 17: Part of the village of Hilton of Cadboll from the sea (photograph, the author).



Figure 18: View of the Park from the top of the raised beach cliff looking north-east towards the chapel site and reconstruction (photograph, the author).

The North Sea oil developments of the 1970s, and the establishment of the rig platform construction yard at Nigg, brought significant changes to Easter Ross (see Barr 1996, 107; Grigor 1980; Revill and Rowlands 1995, 3). The population of the villages virtually doubled with the influx of people employed in the Nigg construction yard. Associated housing development concentrated on Balintore, which was selected as the site of a new council housing development involving erection of 176 timber houses, with additional development in the gaps between the villages. However, there was little corresponding increase in services and facilities within Balintore or the other two villages (Grigor 1980, 77).

Since the recession of the 1980s, employment opportunities in the villages have significantly reduced and the long-term viability of the oil fabrication yard has been in decline (see Barr 1996, 107; Grigor 1980;

Revill and Rowlands 1995, 3). There are few other major employers and many young people have moved away seeking employment since the 1980s with the knock-on effect that local business trade has declined. Local service provision has also declined (see Barr 1996; Revill and Rowlands 1995; Seaboard Community Development Group 1991). For instance, since 1991 the two shops in Hilton (a general store and a bric-a-brac shop) have closed, as well as the butchers in Balintore. For all three villages the main services are now located in Balintore: a post office and grocery store, the Spar, a fish and chip shop, a hairdressers, two hotels and a bed and breakfast. For most other major services residents must travel to Tain, with the concomitant transport problems of rural areas.

On the basis of the 1991 census, Highland Council and Ross and Cromarty District Council identified the seaboard as the second most deprived area in the

Region and the District respectively (Barr 1996). The census figures indicate that 16% of the economically active population were unemployed (district mean 8%), 39% of the population of working age were non-earners (district mean 30%), 35% of the population had no access to a car (district mean 20%), and 40 % of households with dependent children had no adult earners (second highest figure in Ross Shire) (Revill and Rowlands 1995, 4).

In response to these indicators of socio-economic deprivation, the seaboard has been the focus of a number of development initiatives and surveys over the last 15 years. The development programme began in 1986-7 with the establishment of the 'Community House' in Balintore supported by Ross and Cromarty District Council and Highland Council (and later Ross and Cromarty Enterprise). In 1989 the Seaboard Community Development Group was set up, and in 1990 a development officer appointed to assist with its work. Community House provides a 'centre for collection, co-ordination and dissemination of interest to local people', as well as a location for various activities, including meetings, day and evening classes, and play-schemes. Most recently a separate Seaboard Learning Information Centre has been established. Seaboard Community Development are concerned with many spheres including 'social, cultural, educational and environmental development' and major projects include coastal landscaping, car park and picnic facilities, provision of environmental display boards, as well as playing a prominent role in the construction of the new Seaboard Hall in conjunction with the Hall Committee.

Development officers, and the literature produced by development organisations in the area, stress the importance of social as well as economic development. In these terms development is not merely about job creation, but also about 'individual and community empowerment' (Barr 1996, 110). Much emphasis is placed on the importance of educational support in enabling people to 'develop confidence, skills and knowledge to be effective in their community' (ibid.). As a result of initiatives from the late 1980s onwards it is widely felt that there has been a broadening of people's skills and their understanding of local issues and ways of tackling them.

The effects of deprivation and associated development initiatives on people's consciousness are palpable. The lack of services is a common focus of discourse in the villages and often focuses on the differential distribution of services between them. Thus, Hilton was described by one local resident at a meeting as a 'backwater on a backwater on a backwater' and interviewees frequently digressed into discussion of the lack of shops and pubs within the village. For instance,

Duncan, who was born and brought up in the village, stated that:

Hilton's got nothing, it doesn't have a pub, it doesn't have a Post Office, it doesn't have a shop, it had all of these, and Hilton's got nothing.

And Alan, another man who was born and brought up there, noted that:

The village itself, you know it's changed a bit over the years and in some ways it has become a bit of a backwater, it's a quiet place, eh it hasnae got very much in the way of amenities, nothing in fact and in some ways it annoys me in the fact that you know as time goes past there's lots of things could have happened in the village which didnae happen [...] but you know we've always been aware of our past eh the past that's been handed down.

A strong sense of loss and anger pervades these commentaries. There is a sense in which Hilton, and the seaboard generally, is perceived as a 'non-place', bypassed by the rest of the world, marginalised not only geographically but also socially and economically (and see 5.1).

However, at the same time there is an equally strong sense of pride in Hilton and the seaboard generally, with an emphasis on its special qualities, beauty and history. For instance, one woman, Kathleen, who has lived there all her life stated forcefully:

I mean I can't imagine ever living anywhere else. I can't imagine ever wanting to live anywhere else.

And another, Màiri, captures the power of the landscape in the following story:

I remember my husband wasn't working [...] so we went to the whelks [...] and it was October so it was quite cold then and it was, it was maybe three, half-three in the afternoon and it was beginning to get dark and the sea was quite big and the rocks were black you know, the spray of the big rollers coming in and the grey sky and I looked there and I thought this could be the world being created, it was you and this fantastic scene, it was just you and the roar of the sea and the darkness and the black rocks, this is almost like the birth of the earth.

The appeal of the villages is evidenced also by reference to the powerful hold it has on certain 'incomers' who have moved there and over relatives abroad who return again and again. The articulation of this pride is also influenced by the development initiatives discussed, with many people emphasising what has been achieved within the villages in terms of fund-raising, local events, community action, and so forth.

The 1991 census provides a population figure for the seaboard of 1,529, recording a decline of about 130 since 1981, and it is likely that further decline has taken place. A recent survey carried out by the Seaboard Community Development Group placed the figure at just over 1,200 in 1999 with some 300 people in Hilton. Although the figures note a decline since the early 1980s, the population is relatively stable, those who leave being replaced by a steady stream of people retiring to the villages.

3.4 Social relations and identities

In terms of identity, the seaboard villages are differentiated along numerous lines. Class divisions between the 'fishers' and 'farmers' remain a prominent aspect of identity and inter-personal relationships amongst people who were born and brought up in the villages. Historically, these were rooted in proprietorial relationships between landlords and tenants with Hilton belonging to the Cadboll Estate until 1918. The issue of ownership persists today and underlies the clear preference for 'Hilton' rather than 'Hilton of Cadboll' in relation to the village and the cross-slab. Indeed such sentiments have resulted in direct action such as the skilful modification of road signage referring to the 'Cadboll Stone' to read 'Hilton Stone', and the regular assertions that the 'of' in Hilton of Cadboll merely means 'by' in a geographical sense rather than any element of ownership. Class distinctions are powerfully reinforced by topography with the villages on the raised beach below the cliff and the land owners/farmers above on the rich arable land. The tensions created by these class identities are perhaps most visible in conflict over ownership of, and access to, land, such as the disputes that have taken place over the years about the Hilton 'park' and the footpath up the coast to Rockfield (see pp.44 and 52). They are also evident in areas of development and community action where negotiation of power relations often focuses upon the division between those who live below and those who live above the cliff (see p.54 for a discussion of how these divisions are manifested in relation to the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab).

Boundaries are also drawn between the seaboard and other settlements within the Easter Ross peninsula, as well as between the villages themselves. Until the mid-20th century the three villages were geographically distinct, with open land lying between them and separate roads from the Nigg-Portmahomack road, which runs along the top of the raised beach at the back of the villages (see Figure 16). However, in the 1950s a metalled road was created along the seaboard between the villages of Balintore and Hilton, and later 20th-century housing development between the villages resulted in their physical amalgamation. Revill and Rowlands (1995, 3) argue that these developments

contributed to the emergence of a seaboard identity that subsumes the individual identities of the villages. It is certainly the case that local government and development bodies have promoted the concept of the seaboard villages, for the purpose of service delivery, tourist promotion and as a means of mobilising community action. For instance, sign-posting and information boards now promote the concept of the seaboard and services and facilities are largely developed with the entire seaboard in mind. However, the seaboard category largely prevails in the discourse of outsiders, and those living within the village, particularly long-term residents, tend to use it only in opposition to other settlements and areas outside of the seaboard. The distinct histories of the villages and the location of their boundaries continue to inform a strong sense of identity and ownership at the village level. Differentiation between the villages is reinforced by the linear geography of the settlements, and the different resources and facilities characterising them. In particular, competition between the villages focuses on the relationships between Balintore and the other two villages, due to the geographical centrality, but also the greater scale and resources, of the former (the boundary between Balintore and Hilton as identified by local residents is marked on Figure 16).

Discourses of belonging in Hilton – 'of who is and who is not "part of the place", who is and who is not authentically "local"' (Macdonald 1997, 131) – can be negotiated along the above class or village distinctions. Equally important, however, are the boundaries drawn between 'incomers' and 'natives'/'locals'. As in other villages in rural Scotland, these categories are prominent features of daily discourse within the villages, operating in a fluid and situational manner to draw lines of inclusion and exclusion (see Macdonald 1997; Mewitt 1986; Nadel-Klein 1991). Complex gradations of 'insiderness' and 'outsiderness' are defined, depending not only upon the actual number of years a person has been resident, but also their family connections through descent or marriage, their 'feeling' for local issues, and their perceived loyalty manifested in various ways, such as whether they have ever lived elsewhere intermittently and how involved they are in community activities. The situational identification of self and others within such schemes, alongside those based on class and village categories, serves to create and reproduce hierarchies of authority and knowledge in a wide range of contexts (see pp.36-7 and pp.53-4 for further discussion in relation to the Hilton of Cadboll Stone).

The idea of people belonging to places is also very important in local conceptions of identity – people must be placed and where they are from is a crucial aspect of who they are (see also Macdonald 1997, 144). Place of birth is a fundamental aspect of 'placing

people' within a network of social relationships, and in particular negotiating one's status within the villages. The question of where people were born is a regular focus of social discourse in Hilton and the other seaboard villages, particularly amongst those who define themselves as 'local'. It is something which is generally established at the onset of any new acquaintance, and is then re-iterated regularly in daily conversation, thus being incorporated into the body of public knowledge which serves to 'place' people in relation to others. Being born in Hilton, or related to someone who is born in Hilton, is central to being accepted as an 'insider', an authentic member of the community. Those related through marriage to authentic Hiltoners achieve a certain level of insider status, but are still, often after many decades, perceived as 'incomers' by themselves and others.

As in many rural and urban communities (e.g. see Mewitt 1986; Nadel 1984), knowledge about the village in general, whether about its history, landscape, people's relationships and way of life and so forth, is subject to a degree of social control. Certain people are conceived as having greater authority in terms of relating this knowledge than others. The distinction between 'locals' and 'incomers', 'insiders' and 'outsiders', is particularly important in this respect. Thus, those who were born and brought up in the village often preface stories about the history of the village, genealogical relationships, ways of life and so forth, with statements like, *'I was born and bred here'*. Similarly, those who were not born and brought up in the village frequently preface such conversations with statements such as *'well, I'm just an outsider'*, or *'I'm looking at it from an outsider's point of view'*, or *'I'm not from here'* and at the same time they often defer to specific 'locals' who, they say, would have a deeper knowledge. For instance, talking about the fishing history of the village, Angus, a long-term resident of Hilton, but who was born and brought up in a local town, states that:

So they, the Hilton ones, were the sea people. Now I'm an incomer so this is what I've really been told about Hilton.

People's position within the village, their kinship relationships and other kinds of relationships therefore define their place within a hierarchy of knowledge. Those born and bred in Hilton have the greatest socially conferred authority, but even here distinctions are drawn on the basis of whether they have remained living in Hilton all their lives, which families they 'belong' to, the number of generations these families have lived in Hilton, and so on. Furthermore, incomers are not entirely excluded from relating knowledge about the village, but distinctions are drawn depending on their connection, whether they are related through

marriage or some other means, the length of their residence, and their conduct, whether they get involved in local activities and so forth. In the case of incomers due deference is often made to locals, and such deference is important in gaining social acceptance of their right to retell stories about the village. Furthermore, those who are not deemed to have deferred to appropriate 'locals' as a source of knowledge and authority, or who directly challenge them, can be subject to criticism and modes of exclusion.

These processes of inclusion and exclusion were strongly evident in the social discourse surrounding the reconstruction and the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the Hilton Stone. People negotiated their positions within the various committees and action groups surrounding the campaign to retain the Stone on the basis of boundaries that were drawn and re-drawn according to the situation and the interests involved. Most people involved in mobilising the campaign had a long-term family connection with Hilton and many were born and bred there. People from Balintore and other settlements in Easter Ross, as well as 'incomers' from other regions of Scotland, were situationally incorporated within the campaign, and the latter could achieve greater degrees of 'insiderness' by demonstrating 'special feeling' for the stone. Nevertheless, authority and power was negotiated according to degrees of inclusion and exclusion (see pp.36-7 and pp.53-4).

Other aspects of the production and negotiation of personal identities and power relations which are evident in public events and committees, include genealogy and family connections, bi-names which are still common amongst long-term residents, appearance (particularly stature, hair and skin colour), age and gender. Many of these aspects of identity were also apparent in the discourse and practice surrounding the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. Those involved in the initial campaign to retain the lower portion locally were predominantly older women, of 40 years of age or more, a number in their 80s, with only a handful of men and only one person in his 30s. The importance of age in establishing authority was clearly evident at many meetings. Gender is also very important, and men and women took very different, but complementary roles. Men within the campaign group generally adopted a more confrontational stance with the threat of direct action, whereas the elder women in particular emphasised the importance of negotiation and discourse with relevant government bodies and agencies. It is notable though that with the formation of the Historic Hilton Trust the balance in terms of age and gender has shifted with the appointment of the Trustees towards a more middle-aged, male, and

professional-based spectrum. The constitution of the Trust and the Trustees caused controversy as many of the aspects of identity construction noted above were negotiated; in particular, the local action group fought hard to maintain a core group of people who could be conceived of as genuine Hiltoners amongst the Trustees (see 6.3).

In summary, Hilton and the other seaboard villages occupy a marginal geographical and socio-economic position within Easter Ross, the Highlands and Scotland as a whole (see Figures 1 and 14). This marginality has been reinforced by the decline of a number of industries during the 20th century. A sense of marginality is keenly felt, but at the same time there is a pervasive sense of pride in relation to the seaboard

villages, which are in this sense perceived as central places through the lives of the inhabitants. Not surprisingly in the face of socio-economic decline, considerable attention is devoted to identifying the boundaries of the three villages and maintaining a sense of identity by reference to traditional economic activities, particularly fishing. Moreover, during the last decade there have been considerable initiatives aimed at social and economic development, including Community House, Seaboard Community Development Group, Seaboard Initiative, the Seaboard Learning Information Centre, and the construction of the new Seaboard Memorial Hall. These social and historical circumstances provide an important context for any investigation into the meaning and value of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab.

4 HILTON OF CADBOLL AND THE MAKING OF MEANING

4.1 Approach to the study of meaning

The attribution of meaning, significance and value to archaeological remains has a long history within both the discipline of archaeology and the policies and practices of heritage management. However, for the most part, academic attention has focused upon 'correctly' eliciting the *original* meaning and use of the monuments or objects concerned. Furthermore, this concern with the correct meaning of objects and monuments has also thoroughly imbued heritage management policy and practice, where heritage significance assessment is still primarily based upon an evaluation of their historic value. The ongoing social biographies of archaeological remains, and the etymologies of meaning surrounding them, have lately become a focus of academic research. Likewise, the meanings and values derived from archaeological remains today have recently emerged as areas of assessment within heritage management embodied in concepts such as 'social value'. Nevertheless, to date, such concerns are still treated in a rather piecemeal fashion with considerable variation between different areas of academic research and different national traditions of heritage management (see 1.2).

In exploring the meanings and values surrounding specific archaeological monuments and artefacts today, the object of investigation must shift away from a concern with semantic 'accuracy' in any absolute sense, to a focus on people's *use* of such remains as symbols and models. As Fernandez and Herzfeld (1998, 90) point out: '... rather than asking which narratives about a historical site are "correct", we can learn a great deal more by examining how the various interpretations of that site are used by interested factions and individuals'. Furthermore, studies of meaning should not be restricted to 'obvious' aspects of meaning, as meaning is not exhausted by a list of explicit referential correspondences or denotations. It is necessary to grapple with the metaphorical, symbolic, ironic and other connotative meanings which are a dynamic and often contradictory part of everyday life (*ibid.*).

Hence, in exploring the meanings generated through and around the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, this chapter will by no means be restricted to the 'correct' meanings produced by archaeologists and art-historians, and nor will other meanings be judged

against such authorised narratives. Indeed, this report is not the place for a lengthy discussion of the meaning of the cross-slab in archaeological, art-historical or heritage management terms. Rather a summary of its significance in this respect will be provided, alongside other narratives embedded in local oral history and folklore, so that the divergence and intersection of these frameworks of meaning can be explored. Much of the rest of the chapter will then be concerned with the less tangible symbolic meanings generated in relation to the monument, and the reconstruction, in the seaboard villages and wider region of Easter Ross. As we shall see, for the most part these local symbolic meanings are embedded in discourses about community, identity, place and belonging.

4.2 Archaeological, art-historical, heritage, folkloric and oral historical narratives

The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is one of the best-known Pictish sculptures and despite destruction of the carving on one side it is widely acknowledged to be of exceptional quality and interest (Henderson 2001). As pointed out in chapter 2, Hilton of Cadboll is regarded by art-historians as a major 'document' in the history of Christian art in Scotland. Pictish symbol-bearing cross-slabs with Christian iconography, including a cross, scriptural scenes, and other forms of theological symbolism, are seen as the primary evidence for the gradual conversion of the Picts to Christianity between the later 6th and the 8th centuries AD (Carver 1995, 3). The 8th century Pictish King Nechtan is attributed with organising a mission to North Pictland, centred at Rosemarkie near Hilton of Cadboll to introduce the Roman Church into this area (Foster 1996, 92-3). The extraordinary wealth of 8th- and 9th-century Pictish sculpture in Easter Ross and the Black Isle may stem from this. Along with other later Class II cross-slabs, Hilton of Cadboll is also perceived as being closely associated with a formative period in the history of the Scottish nation; a period which saw a growing alliance between, and eventual amalgamation of, the Scots and the Picts from the mid 8th to early 10th centuries AD.

As already discussed in chapter 1, monuments like the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab have been, and continue to be, attributed considerable significance in heritage terms as a result of their religious and national associations. Interviews with eleven heritage professionals repeatedly underlined its significance as

a 'most important', or 'highly significant' piece of sculpture in 'national' or 'international' terms: one of about half a dozen cross-slabs that the Keeper of Archaeology at the Museum of Scotland described as 'really major statements, and they are major pieces of European art that have no real parallel elsewhere in Europe at the period'. Or as Calum, one of the archaeologists excavating the chapel site, put it:

... in art you know or aesthetic terms it's [the Jordanhill Cross] certainly nothing like this. This is the Hilton of Cadboll stone, it is as you know, it's like the pinnacle, approaching the pinnacle like St Andrews Sarcophagus [...], it's top quality stuff.

In keeping with this status, the upper portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is treated in an iconic fashion in the Museum of Scotland, being used, according to the Keeper of Archaeology, to stand for 'a great section of Scotland's artistic heritage'. As such it becomes a symbol of Scottish national identity, the significance of which is further enhanced, at least for heritage professionals, by its brief sojourn at the British Museum in London in 1921 before being returned to the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh:

... it's a very important stone, and not just important in the sense of being iconic, it's very important because it's also one of the symbols of the nation's rights to its own treasures, [...] taking it to London and bringing it back [...] reflected a feeling which we still have very strongly you know that the British Museum should not be collecting our stuff without our agreement.

Clearly then, the meaning of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab today has to be understood, in part, in the context of modern discourses of heritage and national identity. However, the significance of the monument in these terms also intersects with another sphere of meaning derived from art-historical and archaeological studies. Art-historical analysis of the Class II symbol stones (conventionally dated to 8th and 9th centuries AD) focuses on comparative analysis of style and form, iconographic analysis of the symbolic meanings of elements making up the design, and consideration of presentation and intent to cast light on forms of patronage during the early medieval period. The meaning and purpose of the Pictish symbols (abstract geometric symbols as well as depictions of animals and objects) present on both Class I and Class II sculptured stones is subject to much debate. The most widely accepted interpretations, however, suggest that the symbols referred to individual, tribal or lineage names, and that the Class I stones, at least, functioned as personal memorials, records of marriage contracts, tribal territorial markers or landmarks for navigation. On Class II monuments it is thought that these Pictish

symbols may have maintained the same meaning, but that some may also have taken on theological significance, or even gained significance as Pictish national symbols. The remaining decorative, zoomorphic and figural elements present on Class II sculpture are primarily interpreted as symbols from Christian iconography, most obviously the cross, but also scriptural scenes, such as Daniel in the Lions' Den or Samson smiting the Philistines, as well as a rich body of subtle theological symbolism embedded in decorative components, such as imaginary beasts, raised bosses, knotwork and interlace.

The surviving intact side of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab features an ornate double disc and Z-rod, a crescent and V-rod and two unconnected discs, which may have denoted attributes of lineage, status or marriage. Below this is a hunting scene incorporating a rare portrayal of a woman riding side saddle, and the entire face is bordered by a vine scroll inhabited by griffins (part-bird, part-quadruped). Whilst the former is taken by some to represent a scene from the daily life of the Pictish aristocracy, the stag-hunt scene is also regarded as a 'commonly accepted symbol-picture involving some generally understood lesson of Christian doctrine' (Alcock 1998, 529-31; Allen and Anderson 1903 [1993], 47). The vine scroll inhabited by griffins is also attributed Christian symbolism relating to Christians feeding on the elements of the Eucharist (Henderson 2002, 7).

The defaced side of the Hilton of Cadboll monument has long been assumed to have carried a cross, and the recently excavated basal section reveals what is likely to be the cross base, with a deep two-step form filled with key-pattern and raised spiral bosses. Henderson (2002, 8) has argued that such a stepped base is symbolic of 'the cross on Golgotha hill erected at the site of the crucifixion and a focus of pilgrimage'. Furthermore that the spiral bosses provide a 'jewelled' effect, which has 'a symbolic relationship with the great commemorative cross in Jerusalem, encased in gold and studded with precious stones by the Emperor Theodosius in the beginning of the fifth century' (ibid., 9). The figural elements evident on some of the recovered fragments have also been interpreted within a theological framework, for instance the tunic and feet of a person depicted adjacent to a rampant animal with a thick, possibly tufted tail, have been provisionally interpreted as representing Daniel in the Lions' Den (ibid., 13). Even the raised spiral bosses on the stepped 'cross-base' are regarded as having more than decorative significance carrying numerical symbolic meanings of theological significance (ibid., 9).

In its broader context, the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab along with other Pictish cross-slabs, also has significance in terms of our understanding of Pictish

society. At least until the early 20th century, the Picts were portrayed in scholarly, as well as popular, literature as a small, dark, painted 'race' who lived a life of mystery and barbarism (see Ritchie 1994). In contrast, today they are represented in archaeological publications, as a 'perfectly respectable' population, whose average height was only an inch or two smaller than that of the modern British population, and who by the 7th century had entered the mainstream of European art and 'civilisation' and whose social and political organisation mirrored developments taking place elsewhere (Ritchie 1989 [1999]; see Carver 1995 for a more detailed discussion of social and political developments in the North Sea region in the first millennium AD). In characterising the Picts, Ritchie (1989 [1999], 10) elaborates that they 'were farmers, horse-breeders, fishermen and craftsmen, but above all they were warriors and theirs was an heroic society'. The Class II Pictish cross-slabs are seen as representing the wealth and prestige of the Pictish aristocracy as well as the artistic skill of their stone-carvers.

The Hilton of Cadboll, Nigg and Shandwick cross-slabs on the Easter Ross peninsula are regarded as an interrelated sequence, representing a particular 'school of sculpture', probably connected to what appears to be a monastic settlement at Tarbat, where a considerable quantity of Pictish sculpture has been found through excavation (see Carver 1999, 50-52). More broadly-speaking, it has been argued that Pictish society in Easter Ross in the 8th and 9th centuries was made up of small, wealthy estates whose landowners commissioned the large cross-slabs as memorials (Carver 1998b, 1). Art-historians and archaeologists are united in recognising the enhanced value of Hilton of Cadboll as part of this group and also the importance of understanding the wider historical context through archaeological research.

The meanings attributed to the Hilton of Cadboll monument through heritage, art-historical and archaeological discourses have a variable impact on local residents' understandings of the monument in the seaboard villages and the surrounding region. The Picts tended to be referenced in specific contexts in association with the monument, but few people engaged in discussion of the specific meaning and symbolism of the designs on the cross-slab. Many people's received image of the Picts is derived from earlier academic writings on the subject: they are portrayed as a mysterious, small, dark people who painted their bodies, regularly engaged in warfare and lived a harsh, uncivilised life. Such representations emerged in specific contexts. For instance, the wild, fierce nature of the Picts was highlighted by in relation to the Romans by Maggie:

... you see the Romans built the Wall to keep out

the Picts [...] And the Picts were so wild that they couldn't [keep them out] and my granny used to say no conqueror ever put his foot here. Now I don't know how true that was but it was true for her you know.

Another common pre-occupation concerned the nature of Pictish society and the question of its civilised or uncivilised nature. Here the excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab clearly caused considerable reflection and transformation of pre-conceived views. For instance, Christine commented that:

I can't believe that somebody in [the past], could do such a beautiful thing [...] I can't get over it [...] I mean you read in your history books that the Picts, they were savages you know and yet they couldn't be, that [the cross-slab] just shows that they were civilised.

And Ken, another local resident of Hilton, reflects upon similar issues when commenting on the people portrayed in the hunting scene on the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab:

... it doesn't look as if they're people with no intelligence running about just harum-scarum, that seems to be a picture that was taken at that particular time of a race that seems to have been pretty well organised. They had trumpeters as you can see so obviously they must have had some form of I would imagine music [...] They have some kind of command over horses, I mean that shows there quite clearly and hunting skills. The woman has a form of dress on so it doesn't seem to be a very primitive sort of race that's just scraping a living. This seems to be a picture of something that's in order.

Many references to the Picts, however, were primarily concerned with their status as the people who created the cross-slab and did not involve any reflection about who they were or what their society was like. Rather, such references to the Picts, concerned their rights, as the people who made and erected the cross-slab, and the importance of upholding their intentions regarding its location. As one man, Gavin, noted, '*this is where the Picts lived you know so I think it should stay here*' and another local resident, Agnes, argued that:

The people put it there and they're all gone and you've got to sort of fight for their interests, they put it there for a reason and it's [...] always been there, it should go back there, we don't want to harm it or anything or move it anywhere, we want it to stay where it was put.

Such references provide a model for legitimate action in relation to the monument in the present based upon a sense of moral duty in relation to people in the past. They also play a strong role in the negotiation of

authenticity in relation to the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, particularly regarding association with place (see chapter 6 for further discussion).

For some people the perception of a direct relationship between the Picts and the present-day community, or specific individuals within it, adds greater weight to this sense of moral duty regarding the intentions of the people who created the monument. Indeed, for those who maintain a strong belief in such an association there is a sense in which the moral right derived from creating the monument is transferred to the present descendants as they conceive of themselves. Explicit assertions of Pictish descent, although not commonplace, were sometimes conveyed through reference to physical appearance. For instance, people of Pictish descent were portrayed as 'small dark ones' or 'little wee black ones' who are found 'round the coast everywhere' amongst families of 'tall fair Scandinavian people'; characterisations which are evidently part of a long-standing folk tradition in the northern and eastern Highlands (Ritchie 1994). In other contexts direct ancestry was claimed without specifying any supporting characteristics, for instance one elderly woman, Maggie, stated that:

the Picts bore us, the Picts were our ancestors and it [the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab] was taken from us without asking.

Another much younger local resident, Duncan, who was also born and brought up in Hilton commented:

Well nowadays in the village we've got a mixture of people from all over the UK. But going back then they were pure Scots, they were the Picts and that's where I think I'm from.

And in another context, in relation to the lower portion of the Hilton Stone, he recounted how he felt an intimate connection with it as a result of these feelings of ancestry:

... they were excavating all round it for a few weeks and I didn't ask anyone because I thought it would be stupid [...] but the one thing I really wanted to do was just to touch it, put my hands on it. [...] I think we were connected with it, going back down the years they were connected with it. It wouldn't mean so much to me, because the ancestral part of it wouldn't be there, I couldn't connect, if I lived somewhere else, and if my forefathers had lived somewhere else and I just came to Hilton and I went and touched it, it would be an amazing thing to see but it wouldn't be part of me because I would have, nobody I knew or none of my relatives that are gone would have had any part of that. But to know that my people were here and that stone is there just to touch it you know they must have seen it, they must have

touched it you know going back these years, it was like something holy I just, I just needed to touch it.

This latter account clearly demonstrates that, for some, the meaning of the cross-slab is bound up with origins and ancestry and that it figures as a primordial symbol which generates emotions of intimacy and connection.

It is clear from these various forms of engagement that local residents are conversant with the monument's Pictish origins, and possess varying degrees of knowledge about the Picts and their society. However, much of the meaning derived from the monument in this respect is not obtained from a detailed knowledge of archaeological and art-historical interpretations of the symbolism embedded in the art; nor are people primarily concerned with the original meaning of the monument. In the context of the discovery and excavation of the lower section and carved fragments, the meanings derived from the Pictish association of the monument in the local community were primarily concerned with people's rights, past and present, and perceptions of ancestry and descent. Such meanings are of course political as well as historical and cultural. In part, they serve to legitimate current political claims regarding the ownership and future of the monument, adding moral weight to the argument that the lower section should remain in Hilton. However, the depth of feelings of empathy and intimacy generated by the Pictish origins of the cross-slab extend well beyond mere political legitimisation of current claims. Indeed, given their political potential, claims regarding direct Pictish descent were surprisingly few and far between; largely restricted to those local residents whose families have lived in Hilton or the seaboard area for several generations and almost entirely confined to private conversation rather than public forums. Given this contextual dimension, it can be argued that the local meanings derived from the Pictish character of the monument are more concerned with the kind of symbolism discussed below, relating to kinship and the production of a sense of community and place, than they are with either the original historical meanings surrounding the monument, or modern political interests.

Another important, but in some ways contradictory, narrative framework in relation to the Hilton of Cadboll monument is derived from a local folk tradition concerning the three sons of a Scandinavian king who were said to have drowned off the coast of the Shandwick. During interviews and casual conversation surrounding the excavation, this folk narrative was recounted on at least ten occasions in varying forms. Most people had first heard the story as young children and it is clearly part of a long-standing folk tradition as reported in Hugh Miller's *Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland*:

In this [Viking] age says the tradition, the Maormor of Ross was married to a daughter of the king of Denmark, and proved so barbarous a husband, that her father, to who she at length found means to escape, filled out a fleet and army to avenge on him the cruelties afflicted on her. Three of her brothers accompanied the expedition; but on nearing the Scottish coast, a terrible storm arose, in which almost all the vessels of the fleet either foundered or were driven ashore, and the three princes were drowned. The ledge of rock at which this latter disaster is said to have taken place, still bears the name of the King's Sons [...]. The bodies of the princes, says the tradition, were interred, one at Shandwick, one at Hilton, and one at Nigg; and the sculptured obelisks of these places, three very curious pieces of antiquity, are said to be monuments erected to their memory by their father.

(Miller 1835 [1994], 39; see Figure 14 for the location of the King's Sons Reef)

As with all folktales the specific details of the narrative often vary each time it is told, although the underlying narrative structure appears to have been maintained. Local versions of the tale recounted in the interviews for this project varied according to the nationality of the king, some suggesting Denmark and others Norway; about whether the king's daughter ran away or was sent back; about whether the king's sons foundered in a storm or were led onto the reef by the Earl of Ross, most suggesting the latter; and finally about whether the king's sons were actually buried at the site of the cross-slabs, or whether the monuments stand above the locations where their bodies were washed ashore.

The King's Sons folk narrative suggesting Norse origins for the cross-slabs is largely incommensurable with present-day academic and popular accounts of the Pictish origins and meaning of the monument. However, people recounting the tale acknowledge the contradictions implied by the different narratives, and these contradictions are readily accommodated by the different contexts in which they are recounted. For instance, when asked whether her grandmother had told her stories about the stone, Maggie replied 'Well no. You see the thing is they had a wrong conception of that Stone. They thought it was the Norwegians and Danish people that did it' and then proceeded to recount the King's Sons story as passed on by her grandmother. Alan makes a similar point, but with a twist at the end that emphasises the value of the folktale as a story: '... when we were younger originally it was the King's Sons and all the stones were the stones for that, nothing to do with the Picts originally at all, and that was a far better story'.

As the last quote indicates, the King's Sons story remains a popular narrative in local discourse, one which is still recounted to children and to people who settle in the villages. One aspect of the narrative's currency is the way in which it references the close relationship between the local population and the sea, as well as the intimate knowledge people have of the coastline (particularly in the case of those accounts where the King's sons are said to have been deliberately led onto the reef by the local Earl of Ross). In this sense it also allows people to use the folktale as a basic narrative which can be expanded to incorporate more recent events. For instance, after recounting the story of the King's Sons, one man continued as follows:

...also taking it more into our generation there was a notorious villager who also having a fishing boat was poaching one time and he seemingly cut out on the inside of the King's Sons [reef] when the fishery cruiser was after him, and he got through to the bottom of the harbour and just launched the catch where they [the fishery cruiser] had to revert back because they got slightly damaged trying to run along there [past the King's Sons Reef].

The construction of a sense of place is an important dimension of the King's Sons narrative. It serves to create an intimate relationship between the three cross-slabs and particular places, in the form of three different villages each with its own stone; one embedded in the sibling relationships between the three brothers that the monuments are said to memorialise. Each time it is recounted the story emphasises the relationships between the cross-slabs and the villages of Hilton of Cadboll, Shandwick and Nigg, naturalising these associations by setting them in an unspecified, but distant, period in the past (see Figure 1 for locations and Figures 19 and 20). Thus, the narrative serves as a constant reminder of the natural order of things and highlights the sense of loss surrounding the removal of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab in the mid-19th century. The sense of a natural order is evident in the way in which Alan concludes his account of the folktale:

... there was one washed ashore at Hilton and that was the Hilton Stone. There was one at Shandwick, that was the Shandwick Stone and the other guy ended up at Nigg, that was the Nigg Stone. That accounted for the three stones.

Furthermore, a sense of loss or absence emerges from the structure of this narrative, for instance, as in one observation that '... Shandwick and Nigg had their stones but we hadn't. We were the odd ones out that didn't have our stone'. And another older woman, Christine, who married into the village, reflecting on



Figure 19: The Shandwick cross-slab displayed in a glass case in its original location, Easter Ross (photograph, the author).

the stories she heard during the early years of her marriage made the point that:

... perhaps not with the significance of now but yes they always talked about the Hilton Stone, they wondered why [it had been removed] because Shandwick's got their stone, Nigg has their own stone, but then they knew it was down in Edinburgh, I suppose they just said, well it's there, nothing we can do about it.

Last, but by no means least, oral historical narratives provide an important framework of meaning surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and the reconstruction project in local contexts. Such accounts were perhaps the most common form of discourse surrounding the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab and the carved fragments. Specifically in relation to the cross-slab, people recounted how 'the men from Hilton walked to Invergordon after the stone' in protest when it was removed in the mid-19th century, and how people had always talked of the stone and later some of them had searched for the base at the chapel site and within the walls of people's houses. But far more widespread was the web of meaning spanning out from the stone in terms of its associations with the village, the Park, and the chapel site, as sites of entertainment and social interaction in the past. Commentaries about the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and its place in village life also incorporated other fragments of carved stone, such as, an 'apprentice stone' set in the wall of a house depicting an upturned thistle symbolising farewell to Scotland on emigration. Such stories serve to set the cross-slab in the context of people's personal family genealogies and within a network of kinship and social relationships, which as we shall see is crucial to the role of the monument in the symbolic construction of community and place.



Figure 20: The Nigg cross-slab on display in Nigg Old Church, Easter Ross (photograph, the author).

The narrative frameworks discussed above provide different spheres in which the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is imbued with meaning. There is a certain degree of seepage between these different spheres. For instance, the ways in which antiquarians and archaeologists have portrayed the Picts at various times have clearly influenced popular conceptions of them, and visa versa (see Ritchie 1994). Similarly, the significance attributed to the monument by heritage and museum professionals has impacted upon the meaning of the monument in terms of constructing place in the seaboard area of Easter Ross. Furthermore, there is also a great deal of repetition of certain themes across these different spheres of meaning. For instance, in local discourse, references to the Picts, to the King's Sons folktale and to oral histories, all in different ways pertain to the relationship between the monument and Hilton. However, presented in such a condensed and comparative manner, it is clear that these explicit narratives surrounding the monument are to some degree incommensurable and their contradictions only elided by the different contexts in which they are activated.

4.3 Hilton of Cadboll and the symbolic construction of community

The narrative frameworks discussed above constitute some of the 'obvious' denotative meanings surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll monument: an important piece of national heritage, a Pictish sculpture, a memorial to one of three dead Norse princes, and so forth. In this section and the next, the less 'obvious' metaphorical, symbolic and other connotative meanings will be explored, particularly as they relate to the construction of community and place. Due to the nature of this project attention will focus on those meanings generated in local contexts within Hilton and the other seaboard villages of the Easter Ross peninsula. As we shall see, some of these meanings are derived from the narrative frameworks discussed above, but many are more subtly embedded in the everyday language used in talking about the monument and in debating its future, as well as people's daily practices.

One of the most striking aspects of the meaningfulness surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and the reconstruction in local contexts is the way in which they are conceived of as 'living things'. Sometimes such meaning is produced through the metaphorical attribution of organs, or processes, that are fundamental to life, to the monument. For instance, the cross-slab and the reconstruction are both referred to as having been 'born', 'growing', 'breathing', having a 'soul', 'living' and 'dying', having 'charisma' and 'feelings'. A few informants and interviewees were more explicit about this symbolic dimension of the

monument drawing direct similes rather than relying on metaphor. For instance, one local resident, Christine, noted that the cross-slab (specifically discussing the lower portion of the cross-slab after it had been excavated):

was like something that was born there and it should go back [...]. It's, it's like people who emigrate or go away, they should always come back where they were born and I feel that that stone should go back.

Another, Duncan, remarked that if the main part of the cross-slab returned from Edinburgh

there'll be a party maybe and there'll be things going on here that'll be absolutely unbelievable like a, like a how would I put it now, an ancient member of the village coming back, if that came through here on a, on a trailer and everybody would be here. [...] Coming home where it's always been. [...] If the stone had a soul it would be saying oh there's the Port Culac you know, there's so and so's house you know I'm going over to the park and there's, there's the other bit of the stone and it broke off a hundred and fifty year ago or whatever.

As noted above, this discourse is restricted to local residents and the artist who produced the reconstruction. The field archaeologists, government officials, heritage managers, development officers, and museum curators involved with the monument do not seem to participate in it. It might be argued therefore that the conceptualisation of the cross-slab and reconstruction as living things is somehow grounded in a sense of intimacy. However, the intimacy implied in such symbolism is not necessarily based on physical proximity to, or regular physical contact with, the monument itself. Many local residents have not seen the upper portion of the cross-slab in Edinburgh, and until it was lifted, knowledge of the lower portion was restricted to what could be seen from the viewing platform at the site. Indeed, those most intimate with the new material in physical terms were the field archaeologists who excavated the lower portion and fragments; only one of whom referred to the reconstruction as a living thing, in making an observation about its meaning locally. Thus rather than physical intimacy, it can be argued that the symbolism surrounding the cross-slab and reconstruction as 'living things' involves a perception of social intimacy that needs to be understood in terms of the broader processes surrounding the construction of community and belonging in the village of Hilton.

In chapter 3 (pp.23-4) it was noted that membership in the community is conferred through regular social discourse 'placing people' in relationship to others, through kinship relationships, bi-names, friendships,

and so forth. Furthermore, the importance of this discourse is reinforced as a result of the fundamental role which it plays in defining the boundaries of Hilton as a community. Through such discourse on the relationships between people, 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are identified and thus the symbolic boundaries of the Hilton community are continuously drawn and redrawn. Within this framework it is knowledge about people, produced and reproduced through regular daily discourse, which is important rather than daily face-to-face contact or shared activities between particular individuals. If someone 'belongs' to you in a kinship sense, they belong whether or not you mix with them on a daily basis. It is the social intimacy implied by *knowing* them which is important.

Local residents' relationships with the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and the reconstruction very much fit into this model suggesting that they are seen not merely as living things, but living things that are *members* of the community. It is locally produced knowledge about the cross-slab and the reconstruction, mostly grounded in the kind of oral history and folklore discussed above (see pp.31-2), which confers it with the status of being a member of the community, a 'local'. Such knowledge extends across generations, as expressed by one older person in reference to a member of the generation before her:

the old captain here, he knew about the stone. We all of our generation, the stone was our stone. [...] Our generation new that it was adrift. We laughed at here lies John Duff and his three wives you know. We laughed at that and we knew it eh, for us it's part of ourselves and our heritage.
(Maggie)

'Knowing the stone', rather than regular physical contact or viewing, is central in producing the social intimacy necessary for it to be conceived of as a living member of the community. As one local resident, Agnes, put it when commenting on the relationship between 'the locals' and the cross-slabs in the area, '*people do come especially to see it, but locals don't need to go especially to see it, you know it's there [Shandwick], and that it's there [Hilton lower section], and that it's our stone*'. Indeed, even the cross-slab itself, when conceived as a living thing, is imagined to possess such knowledge. For instance in the imagined journey cited above (p.33) the stone is reported as saying '*there's the Port Culac [a local beach of considerable significance] you know, there's so and so's house you know, I'm going over to the park*'. This commentary emphasises the monument's status as a member of the community through the attribution of knowledge and also symbolically mirrors the daily journeys of residents punctuated by references to familiar landscapes, people's houses, and by extension

people's relationships. More importantly, the act of conducting such a commentary *on return*, whether the commentator is a carved stone monument, or a person who has emigrated, serves to symbolically reintegrate that object/person within the community and establish its/their authenticity as members of that community.

The names used to refer to the cross-slab and the reconstruction in local social discourse also highlight the ways in which they are conceived of as embedded in webs of relationships. People's names carry information about their kinship and other social kinds of relationships, whether in the form of family names or nicknames, and by extension naming of the cross-slab and reconstruction carries similar connotations. For instance, its full name, 'Hilton of Cadboll', is rarely used by residents of the seaboard, and the cross-slab is resolutely the 'Hilton Stone' not the 'Cadboll Stone'. The antagonism displayed towards the latter term, even to the point of modifying the road signage, belies the underlying symbolism of the implied kin relationship, as well as the traditional class-based tensions between fishing and farming communities, and specifically between the landowners and their estate and the village. Whereas, having witnessed the reconstruction being carved by a particular person, it is commonly referred to as 'Barry's Stone', implying a direct kinship relationship.

Beyond the explicit attribution of identity through naming there are also more subtle ways in which the language used in relation to the cross-slab and reconstruction sets up relationships of identity. For instance, 'belonging' is one of the key concepts in the identification of kinship relationships between people, particularly amongst the older generation who were born there and/or have spent most of their lives there. Thus the term regularly crops up in daily conversation, for instance, in an interview with Maggie: '*she belongs, they're both Sutherland in their name*', or '*it was the first of the Sutherlands that belong to my granny*'. Given such usage the extension of the concept of belonging to the cross-slab by local residents carries a connotation of kinship. For instance, to give a few examples:

it belongs to the village, it is Hilton and I suppose Hilton looks on it a different way than Shandwick would or anything, I mean anyway Shandwick's got their stone, they aren't really very interested in ours. (Clare)

I still think that the stone belongs to the people here. (Mary)

it's still not where it should be, it should be back up home where it belongs. (Janet)

... there'd be a ceilidh, there'd be pipe bands there'd be absolutely amazing, [...] that stone

belongs here and that's part of the village so that would be, that would be one of the happiest days of my life to see that coming back to the village.
(Duncan)

The use of the concept of belonging in relation to the stone therefore symbolically confers it with the status of kin, and illustrates that many of the references to the monument 'belonging to Hilton', or as 'our stone', should be seen in terms of its status as a member of the community rather than referring to possession in the sense of property (and see 6.1). Indeed the kinship metaphor is further reinforced in the case of the last quote where the cross-slab even becomes the focus of celebratory events and performances (a ceilidh and a pipe band), which typically accompany key rites of passage or events in a person's life, or the lives of their family and friends.

As discussed in chapter 3 (p.24), place of birth is a fundamental aspect of 'placing people' within a network of social relationships, and in particular negotiating degrees of 'belonging' within the villages. Being born in Hilton, or related to someone who was born in Hilton, is central to being accepted as an 'insider', an authentic member of the community. As might be expected, the role of birthplace in conferring insider status is also applied to the cross-slab and the reconstruction. Like people, the cross-slab belongs in Hilton because, as Christine puts it, it is 'like something that was born there', 'that's where it was created'. Furthermore, like people who emigrate or go away, the stone should come back to where it was born. In the case of the reconstruction, its significance is magnified by the fact that it was born in Hilton and not elsewhere as the following reflections by the sculptor himself illustrate:

I feel it's important that the carving of the Hilton stone [the reconstruction] it kind of grew, it was an organic process. When I was first doing it, it was meant to be a closed studio but you've been long enough in Hilton yourself to know that that's a physical impossibility so it became a visitor attraction I suppose but it's, it was an opportunity for people to feel a part of it, it wasn't someone coming from down south and just slapping up a piece of stone, they actually saw it being born as it were, and that made them closer to it, it made me closer to them and everyone was accepted then.

And:

If I was to do this down in Fife and bring it here it wouldn't mean a quarter of what it does to the village now. It's because they see this being, being born.

These reflections also highlight the importance of social intimacy discussed above (p.33). It is important

that people *witnessed* the reconstruction being carved in Hilton; the same effect would not have been achieved had it been carved in a closed studio. Likewise in the case of the cross-slab, it is the perception that it was born in Hilton, which is important in its conception as a living member of the community.

Many aspects of the symbolic construal of the cross-slab and reconstruction as living things, born in Hilton, and grounded in kin relations and thus 'belonging' or being 'of our blood', are further reinforced by the close association with the ground and soil. Being able to witness the lower portion of the cross-slab emerge from the ground during the excavation informed many people's sense of it having been 'born' there, irrespective of whether archaeologically speaking it is in its original position. The reconstruction, on the other hand, is conceived by some as having been born when it was erected in the ground. Furthermore, being in Hilton, and for some being in contact with the ground, was perceived to be essential in terms of the well-being and life-force of the cross-slab. For instance, one woman commenting on the lower portion after it had been lifted and placed in the shed interjected:

Christine: *But I think being in the ground gave it something [...] whatever was in the ground was good for it [...] I feel if it is back in the ground it'll breathe.*

SJ: *You think it can't breathe when it's out here?*

Christine: *It's just a cold piece of stone.*

In marked contrast to the discourse of heritage professionals, many, although by no means all, local residents perceived the earth or the ground as playing some kind of protective role in relationship to the stone, as well as attributing authenticity to the monument (see p.55 for further discussion).

The same discourses that symbolically construct the cross-slab as a living member of the community also, not surprisingly serve to define and legitimate people's responses to it. 'Belonging' to Hilton, being 'born and bred' there, is also associated with an instinctive 'feeling' for local things, for local issues, for the local landscape, and by extension for the Hilton Stone. Thus one woman, Màiri, who was born and brought up in the village recounted her experience of visiting the excavation to see the lower portion of the cross-slab *in situ*:

When I was up on the [excavation viewing] platform there on Saturday and looking down on it [...] and I was able to see it, and the fact (laughs) it's in there, it's in the earth and [...] you know you only see a wee bit of [it] and the carvings and whatever, I don't know, it just, it just makes you ask questions, it erm I don't know, you

actually feel for it, you have a feeling for it. I can't put it any other way, I can't.

Later in the interview Màiri tried to imagine how she would feel about the future of the lower portion of the stone if she were an outsider:

... if I moved away from here to another community and a similar thing was going on in another community, I would feel the injustice of it because I'd think it was morally wrong, but I honestly don't believe I would have the attachment. I wouldn't have it, I wouldn't have that same attachment spiritually, whatever you call it, I know I wouldn't have that, no I wouldn't. But I would certainly feel for that community that was losing something that was being taken away from them, yes I would. But no I don't think I would have the same emotion you know, no, no I don't think I would honestly.

The comments of another woman who defined herself as an 'incomer' further reinforce the distinction:

'... well what would they say [to me], this is not your home, you weren't born and bred here, you haven't got the same feeling you know for wee local things'.

As the last quote implies, the symbolic meanings generated by the cross-slab and the reconstruction in the context of local social discourse also serve to identify people who have an authentic relationship to the monument, and to create a hierarchy of authority in relationship to it. As discussed in chapter 3 (p.24), knowledge about the village in general, whether about its history, landscape, people's relationships and way of life, and so forth, is subject to a degree of social control. Certain people are conceived as having greater knowledge about, and feeling for, things than others, creating a hierarchy of knowledge usually established through the distinctions drawn between 'locals' and 'incomers', 'insiders' and 'outsiders'.

As might be expected this hierarchy of knowledge extends to the cross-slab and to a lesser extent to the reconstruction. Thus, being defined as an 'insider' or a 'local' (ideally Hilton-born, with multi-generational connections to the village) and therefore as someone who has 'feeling' for local issues and the Stone, is crucial in acquiring authority to legitimately speak about the cross-slab, and determine its destiny. For instance, reflecting on the removal of the cross-slab to Invergordon in the mid-19th century, Alan, who strongly identifies himself as a 'local', noted that:

Well I think what, what really came across [in the stories told within the village] was just the negativity of the fact that the people that moved the stone had no feelings for the stone themselves you know and they'd no feelings for the people in

the place, and I think that's the sort of feeling that came through is that, eh, it was something that was important to the place, but basically those that had the power basically had, it's like, it's like a lot of these people that come into the place can be interested and whatever, but well one thing about Hilton, eh, you can be here fifty years and if you're no' born here you're still an outsider.

And later in the interview Alan drew a further distinction between people who don't have this intrinsic feeling for the stone and those who do:

somebody that has got feeling for that stone wants to see the original stone standing there [next to the chapel], eh, that's the difference.

In commentaries about the future of the lower portion of the cross-slab, the distinction between 'locals' and 'incomers' becomes particularly significant where anyone diverges from this 'feeling' that it should stay in Hilton; a position construed as the only authentic position. So, for instance, one elderly woman, Peggy, noted:

I think everybody in Hilton [wants the lower portion to stay here], the only voice that I heard against it was a man who doesn't belong to, he lived in Hilton for quite a while, but he wasn't born and brought up in Hilton like we are.

And Alan forcefully states that:

It's no' going nowhere and the consensus as far as I can gather I think there's only two people in the whole village that are not of that consensus and both of them are incomers so they don't really count, eh, so the people in the village that are born and bred are one hundred percent, it's no' going anywhere.

In the context of such statements it may appear that the categories applied to people, for instance whether they are 'locals' or 'incomers', are fixed and deterministic, but in reality as argued in chapter 3 they are fluid and negotiable (see p.24). In the case of the Hilton cross-slab, people's relationships to it are not merely a passive reflection of their position within the community. On the contrary, the monument itself, once symbolically conceived of as a living member of the community becomes a medium for the reproduction and negotiation of relationships. For instance, 'incomers' who adopt or respect the socially constructed authentic position about what should happen to the lower portion of the cross-slab achieved a greater degree of 'insiderness' as a result of this stance. Those 'incomers' who played an active role in the informal local action group established at the time of the excavation became almost honorary locals and their position was subject to special comment, such as, 'she's only lived in the village for x number of years but

she feels for the stone as much as we do'. In contrast, the few local residents who felt that the lower portion should go to Edinburgh were cast as 'incomers', thus questioning their authority.

Within the village and the broader area the ongoing negotiation of these different positions caused temporary moments of friction. However, for the most part these positions and their relationship to the production of a hierarchy of knowledge were accepted, as those involved, broadly speaking, participate in a shared discourse. So, for instance, the few people who publicly stated that they would prefer to see the lower portion join the rest of the cross-slab in Edinburgh also often acknowledged that they were speaking from the position of outsiders. Other incomers would acknowledge the authenticity and authority of the core of the community, those born and bred there, by stating that if that's what the community wants then that's what should happen. In this manner the symbolic construal of the monument as a member of the community provides a means for the reproduction and transformation of people's relationships within the community, and through these processes a medium for the construction of the community as a whole through the reiteration of its boundaries.

As well as being conceived of as a living member of the community, the monument is also simultaneously an icon for the village as a whole. This iconicity is expressed metaphorically in the following statement by one of the local activists: *'that stone is the heart of Hilton'*. Here, rather than the monument itself being attributed organs deemed central to life, it is portrayed in its entirety as one of the bodily organs of the community, the heart. Another example of the way in which the cross-slab becomes conceived as representing the entire village community can be found in the statement *'it belongs to the village, it is Hilton'*. Thus, the cross-slab is both a member of the village community and a microcosm of it in its entirety; symbolism which is central to its role in producing a sense of place.

4.4 Making place/resisting displacement

Anthropologists have recently turned their attention to a reconsideration of the relationship between community and territory, and in particular to the ways in which in a world of deterritorialisation, people often deliberately and laboriously construct their places in particular locations. Gray (2002, 40) has argued that 'place-making and the resultant sense of place are an essential part of how people experience community' and that a sense of being in a community and a sense of its place emerge simultaneously and mutually constitute one another. Furthermore, it has also been observed by Gray (2002) and others (Gupta and

Ferguson 1997; Kempny 2002; Nadel-Klein 1991) that processes of displacement, decline of community institutions and blurring of community boundaries, often lead to a more explicit and urgent emphasis on the production of a sense of 'community as place'.

In light of this research it is perhaps not surprising that, given the way it mediates the symbolic construction of community, the Hilton of Cadboll monument also plays an integral role in the production of a sense of place. Its significance in this respect is expressed in the following observation by Niall, a resident of Hilton, but also actively involved in the Shandwick Trust, that if you take such monuments away:

you take part of the environment away from the village, from the town, from wherever it is when you put it somewhere else and that takes a lot of the character away from you know from the field, from the environment, from wherever it is, it just takes a huge amount of that character away.

A number of the heritage and museum professionals interviewed also emphasised the role of such monuments in place-making in one form or another as expressed by one museum curator, Robert:

one of their roles is as a real, an obvious prompt to the time depth that is embodied in the landscape, and for people I can see that is very, very important because that is back to, linking back to roots in this sense and a belonging and place and all the rest.

It can be argued that the various fragments of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and its reconstruction, act as mechanism, mediator and metaphor for an embodied relationship between people and place, between the Hilton community and Hilton the place (cf. Gray 2002, on the relationship between hill sheep and notions of community in the Scottish Borders). But how exactly do these processes work? As argued above, the concept of 'belonging' is important in the production of identity in the villages, and features prominently in everyday discourse. However, people 'belong' to places as well as to each other, thus conflating community and place. For instance, in reminiscing about her school days Peggy noted in passing that her school teacher *'belonged over to the Nigg area'* and later, in relation to a man who came up in conversation, she asked her friend *'did he belong to here, or did he belong to Portmahomack?'*. Thus, conceived of as a living member of the community, the monument can act as a mechanism for expressing the relationship between people and places through the discourse of belonging (and see pp.34-5 above). As with people, statements of belonging relating to the monument conflate community and place, as captured by one woman, Clare, when she states that: *'it belongs to the village, it is Hilton'*.

Furthermore, the monument not only 'belongs' to the place, it is simultaneously constitutive of place and therefore part of the fabric of people's existence in that particular place. Associations between the monument and other aspects of the landscape, such as rocks and sea, serve to place it as an integral component of the landscape. For instance, one interviewee, Màiri, commented on a scene she had witnessed along the coast one wild October day:

it was just you and this fantastic scene [...] the roar of the sea and the darkness and the black rocks [and I thought] this is almost like the birth of the earth. [...] I think people are, they were close to the sea, and they were close to the rocks.

She then went on later in the interview to observe that:

the Hilton stone, you almost feel attached to it, it's almost like being attached to rocks or the sea or it's always been here, it's part of the place and for generations, I don't know, it was a close community you know.

Such a conceptualisation of the monument, as one of the physical constituents making up the 'world', enables it to act as a metaphor for the relationship between people and place, referencing the closeness between people and the landscape, as well as the closeness of the community as a whole.

The process of emplacement, however, is clearly far from straightforward for the inhabitants of the village of Hilton, and the seaboard generally. Indeed, it can be argued that it is distinctly fraught and problematic. On the one hand, a strong emphasis is placed on the value of the particular place, as documented in chapter 3 (pp.17 and 22). During interviews and casual conversation many people stressed their attachment to Hilton and the seaboard villages generally, and also the strong hold that it has over people who have moved to other parts of the UK or emigrated abroad. Furthermore, people emphasised the advantages of living in Hilton and the seaboard villages generally, in terms of community spirit, openness, friendliness, the beauty of the landscape, and the slow pace of life. On the other hand, considerable concern was expressed about the marginality and decline of the seaboard and particularly Hilton. For instance, people emphasised the threat of population decline due to poor employment opportunities, and the lack of amenities and basic service provision (see p.22). There was also a palpable concern with geographic marginality on the seaboard. Finally, present concerns about decline and marginality are very much associated with historical processes: the decline of the various fishing industries, the loss of young men and women as a result of the two World Wars, and social memory of the Clearances with a focus on forced displacement of populations, loss of association with the land, and emigration.

In effect there is a tension underlying the process of place-making in Hilton in that it is at once both a place of deep significance in the eyes of people who live there and a marginal place of little significance in the eyes of others, at least as perceived those who live there. Furthermore, social discourse surrounding this tension is replete with processes of historical emplotment, whereby current concerns about decline and marginality, as well as the need to fight against them, are framed by past events and injustices. The Hilton of Cadboll monument occupies a particularly powerful position in terms of addressing these tensions, as it acts as both an icon of place and a metaphor of displacement in countless different ways and contexts.

In terms of displacement, the history of the cross-slab means that it is eminently suited to the task of metaphorically dealing with dislocation between people and place, the concomitant fragmentation of communities, and the pervasive sense of loss surrounding such processes. In the perception of many of the inhabitants the forcible displacement of the upper portion in the mid-19th century, and the recent excavation and possible further displacement of the lower portion of the cross-slab, represent the power of certain individuals and organisations, notably landowners and national institutions, to move things/people against their will. Furthermore, the fragmented nature of the monument can serve to provide an iconic image of the fragmentation of communities wrought by processes of displacement. The Highland Clearances provide the main focus for the historic emplotment of these processes of displacement and fragmentation and the frequent uninitiated references to them in conversations about the Hilton of Cadboll monument highlight its symbolic role in this respect. Such references take the form of a slippage between those with power and authority today and their perceived counterparts in the past, namely landlords and ministers. Or sometimes they even seem to involve a direct relationship between people's longing to reconstitute or reconstruct the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and their desire to destroy other monuments associated with the Clearances and their landlords. For instance one man noted in passing, 'Aye, we'll sort our stone and then we'll sort that stone', referring to the controversial statue of the 1st Duke of Sutherland on Beinn a'Bhragaidh overlooking Golspie.

Opposition to the recent excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab, and to its potential removal to Edinburgh, provide a means to symbolically resist the historic processes of displacement encompassed by the Clearances; processes which ironically contributed to the development of the villages in their modern form (see pp.17-19). Whilst such processes of resistance and the importance of 'fighting' for the stone will be

discussed in more depth in chapter 6, here it is important to explore the redemptive or restorative dimension to the role of the monument in place-making. This redemption or restoration can take many forms drawing upon either the cross-slab itself or the reconstruction.

One important aspect is the way in which both the original cross-slab and the reconstruction can act as a means of making Hilton 'whole', or provide it with the centre that some people feel it lacks. For instance, one elderly woman reflecting on the impact of the reconstruction on the people of Hilton and the other seaboard villages suggested that:

I think people in Hilton were proud although they hadn't got the original stone they had something at last that they could associate with the Hilton stone. Because they had nothing and all they could say was oh, it's in Edinburgh. But now they've got something, they can go and look at it and it is part of them. [...] I think Hilton became whole. Something was missing. So erm, at long last something came back to what was taken away.
(Christine)

The following conversation between Agnes and Beth, her daughter-in-law, highlights the way in which the newly discovered lower section of the cross-slab became a focal point and a source of pride:

Agnes: [...] when I actually saw it there [in the ground], I don't know it sort of stirs you and I think you don't want it to go, you want it to stay.

Beth: It's on our ground so ...

Agnes: We feel as if people are coming in and taking it away, the only thing that we have of any importance and we don't want it to go at all.

Beth: It's just the focal point of the village and, and ...

Agnes: We don't have anything else to be proud of.

Beth: It's brought the community together.

Agnes: Everybody's got a pride in it.

Beth: And it should, it should be left.

As implied by the reference to the importance of the lower portion in the above conversation, another aspect of place-making in relation to the monument relates to its potential to produce significance and value. So for instance, Màiri refers to the wealth and prestige of the past as a means of countering the perceived insignificance of Hilton and the Moray Firth seaboard today:

to think that that stone was carved possibly out there, twelve hundred years ago, it seemingly is extremely good quality carving, the depictions on the front, especially the lady on horseback is very rare and of its kind it seems to be very famous and a very good example and to think that it was carved in Hilton you know, an insignificant little corner of the Moray Firth, to think that that should be there and it must have, they must have been wealthy people who lived there at that time to have such a fine stone [...] I think most people living now can only remember abject, abject poverty here, the contrast is really quite amazing. But that does not mean to say that the community of Hilton is not worthy of having such a fine example of Pictish carving back where it belongs, hmm.

In drawing on the fame of the monument and the quality of the carving, this woman also highlights another important feature of the monument – the evident value that it is attributed within discourses of heritage and national identity. Here, perhaps, lies the most important intersection between the meaning of the monument in local contexts and its meaning in various 'professional' spheres of knowledge. Its national and international significance in heritage terms is appropriated in local contexts in the process of making Hilton, and the seaboard, a place of significance. Frequent references were made to the importance of the monument as evidenced by the public outcry in 1921 when it was sent to the British Museum, its prominent position within the Museum of Scotland, and equally by the attention surrounding the recent excavation of the lower section and the number of important organisations who attended the Public Meeting. As one speaker from the audience put it at the public meeting, 'Now you have brought all your big guns from Edinburgh, you must be very, very much wanting this fragment.'

Above all, however, the greatest potential of the monument in the process of place-making lies in the ways in which, as metaphor, it serves to provide an iconic image of community. Once such a metaphorical association has been established, the fate of the stone can stand for, or be integrally connected to, the fate of the community in social discourse surrounding the monument. For instance, one man, Alan, was particularly explicit about this relationship:

I look at the Hilton stone when it's in the Edinburgh museum it's just a dead headstone among other headstones, just a dead you know, whereas in Hilton it could be a living stone, hopefully as a focus of a living community again and also indirectly basically the catalyst for more development in the place.

And:

I feel that while that stone is in Edinburgh museum it's a dead stone but it could be made live [...] And when it's alive it'll be back in Hilton and the stump of the stone is a catalyst for this and it's you know, I feel our community in some ways is dying because, eh, you know we don't, as you say we don't have a post office or a shop or whatever, we don't have an awful lot of work about us, we don't have power, we don't have high tech industry, we don't have anything really in a way, but we do have a wee bit of community spirit and we do have an appreciation of what the past was.

The assertion that the cross-slab is a dead stone in the Museum in Edinburgh and a living thing in Hilton of course embodies political interests in the context of conflict about the ownership and appropriate location of its lower section (see chapter 6). It also ties in with a more widespread conception of museums as full of dead things, in contrast with open landscapes which are full of living things (see pp.58-60). However, it also highlights the integral relationship between the community and place. The monument is only alive in its own place, and the problems of decline, marginality and loss in Hilton, and the question of its future significance as a place, are metaphorically linked to the fate of the monument. The link with place was further emphasised by the same man when he stated elsewhere in the interview *'to see the stone in Edinburgh, saying it's the Hilton Stone, well that doesn't mean anything'* (Alan).

As a final word on the role of the stone in the important process of place-making, the following extract from an interview with Mary and her grown-up son, Ken, encapsulates many of the points made in this chapter and speaks for itself:

- SJ: *Why do you think that keeping the stone here is so important to people?*
- Mary: *Yes, yes it's important to the next generation as well.*
- SJ: *But why is that?*
- Mary: *Well it's part of your heritage and you, you feel well I think it belongs and erm it's like the fishing you know the salmon fishing, I've been in it all my life and there's, we had lots of times we had to fight for ...*
- Ken: *Och aye it's difficult.*
- Mary: *Erm, because there was hardly any fish.*
- Ken: *Life's no easy.*
- SJ: *Do you think it's the same with the stone? I was just asking why the Stone is so important to keep it.*
- Mary: *Yes, it's part of our*
- Ken: *Well it's part of the village really and let's look at it this way, if you take the stone away from the village the village is no different from any other village in the country but that's why if you put the stone there then that's Hilton stone and Hilton village.*
- SJ: *Hmm mmm. And Hilton becomes special?*
- Ken: *It is special then. I mean there's something special, it goes to prove without any shadow of doubt that there's been a population of people here at least for a good number of years.*
- Mary: *Yes.*

5 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE

The meanings and values attributed to monuments and landscapes by contemporary communities traditionally fall outside of heritage significance assessment methods which prioritise historic, aesthetic and scientific value (see pp.5-6). 'Social value' is a term that has come to be used in relation to the meanings and values attached to the historic environment by contemporary communities. For instance, it is used in the *Burra Charter* and the accompanying guidelines define it as follows:

Social value embraces the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group.

(ICOMOS Australia 1979 [1999], Article 1.2)

It is also used in the *Australian Heritage Commission Act* which defines it as value attributed by a community for reasons of religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations (Johnston 1994, 1). In the United States of America the concept of social value is less commonplace, but the meanings, values and associations attributed to historic sites and landscapes by 'traditionally associated' peoples, or communities neighbouring historic sites, are largely accommodated within the concepts of 'ethnographic resources' and 'ethnographic landscapes' (e.g. see Evans *et al.* 2001; Peña 2001). Social value has, however, featured prominently in the Getty Institute's research project on heritage and values (see de la Torre (ed.) 2002; and Mason 2002, 12; for background to the project, see <http://www.getty.edu/conservation.activities/values/index.html>).

5.1 Social value

One of the most extensive inquiries into the concept of social value in the context of cultural resource management and heritage significance assessment is provided by Johnston's (1994) discussion paper, *What is Social Value?*. In it, she places primary emphasis on 'attachment to place' and characterises social value as being about, 'collective attachment to places that embody meanings important to a community' (ibid., 10). She also provides an in-depth discussion of the kinds of social value that can be derived from places (ibid., 7). The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and to a lesser degree the chapel site, appear to reflect almost all

Johnston's different kinds of social value which can be summarised as follows. They are places that:

- **'Provide a sense of connection with the past'** (ibid.). For some people, mainly those born in Hilton and whose families have a long-term association with the north-east Highlands, the cross-slab provides a sense of connection based on notions of direct Pictish ancestry (see p.30). For others, it is more loosely-based on the feelings of connection and validation generated by the material traces of much earlier habitation of the same landscape. These different senses of connection with the past were evident even in the monument's 'absence', as manifested in requests for the repatriation of the monument and the reconstruction project (see p.12). However, as this project has shown, such feelings have been further stimulated and reinforced by the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab (see p.30 and p.39 for different examples).
- **'Tie the [more recent] past affectionately to the present'** (ibid.). The biography of the various fragments of the cross-slab and the chapel site are interwoven in various ways with personal and family histories, and embedded in the oral history and folklore of the villages (see pp.31-2). The reconstruction project initiated in the mid 1990s added further depth to the ways in which the monument is embedded in the historical experience and social memory of many of the residents.
- **'Provide an essential reference point in a community's identity or sense of itself'** (ibid.). To begin with, the cross-slab is distinctive and its association with the place serves to lift the village of Hilton 'above the crowd' (ibid.); a factor that is reinforced by the King's Sons folktale which highlights the three cross-slabs, Hilton, Shandwick and Nigg, along with their eponymous villages. At a deeper level, however, the symbolic construal of the cross-slab and the reconstruction as 'living things', born in Hilton, and grounded in relationships of 'belonging' provides a mechanism for the articulation of community boundaries and an iconic image of the community as a whole (see chapter 4, pp.34-7).
- **'Help give a disempowered group back its history'** (ibid.). The complex and fragmented history of the monument also provides an icon for

processes of dislocation and displacement. Great value is placed by local residents on the quality of life in the villages and the beauty of the landscape. But there is also considerable concern about marginality and decline of community, traced back in terms of social memory to the Highland Clearances, with a focus on forced displacement of populations, loss of association with land, and emigration. Resistance to the excavation and removal of the lower portion thus provides a means of symbolic resistance to broader processes of dislocation and a means of empowerment (see pp.38-40).

- **'Above all, provide a sense of 'collective attachment to place'** (ibid.). The place where the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab once stood, and where the reconstruction now stands, is clearly and unequivocally a focus of community attachment. However, the cross-slab and reconstruction are not merely the focus of community attachment, but more profoundly act as mechanism, mediator and metaphor for an embodied relationship between community and place (see pp.37-8).

Much of the social value of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab discussed above is derived from the meanings it is attributed in local contexts and the ways in which these meanings facilitate the production of a sense of place. As these meanings have been discussed in detail in chapter 4, further elaboration in this chapter is unnecessary. However, these meanings are reinforced through the long-term association and ongoing social activities relating to the cross-slab, and the place where it once stood. Johnston (1994, 7) notes that places that are accessible and which **'loom large in the daily comings and goings of life'** as well as **'places where people gather'** and engage in communal activities, often accrue social value.

Many aspects of the biography of the monument itself have of course formed a focus for communal activities or action. For instance, according to oral historical accounts, when the upper portion of the cross-slab was removed by Robert Bruce Aeneas Macleod in the mid-19th century, many of the men of the village marched behind it as far as Invergordon in protest. Attempts to locate the missing 'base' have also provided a focus for small-scale communal activity (see p.12). Most recently the campaign surrounding the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the cross-slab has provided a broader and more powerful source of communal experiences and mobilisations. A number of people passed comment on the ways in which this discovery and associated activities had brought people together, and some, who have settled in the village in the last ten years or so, noted how getting involved with the Stone had made them feel part of the village, made them feel like they 'belonged' (and p.36). The

following extract from an interview with Beth and her mother-in-law, Agnes, illustrates the way in which the excavation and the protest surrounding the lower portion has provided a focus for social interaction and shared experiences. It is also notable that they draw a direct parallel between the forms of social interaction surrounding the excavation and the kind of interaction that used to revolve around places and institutions which have been lost, such as the village shop:

Beth: *I thought there was a bit of life about the place [since they found the lower portion], there's absolutely nothing [in Hilton], but the last few weeks everybody seems to have....*

Agnes: [They're asking] *"Have you heard anything about the stone, or what's happening?"*

Beth: *That's good.*

SJ: *So that's a good impact you think, people talking to each other.*

Beth: *Hmm mmm. Community spirit.*

Agnes: *Because everybody used to chat in the morning in the shop and you'd say good morning and speak to people and that. You hardly see anybody [now that there is no shop]*

Agnes: *People are going out of their way to see each other to speak about the stone.*

Beth: *They're in a like mind you know.*

SJ: *Yeah. And I suppose it provides a focal point like a shop like that, because the shop's where you meet people.*

Agnes: *Absolutely.*

As well as providing a focus for discussion, the excavation also provided a site of communal activity. The viewing platform for visitors became a meeting place where people engaged in daily conversation amongst themselves, as well as with the archaeologists (see Figure 21). Furthermore, the daily site tours and the public meeting provided a focus of community activity and mobilisation.

The reconstruction project also provided a focus for social interaction and communal activity. The original studio (William Paterson and Son's salmon shed) clearly loomed large in many people's daily comings and goings, as they stopped to observe progress on the carving. It also served as a place where people met one another and engaged in conversation unrelated to the reconstruction itself. As the sculptor comments:

I remember being there for fourteen hours one Monday and carving about three inches of the stone and that's all I got done, but people, people would come in and I'd be alone and I'd be carving and they'll think oh well he must want to talk to



Figure 21: Visitors gathered at the viewing platform at the Hilton of Cadboll chapel excavations, 2001 (photograph, the author).

someone so they chat away and you know what it's like here it's just people, like, passing the time of day and they, they were fascinated by the process so I'd explain the process again, the history of the original stone [...] Sometimes they would actually, they'd come in and then they'd see their friends so they'd come in, they'd kind of talk to me for ten minutes and then it would just be banter and I'd be standing in the background.

Furthermore, the erection and official unveiling of the reconstruction are social events which many people reminisce about, and which have entered into social memory. The sculptor himself notes that he still feels quite emotional when he thinks about the village turnout at the unveiling:

It was great, the kind of things that I've got, there was quite an accomplished piper, Duncan McGillivray, he wrote a tune for the, for the opening. I did have a picture somewhere. We covered the stone up and the primary school kids they painted their faces with little tattoos and they'd written a Pictish Rap and things which they sang a couple of times. People made speeches, everyone cheered, we had whisky and then we went off to the primary school for a ceilidh.

A local resident reinforces this picture, reflecting on the day the reconstruction was erected near to the chapel site:

I mean we were there all day. All day, watching that stone. It was followed from the [shed], in the village, came past [the house], we followed behind it. Over to [the Park], they got it right to

put in, I mean it was again, it was something that I never ever thought I would be a part of.
(Christine)

The chapel site and surrounding area, referred to as the 'Park' by local residents (see Figure 16), are also imbued with social value, much of which is derived from their place in daily activities in the past and the present. Many people recounted how the villagers used this land in the past, and it appears it was indeed a place of great activity. It was a place where adults mended nets and boats and collected bait; a place where children played and went swimming; a place where people played football and golf. It is also a place associated with many shared stories about pots of gold hidden from the Vikings by those who lived in the Abbey, about fairy rings, and about who was buried beside the chapel. Many aspects of the significance of the place are expressed by one of the villagers, Màiri, in response to being asked about the Park and the land up the coast towards Rockfield (see Figure 16 for the locations of the places referred to):

It is called the Park yes and, eh, that's what I've known it all my life as erm, from when I was a child for the youngsters it was a playing area [...]. It was also access to the salmon fishing station over at Skaravak [...]. So you know, the tractors would go over there with the nets and whatever. It was an area that was regarded as almost, it doesn't, but belonging to the village [...]. As I was saying it was a play area for the children. We used to go over with rusty (laughs) golf clubs and hit the one ball you know, we used to do that. We used to do handstands off the sandy banks over there,

they're not so big now, [...] Erm it also gives access to the little bay Port Culac. [...] We used to go swimming there, picnicking there. It also allowed access for people who would gather the whelks there. [...] And in the summer time it's fine, there's actually something about it. I mean it's hard work but there's something about it, you can breathe, if you see a clump of whelks there it's like manna from heaven, it was absolutely brilliant you know and being on the rocks, the seaweed whatever. [...] It was part of your life anyway so you felt quite at home there.

And she continues:

I don't know, I just wrongly probably you just feel its part of the village, you really do, and I've also heard and seen people who were native to Hilton and went abroad or went down south or whatever, they would maybe come up back here for a holiday whatever, and they've got to go to Port Culac, they've got to go to Skaravak, they have you know, I've seen them do it, they've got to do that walk.

Finally, as can be seen from this extract, there is a palpable sense of the Park 'belonging' to Hilton, or being part of the village. Much of the sense of belonging and ownership is derived from repeated use; the Park holds a prominent place in people's individual and social memory, and although it is no longer the focus for football and golf, it is a place that looms large in the daily activity of taking the dog for a walk. However, some people substantiate this sense of ownership by referring to a rental between the Abbey and the people of Fishertown of Hilton dating to 1561-6: 'The Fishers' eight acres [the 'Park'], which never paid a penny, but given to them for the purpose of dwelling upon and for furnishing fish to the place and County upon the Countries expenses' (*Origines Parochiales Scotiae* 1855: 438; Macdonald and Gordon 1971, 18). It appears from many oral historical accounts that this arrangement was upheld informally by the Macleods of Cadboll. More recently, it has been the site of conflict over access and ownership at times when the gates have been locked; a subject which is referred to repeatedly in discussions relating to the Park. Undoubtedly this sense of historic association between the Park and the village of Hilton contributes to the social value attached to the chapel site, cross-slab and reconstruction, all of which are located in the Park (even if in people's imagination rather than in practice in the case of the cross-slab). Furthermore, the strong sense of the Park belonging to the village also reinforces the perception of the cross-slab belonging to Hilton.

On the basis of this characterisation and the analysis in the foregoing chapter it is clear that the Hilton of Cadboll cross slab, in its various manifestations (upper

portion, lower portion, reconstruction and small carved fragments), has immense social value, as do the places that they are intimately associated with (the chapel site and the Park). Some of this social value is based on the cross-slab's historic, aesthetic and national significance. However, much of it is derived from the specific local meanings and the social activities surrounding the monument, as well as the reconstruction, the chapel site and the Park. These meanings and activities largely lie beyond the domain of professionally-recognised significance and, in this respect, they conform very closely to Johnston's commentary on the nature of places with social value:

These places are usually community owned or publicly accessible or in some other ways 'appropriated' into people's daily lives. Such meanings are in addition to other values, such as the evidence of valued aspects of history or beauty [although they may intersect with them], and these meanings may not be obvious in the fabric of the place, and may not be apparent to the disinterested observer.

(Johnston 1994, 10, my emphasis)

5.2 Economic development, tourism and 'pride in place'

Another aspect of value, which traditionally has been neglected in heritage significance assessment, is the economic value of archaeological sites and monuments. Economic value is now increasingly addressed in a range of heritage management contexts, e.g. conservation plans and sustainable development strategies (English Heritage 1997; Historic Scotland 2000b; Historic Scotland 2002). However, there is still a tension between the development discourse surrounding archaeological monuments, which situates them as 'assets' or 'resources' within development plans, and the more conservation-oriented discourse prevalent within the domain of heritage management. Although those concerned with social and economic development at regional and local levels do refer to conservation needs, heritage managers tend to place much greater emphasis on the long-term well-being of the object. This is captured well by Peter who works for a national heritage agency in the following extract:

what I always say [...] is what should be paramount is the needs of the monument or the object itself, because how we deal with them will also change over the generations and, in the past, certainly in the late 19th century the early 20th century as I've said, people wanted to explore monuments and find out for them themselves. Nowadays it seems that people want more interpretation, [and] the government certainly wishes agencies to increase income from

properties in care, the Scottish Tourist Board want us to promote our properties, but another generation might turn round and say well this has gone too far, monuments are being damaged by people, too many visitors, [...] and we find we've got a very conservation minded generation who wants to do things differently. So in part what Historic Scotland and the national agencies should be doing is keeping their eye on and acknowledging the fact that what the public wants is going to change and it has to keep the object in the best condition to meet the changing needs of the public.

As evidenced by this quote, there is a tendency for national agencies responsible for the preservation of the historic environment to be primarily concerned with *future* needs and preservation for posterity, whilst local and regional development bodies and their representatives place far more emphasis on the *present* social and economic contexts of archaeological materials.

Heritage and tourism on the seaboard have been significant components of community social and economic development reports and initiatives since at least the early 1990s. The *Seaboard Community Profile* produced by the Seaboard Community Development Group in 1991 does not identify the Hilton of Cadboll chapel site amongst its list of 'community resources'. However, there is a clear recognition of the importance of tourism:

As part of the community-led push to develop a broader economic base for the Seaboard communities, considerable effort needs to be put into encouraging the currently almost untapped possibilities for tourism development.

(Seaboard Community Development Group 1991, 55)

Furthermore, the Tourism Development Officer for Ross and Cromarty District Council who was interviewed for the *Community Profile* identified the Shandwick and Nigg stones, along with the Hilton chapel, Well of Health and Kings Cave, as sites that could attract a proportion of visitors from Tain and the Glenmorangie Distillery over to the seaboard (ibid., 29).

By 1995, the Seaboard Environmental Action Plan, *SEA2000*, (Revill and Rowlands 1995) produced for the Seaboard Community Development Group, placed primary emphasis on tourism as the basis for social and economic development. *SEA2000* suggested that the development of tourism not only provides potential for the creation of new local jobs and direct economic benefits to other sectors of the economy, it also provides dispersed economic benefits which 'will help

to secure a self sustaining community, protecting existing community resources and employment' (ibid., 10). The preparation and initiation of an archaeological dig at the Hilton of Cadboll chapel site is identified as an aspect of Action Area 4, 'Interpretive Provision' (ibid., 18), and the production of a reconstruction of the Hilton of Cadboll Stone and its erection at the chapel site is identified as one aspect of Action Area 5, 'Recreation Provision' (ibid., 21).

The achievement of these latter initiatives, with the erection of the reconstruction in 2000 and a series of excavations between 1998 and 2001, is mostly detailed in the *SEA2000 Final Report* (Seaboard Initiative 2000). The Seaboard Initiative's (2001) current *Economic Development Plan* identifies the Pictish stones as part of the area's 'built assets' and outlines a plan for building on the area's Pictish heritage. The plan for exploiting these assets includes, amongst other things:

- completion of the 2000AD reconstruction by carving of the seaward face;
- creation of a 'local home for the recently discovered piece of the Hilton of Cadboll stone';
- continued marketing of the Pictish peninsula through the existing Pictish Trail and broader marketing with the possibility of 'branding' the Picts;
- development of 'a centre of excellence in stone carving and revival of traditional skills based on the Pictish heritage'.

A very similar list of objectives is outlined in a working paper produced by the Highland Council's Area Development Officer, *The Pictish Trail and Hilton of Cadboll Cross-Slab: a framework for action* in 2001.

The most recent Regional Council *Local Plan* for the period 2002-2012 also highlights the importance of heritage tourism for the seaboard villages. The erection of the Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction and the improved access to, and interpretation of, the chapel site, are both identified as key recent developments to be built upon. The *Local Plan* also singles out the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab as being of major importance:

The Hilton Stone is of major significance to the area – its heritage and its future development. It can be the catalyst to bring more tourists to the area and help regenerate the village. The Council is therefore keen to see the stone remain *in situ* in a high quality, purpose designed building, incorporating suitable interpretation.

(Highland Council 2002, 79)

It is clear then, that the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab (in its various forms) and the chapel site have become

increasingly prominent features of local and regional economic development initiatives focusing on cultural tourism during the last decade. However, the prevailing development discourse is as much about social development as it is about direct input into the economy. During the 1990s a number of studies of development stressed the importance of empowering people and communities and challenging institutional notions of disadvantage and deprivation (Barr 1996; Shucksmith *et al.* 1994). Recent Highland initiatives like The Highland Well-Being Alliance (made up of a consortium of government bodies and public sector agencies) reflect these concerns referring to 'capable, confident communities', 'prosperous communities' and 'communities rich in their heritage'. Within this evolving discourse, the relationship between development, tourism, and heritage is by no means seen in simple, direct economic terms such as numbers of jobs created. Instead, niche tourism focusing on natural and cultural heritage is situated within a much broader development framework where it is conceived as a means to achieving sustainable communities. As one local development agency officer, Eileen, put it:

Well, community and tourism and visitors are all inter-linked here. There's very little else you can develop quite quickly and the industrial and commercial opportunities come and go as they do in rural areas for various reasons, subsidies and so on. Whereas if you can create and stimulate a niche market [with regard to tourism], and also [if] you can involve the young people in the schools and locally in their own history, then you can start to really make progress.

And elsewhere she notes that:

hopefully there will be development of the niche marketing of the Picts which will, I don't think we'll ever be overrun by visitors, but if we can develop the niche market then that again will benefit all the sites and keep them sustainable I think basically, and the communities.

This ethos is also evident in local residents' discourse about development in the context of the seaboard villages generally, and particularly in relation to the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab (specifically the lower portion), reconstruction and chapel site. In interviews carried out for this project, some local residents did present the new Hilton of Cadboll finds and the reconstruction as a direct means of economic revitalisation in the face of decline. For instance, Julie who has lived on the seaboard for just over ten years noted that it would be nice if the entire stone was reunited at Hilton '*because I think it would be a tourist attraction and we need tourist attractions [...] because we are a depressed area in many ways, it would help*'. Another local resident, Stuart, argued that:

people have been so interested that they have taken the time and effort to come here. And there could be a lot more of that and you know tourism locally is not good and never has been. You know there's not a lot of industry around really with Nigg having closed down so it, it would be a help to the local economy if that piece of stone stayed. Erm I'm quite sure that that would be the case because it just creates so much interest that you know there would be money coming into the local economy just because it's there. Which is a, I think a very important factor in the calculation [about what should happen to the lower portion] because you know the local economy is not good and really needs every last bit of help it can get and there's no question if that part of the stone stayed it would be a help to the local economy.

However, such statements were few and far between and economic development was usually embedded in a cluster of issues relating to creating opportunities for social interaction, developing a sense of belonging, and bringing the community together (e.g. Seaboard Community Development Group 1991, 64 and 77).

Indeed, local perspectives on the development potential of the chapel site, the cross-slab and the reconstruction, for the most part have to be seen in terms of the iconic relationship between the monument and community explored in chapter 4. This iconic relationship enables the fate of the village and the monument to be tied together symbolically and suggests that a concern to encourage cultural tourism is as much a technique of place-making – i.e. making Hilton a place of significance – as it is a means of direct economic regeneration. Extracts from other interviews support such an interpretation. For instance, some people emphasise that tourism can be a mechanism for the development of pride within the community, as this interview extract illustrates:

Kathleen: *I suppose it's because I've a little bit of pride about the association with the stone, there's a bit of that, but if I was going to be perfectly honest I'm very keen that this area has a future as far as erm tourism and development is concerned. Our indigenous industries here were fishing and farming and we just, that's gone, that's gone.*

And later in the interview:

Kathleen: *I would love to see our local enterprise company as well investing in that because at the end of the day it is good for the community and it will generate, it generates work but it also generates a bit of pride again in your community.*

SJ: *Right. Can you tell me why you think that generates pride having people come to stay?*

Kathleen: *Well I yes, well the way I look at it is for instance, even the people that come and stay here, I'm, I'm very proud of this area and I want people to come back so you actually, you open your eyes more to your own area and I think that, that would happen in our own community for instance if people started saying right, OK, I'm going to do Bed and Breakfast, I have a spare room and I'm going to do Bed and Breakfast, they're going to get guests in, people come in and they'll say now I don't know where we'll go tomorrow and you start suggesting things to them and all of a sudden you're opening your own perception of your area.*

For others, however, the development of Pictish heritage in terms of tourism is much more concerned with the marginality of Hilton and the seaboard villages generally, and the desire to make them places of significance in the eyes of others. Such concerns clearly underpinned many people's preoccupation with the development of access to the site from the back 'Balmuchy' road, rather than through the village itself. For example one man argued that it would be better to have a car park in the Park itself with people driving through the village into it because *'It gives them a better idea of what it looks like in the village as well'*. He then went on to stress that the few people who do come to stay in the village on holiday recognise *'what a beautiful place you live in'*. Another example is provided by the following extract from an interview with Val who has lived in Hilton for ten years and wearily recounts that:

Since I've moved here they'll say, oh you don't live in Inverness anymore and I'll say no. Where do you live? [they ask] And I know before I tell people where I live they haven't a clue where I'm talking about. And they say, oh Hilton, oh yes. Well where is it? And then I have to tell them that it's so many miles before you come to Tain and they'll say, oh I can't think I've seen it, and I say no you have to take a detour off and go right down to the coast so that you can't go any further than

these three villages. Some people say they've been there before but a lot of people don't even know it exists. I mean that's, that's quite feasible you know and Inverness is a city now and look at all the people that have come, they've come from all over, half of them are English, I mean you mention a little place like this and they think well, you know, where would that be now, you know, whereas if for any reason this sort of took off or kicked off on a big scale, well people would know where Hilton was, oh that's that place where that dig's going on or that's where they've built that thing, oh maybe we'll go along there on a day off and then by that time hopefully the hall will have been finished along in Balintore and then they can go further along the road to Shandwick and see that stone.

The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, the reconstruction and the chapel site are clearly laden with social and economic value which can be detailed as they have been in this chapter. Nevertheless, in concluding this chapter, it must also be recognised that their social and economic value are inter-linked, and inseparable from the meanings attributed to the monument in local contexts. Above all, their social and economic value, as perceived in local contexts, are bound up in the production of a 'sense of place' – they provide both material and symbolic mechanisms for the maintenance of communities and their localities. So much so that Alan, a Hilton resident, even suggests that this 'sustainability' be represented on the as yet uncarved seaward side of the reconstruction in a manner that creates continuity between past and present:

The Pictish symbols are on the old side, the side that's there. Now the side that was chiselled off [the original], it had Christian symbols and whatever on it, and OK this village has lots of Christian heritage and whatever, so I would say definitely the cross on that, but instead of old Pictish symbols I would say let's go for some of the old style fishing boats, like the old style of fishing they did, like the old style rope, eh, and they fished by line, eh, which was sustainable which is maybe what fishing has got to go back to, eh, it was more in touch with the environment at the time, it was sustainable for years and years, that's what I would like.

6 CONTESTED TERRAIN: OWNERSHIP, CONSERVATION AND PRESENTATION

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the sources of conflict surrounding the monument. On the surface, debate surrounding the excavations of 2001, and specifically the future of the lower portion of the cross-slab, centred on specific issues such as Treasure Trove procedures and conservation strategies. However, these were merely a focus for negotiating more fundamental underlying areas of conflict, namely: ownership, power and control, conservation, and presentation.

This discussion will be concerned with identifying and understanding sources of conflict, rather than exploring the implications, which will be dealt with in chapter 7. To gain an understanding of the sources of conflict it will be necessary to reflect on the meanings and values surrounding the monument in local contexts (discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 5). It will also be important to examine how these meanings and values diverge from those embedded in the principles, structures and legal frameworks surrounding heritage conservation. As we shall see, whilst by no means discrete, these provide qualitatively different frameworks for engaging with the monument.

6.1 Ownership and belonging

In the conflict surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll monument the issue of ownership has loomed large. This was starkly evident at the public meeting where representatives of HS and NMS, along with other funding bodies and local politicians, gathered to discuss the future of the lower portion of the cross-slab with local residents. On the one hand, representatives of NMS and HS stressed the legal frameworks through which ownership might be determined (the guardianship agreement for the chapel site, the Treasure Trove system, or HS's own Finds Disposal Panel), and emphasised the likelihood of allocation to NMS. On the other hand, at the same meeting local residents in the audience stressed over and over again that *'its our stone'* and that they would fight to keep it. In response to arguments about the need to lift the Stone and take it to Edinburgh for conservation, members of the audience shouted that *'we are not giving up'* and *'its not going anywhere'* to cheers of agreement from others. Furthermore the local politician representing the village, Cllr Richard Durham, emphasised that *'moral ownership of the Hilton of Cadboll [Stone] still rests in Hilton'*, whether or not legal ownership lies

with NMS or HS.

The issue of ownership has consequently been regarded as the most significant hurdle in resolving the conflict. As one heritage manager, Robert, explained during the excavation, from his perspective, *'at the moment we can't move anywhere because actually the argument is just stuck on ownership'*. The complex legal issues surrounding ownership and the developments to date regarding the lower portion of the cross-slab are discussed in detail in chapter 2 (pp.15-16). However, the apparent dispute over ownership is far from a simple conflict over the possession of cultural property. 'Ownership' acts as an umbrella which embraces a diverse set of perceptions of, and relationships to, the monument. Part of the conflict is generated by varying degrees of misunderstanding about the nature of these perceptions and relationships and therefore it is these that will be examined here.

Interviews revealed that within the heritage sector, the issue of ownership is seen as an inevitable and unavoidable formality providing a means of designating those with responsibility and control over the conservation of historic remains. The legal dimension of ownership is regarded as significant in ensuring that responsibility and control are vested in appropriate organisations. Furthermore, for most heritage managers, 'appropriate organisations' are those with the relevant expertise, resources and longevity to ensure preservation of historic remains in perpetuity; in the case of nationally significant remains, a national body with authority vested in it by the state.

However, many of the professionals involved in the conflict surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll case also regarded ownership as a problematic or unhelpful concept. As one heritage manager, James, put it in response to local concern about ownership:

We seem to have this obsession with who owns it. I just think it's an irrelevance, erm in some respects an irrelevance, I mean I think the law of the land as it were helps to establish ownership erm but it's not really necessarily going to be terribly helpful.

And he went on to explain that:

Ownership of antiquities is different from erm the packet of Rice Crispies you bought this morning

which you now own or whatever, you know it's almost the wrong terminology, it's who's going to care for these things in perpetuity.

Another heritage professional, Donald, makes a similar point when reflecting on the Hilton of Cadboll situation: *'Ownership is an irrelevance ... "ownership" is really duty of care, you don't own an [historic] object you accept the duty of care of looking after it'*.

In light of these views, heritage professionals tend to see strong ownership claims stemming from a specific community, whether that be a local community or an academic community, as inappropriate. For instance, one interviewee argued that *'issues of ownership are always rather kind of dubious at the best of times, really I mean [...] how can anything carved in the 9th century be owned by anybody else?'* (Scott). Another reflected that *'I suppose it's old fashioned but it's a sense of stewardship you know, these things don't actually belong to you and me, they are almost timeless in that respect'* (James). Yet another summed up by stating that *'it belongs really to humanity in general and it belongs to, you know, a particular location'* (Mark). In stressing the universality of heritage such arguments are in keeping with heritage conservation ideals that have their origins in the 19th century (when private ownership started to be questioned in favour of state ownership) and which are now prominent in numerous international heritage charters (see Bell 1997). However, as the *Burra* (ICOMOS Australia 1979 [1999]) and *New Zealand* (ICOMOS New Zealand 1992) Charters recognise, such ideals often fail to account for the diversity of meanings and values surrounding historic remains.

It is striking that although strong ownership claims are attributed to the local community, actual use of the concept of ownership is almost entirely restricted to the heritage professionals involved, where it forms part of their technical vocabulary. All but one of the professionals interviewed used the concept of ownership, often extensively, in the manner discussed above. In contrast, analysis of interviews with local residents reveals that only two out of thirty used the concept with respect to the monument, and then they were only fleeting references. Of course, local residents do discuss the monument in ways that can imply a sense of ownership. For instance many claim that *'it belongs to the village'*, *'that stone belongs here'*, and regularly refer to the monument as *'our stone'*. However, far from being expressions of ownership in the sense of private property (which can be bought, sold, lent, given away), it can be argued that such statements must be understood in terms of the broader language of kinship and belonging that describes the relationship between the monument and the community.

In chapter 4 (pp.34-5), it was shown that, in local contexts, the monument is symbolically conceived as a living member of the community; something which was born in Hilton and had grown there, and something which possesses a 'soul', 'charisma', 'feelings' and 'rights'. As is the case with people, the creation, or birth, of the Stone in Hilton is particularly important in establishing its position as an authentic member of the community. Furthermore, as with people, its relationship to other members of the community is defined in terms of 'belonging'. For instance, people refer to relatives 'belonging' to them, or being one of 'ours', just as they refer to the monument as being 'our stone' or 'belonging to us'. Thus, given the symbolic status of the monument as a living member of the community, it is clear that claims such as *'the Stone belongs to us'* are primarily an expression of a social relationship, rather than one of property.

In light of these insights, the conflict surrounding 'ownership' of the monument cannot be explained simply as a fixation with property. Nor for that matter can it merely be seen as an apparent failure by local residents to grasp the implications of long-term care. Rather it is based on the difficulty of reconciling external ownership of the monument with its inalienable relationship to the community; a relationship which is symbolically defined in terms of birth and soil and kinship. No matter how much emphasis is placed upon the 'irrelevance' of ownership by heritage managers (see above), the allocation of the lower portion of the cross-slab to a national organisation based in Edinburgh still symbolically threatens the intimate relationship between the monument and the community. A grasp of the symbolic meanings surrounding the monument in local contexts is therefore essential to understanding the tenacious resistance to the idea of allocating ownership of the lower portion to NMS.

An understanding of local contexts also helps to explain why attempts by heritage managers to promote a distinction between ownership of the monument and the place where it will be displayed have been less than successful to date. The concept of belonging is not only important in expressing the relationship between members of the community, but also in terms of expressing the relationship between community and place. People are said to 'belong' to places just as they 'belong' to each other, and it is clear that the same relationships of belonging are applied to the monument; it belongs to 'Hilton the community' as well as to 'Hilton the place' (see pp.37-8). However, there is an integral relationship between belonging to a community and belonging to a place. People belong to a place by virtue of belonging to the community that embodies that place. The idea that the monument can be owned by (i.e. belong to) a national organisation based in Edinburgh (i.e. a distant community) and still

maintain an authentic relationship with Hilton as a place is thus problematic. To some extent therefore, the idea of external ownership is resisted so as not to disrupt the role of the monument as a powerful symbol of the relationship between community and place.

6.2 Ownership, power and control

Another important dimension of the conflict surrounding ownership is the power and control that that it confers. As one heritage manager, James, put it, '*Ownership's shorthand for who's controlling it erm and who as it were is going to decide whether it goes to A or to B or to C or to D.*', and he later went on to explain that :

Well it's because they don't have complete control over it erm because there's still somebody somewhere that is going to say I'm sorry you've had that object for a hundred years but we want it back.

Thus, the desire to be identified as 'owners' is rightly interpreted as a desire to maintain control over the future treatment of the monument, or in this case the lower part of it. The acceptance of national ownership-cum-guardianship of historic remains depends upon a high level of trust, which was palpably lacking in the Hilton of Cadboll case. For instance, at the public meeting members of the audience shouted warnings to others that '*if they [Edinburgh institutions] take the stone you'll never see it again*'. Such concerns were also echoed in interviews, as illustrated in the following extract of an exchange between Agnes and her daughter-in-law:

Agnes: *Well I would, I would really like it to stay, yes. If it does go off even to get treated will we get it back? If they treat it here and keep it here until we get something erected over there to protect it, I don't want it to go off at all.*

SJ: *Yeah.*

Beth: *No, I feel the same way.*

Agnes: *I don't think we'll get it back.*

The lack of trust in national heritage bodies evident in the Hilton of Cadboll case relates to a more widespread mistrust of centralised governmental organisations in rural areas, and a polarisation between centre and periphery. However, in rural Highlands Scotland this mistrust is inseparable from the historical events of the last three centuries. In chapters 3, 4 and 5 it was noted that a strong sense of pride in the seaboard villages is also coupled with feelings of powerlessness, disadvantage and loss, which are firmly rooted in people's perception of their social and economic history. In particular, social memory of the Clearances provides a powerful symbol of the betrayal of ordinary

people by people and organisations in power. The specific history of the monument also resonates with broader feelings of powerlessness and loss. The removal of the upper portion of the Hilton of Cadboll Stone to Invergordon by the landowner, and its subsequent donation first to the British Museum and then to the National Museum of Antiquities in 1921, is seen as a further example of the power of land owners and the State, as well as their failure to consult local communities.

The actors and events surrounding the recent excavations are to some extent read in terms of these historical events, and the representatives of national agencies are conflated with the landowners and farmers of the past, thus undermining any element of trust. Furthermore, the centralising tendencies of national heritage organisations, and the inaccessibility of the knowledge and systems which govern their decision making, further exaggerates the pervasive lack of trust. Thus in the experience of one heritage manager, Mark, who works in the Highlands:

A sense of powerlessness is a deep seated thing in the Highlands amongst communities [...] It goes right back a long, long way [...], it's seen in all this land reform legislation that's going through at the moment, this sense that communities themselves want to have control over their own lives in a way that they don't feel they had in the past [...] the crofters getting control of their estate, the Isle of Eigg people, it's all connected with that. [...] And it's a very Highland thing you know and it may not be all that clear to people in the central belt or in England or whatever that it's something that is very deep into the Highlands that has to be taken on board so the same thing applies with people wanting to have control over their estate, over their land, erm and over their archaeological heritage eventually.

Conflict over ownership is also a product of friction between different modes of negotiating knowledge and authority in relation to the monument. The same discourses that symbolically construct the cross-slab as a living thing within the seaboard villages (particularly Hilton), also define and legitimate people's authority in relation to it. 'Belonging' to Hilton is associated with the possession of an instinctive 'feeling' for local things. However, the depth of such 'feeling' is negotiated in relation to degrees of belonging, which produces a hierarchy of knowledge and authority. This hierarchy of knowledge extends to the cross-slab. Being defined as a local, particularly as Hilton-born, with multi-generational connections to the village and the biography of the cross-slab, is crucial to having the authority to speak about the monument and determine its welfare and destiny (see pp.36-7 for interview extracts). However, as the distinction between 'locals'

and 'incomers' is flexible, and varies in different situations, incomers could negotiate degrees of authority and thus greater degrees of 'insiderness' through their actions in relation to the cross-slab.

Contemporary heritage legislation, which attributes knowledge and authority to representatives of national or regional heritage organisations, inevitably comes into conflict with such local protocols of access and authority. The authority vested in professionals from outside of the community, who by definition cannot have the same 'feeling' for the Stone and who cannot be located within local sets of social relationships, creates considerable negativity and tension within the local community. This is reflected in the interview extracts in chapter 4 (p.36) and also in the following statements by local activists:

You know Historic Scotland as far as I'm concerned is a faceless quango. I mean I would like to basically know the guys. I wouldn't mind a list of them so I know what they are, who they are, where they're from, eh, that are making decisions about our stone. (Alan)

It feels like the big guns have arrived and like you're going to lose control. [...] You don't feel like you're dealing with people, you feel like you're dealing with faceless institutions. (Janet)

There is a desire to 'place' the individuals representing these organisations and to incorporate them within a body of local knowledge. This process, however, is dependent on certain forms of social interaction. As the representatives of specific organisations, individual heritage managers were perceived to be automata, mechanistically putting forward the views of the State in formal contexts such as meetings. As such they often found themselves being talked about as if they were not physically present. However, there was a notable shift in behaviour once local residents had met individual heritage managers outside of meetings. The kinds of interaction generated in these contexts – passing round a hip flask, finding out where people are from, talk of meeting each others' spouses, and subsequently attributing friendly nicknames – clearly served as a mechanism for local residents to 'place' the outsiders involved and locate them on the outer edges of a web of local social relationships.

6.3 Resisting heritage institutions of the State: some specific 'sites' of conflict

The power and authority vested in state heritage institutions is most obviously contested by challenging, or directly engaging with, the associated heritage legislation, procedures, and structures. In the dispute surrounding the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll monument in the summer of 2001, much of the explicit

controversy surrounded three areas: legal ownership and guardianship of the chapel site; the application of Treasure Trove; and the membership and authority of the various action groups, committees and meetings relating to the cross-slab. In all three cases local conceptions of the relationships between the monument, the community and 'place' were mobilised in attempting to resist and challenge heritage organisations and the State.

Many local residents feel a strong sense of ownership over the land where the chapel is located, known locally as the 'Park'. Attempts by the landowner to restrict rights of access to the Park in the past have been a source of considerable conflict. Indeed, legal ownership of the land by the Cadboll estate, and subsequently the farm, is privately contested usually in relation to a 16th-century reference to the land being given rent-free to the village by the Abbott of Fearn Abby (see p.44). It is not surprising, given this background that the legality of the guardianship agreement between the landowner and HS in respect to the chapel site became a particular focus of dispute. It was questioned at the public meeting when local activists placed pressure on HS to explain the nature of the agreement and drew in the current land owners, Glenmorangie Distilleries. The publicly expressed desire of Glenmorangie to see a local solution to the display of the lower portion of the cross-slab, and their eventual sale of the guardianship land to the Historic Hilton Trust, has clearly been important in legally endorsing the perceived link between community and place (see Glenmorangie 2002, 3; *Ross Shire Journal*, 5/4/02, 9). The formal transfer of ownership, involving the Ceremony of Sasines, also symbolically reinforced this link with the transfer of a piece of the earth from a representative of Glenmorangie to the Chairman of the Historic Hilton Trust.

The Treasure Trove and Finds Disposal systems (Treasure Trove Advisory Panel and HS's Finds Disposal Panel) also became an explicit focus of local concern and resistance during and immediately following the excavations of 2001. These mechanisms had been identified as the key apparatus determining the future of the lower portion of the cross-slab in the excavation leaflet produced by the four funding bodies (GUARD 2001). The Finds Disposal system and Treasure Trove were seen as elusive and shadowy forms of authority lying beyond people's experience and apparently without a specific location, or at least of unknown location ('*these authorities that exist somewhere*'). However, despite frustration at the perceived lack of information (on the web for instance) and seemingly inaccessible nature of the individuals and organisations involved, the local action group responded by directly challenging the applicability of these mechanisms.

The main strategy adopted was to emphasise the monumental character of the cross-slab as opposed to a portable artefact; a distinction which is subject to much debate amongst heritage professionals themselves (see Foster 2001). For instance in the leaflet produced by one of the key local activists it was stressed that: *'While the stump remains in the ground it is part of a scheduled monument. If the stump is raised from the ground, it becomes a portable artefact and is treated as Treasure Trove'* (Macdonald 2001). At the public meeting this distinction was further enforced by the following debate between members of the audience (MoA's) and representatives of HS (Sally Foster) and NMS (David Clarke):

MoA1: *As long as the stone is standing in the ground, what's the status if it stays there rather than....?*

DG (Chair): *So who owns the stone in the ground?*

MoA2: *No, no it's sitting there as part of an ancient monument and as long as it's standing in the ground there and it continues there ... it's when it's moved that [its] status changes.*

SF: *So your question is whether...?*

MoA1: *When it's standing in the ground nobody, Historic Scotland or the museum or nobody else, can bid for it or in any way endanger it?*

SF: *So your question is when do the Treasure Trove procedures knock in?*

MoA1: *Yeah, Yeah*
[...]

DC: *It kicks in when the object is discovered I'm afraid, not when you actually pull it out of the ground. The simple fact is I can use an analogy. If you find a single gold object OK that is actually one of a collection of gold objects, OK, the other objects are still in the ground but they're still Treasure Trove. As soon as you start discovering something it's Treasure Trove. We're down the line on that legally as far as we're, as far as I'm concerned, that is the position you know. Whether it's right or wrong is another matter.*

MoA1: *OK. The other side of that coin is that it's an ancient monument in what we now believe to be its original location or very nearly to that, what is anybody's right to start moving that.*

DC: *Well what gives anybody the right, the fact is that we have started to move it in the*

sense of move the earth around it and recover it. It's not about, it's not strictly about moving it, what I'm saying is that as soon as you discover it it's Treasure Trove, you know, whether it's physically there or whether it's down the road in Edinburgh or over there in the village is irrelevant, it's Treasure Trove.

MoA1: *That was not my understanding.*

In this context, the ground or soil is seen as providing protection from the Treasure Trove process as expressed by one member of the audience in the above debate: *'When it's standing in the ground nobody, Historic Scotland or the museum or nobody else can bid for it or in any way endanger it'*. The protective nature of soil was likewise expressed in numerous interviews with local residents where it also pertained to the well-being of the monument (see preservation below; also p.55). Whatever the legality of the situation, the important point is that, again, the relationship with place, here manifested through contact with the ground or soil, is mobilised in trying to resist state frameworks for allocating archaeological finds.

The third focal point for explicit controversy surrounding the excavation and ensuing activity was membership of the various action groups and committees, and the relative authority of the different groups. The makeup of local action groups and committees was negotiated on the basis of broader modes of differentiation within the seaboard villages (for background see 3.4). Of particular importance was the distinction between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', which was drawn along numerous lines.

The main local group concerned with the remains of the original cross-slab was initially a loosely formed action group, which rapidly constituted itself as the Historic Hilton Committee and eventually became the Historic Hilton Trust (registered in December 2001). Historic Hilton was set up in response to a widespread perception that the Replica Committee, which oversees the production and funding of the reconstruction, did not provide an adequate means of pursuing the villagers' interests regarding the remains of the original. In part, the deliberate distinction between the two Committees was an attempt to separate the potentially conflicting interests of the two projects in opposition to the direct linkage made in the excavation leaflet (GUARD 2001). However, Historic Hilton was also set up in response to a widespread perception that the Replica Committee is dominated by 'outsiders'. It was regularly emphasised that most of the Replica Committee's members lived outside of Hilton and the other seaboard villages, and that they were mostly farmers, councillors and professionals. The

authenticity of the Replica Committee in terms of its ability to represent the interests of the community was therefore questioned.

The makeup of the Historic Hilton Committee, and later the Trust, was of course also subject to negotiation and contestation as to its authenticity and authority. The main unstated criterion for membership of the Committee, with a couple of exceptions, was residence in Hilton. 'Incomers' with 'feeling' for the Stone and the issues surrounding it were incorporated, but at the same time the authenticity of the Committee was established in relation to a number of core older members, whose biographies could be linked to Hilton and the cross-slab over at least two to three generations. Any attempts to simply integrate the Replica and Historic Hilton Committees were strongly resisted by the latter, as were attempts to incorporate more professionals and landowners within the makeup of the Historic Hilton Trust. Nevertheless, some of the members of the Replica Committee also became Trustees of Historic Hilton, and most notably the local Councillor is Chairman of both. Furthermore, the Trustees appointed to the Historic Hilton Trust still represented a shift towards a more middle-aged, male, and professional-based spectrum in respect to the former parent 'Committee', or action group, which had a greater proportion of women and elderly members.

The relationship between these local committees and other regional/national committees and organisations became fraught when their relative authority was in question. From the perspective of most local residents the Hilton Committee, and subsequently the Historic Hilton Trust, was the authentic body representing the 'community' in relation to the original Hilton Stone and as such should be attributed the greatest authority in that respect. However, representatives of national and regional heritage agencies, often unaware of local protocols and emerging groups, tended to communicate through local professional gatekeepers, or the Replica Committee, rather than Historic Hilton. Furthermore, it was also clear that higher authority was vested in national committees and organisations than in Historic Hilton (often leading to claims such as '*people who it matters most to are not really being sufficiently informed*'). Local residents and Committee members were continuously frustrated by their inability to access or influence national committees and their representatives, such as the Q<R or the Treasure Trove Advisory Panel.

Members of Historic Hilton struggled to negotiate what they felt to be due recognition and authority through establishment of committee structures and eventually a charitable trust, as well as through direct communication with key representatives in national agencies. In many cases this consisted of signalling

their existence and attempting to assert their rights, if necessary by-passing heritage agencies, for instance by registering their ownership of the lower portion of the cross-slab with the Procurator Fiscal in Tain. Nevertheless, the discrepancy between modes of attributing authority within the community and the systems of communication and consultation used by heritage managers clearly did much to accentuate the conflict surrounding the excavation; the implications of which will be discussed in chapter 7 (see 7.3.1 (vi) and 7.3.3 (iii)).

A final point of significance regarding differentiation between committees and organisations involved in the conflict is that, once again, from a local perspective it is impossible to disentangle the social from the geographic. For instance, the distinction between the Replica Committee and Historic Hilton was, broadly speaking, drawn on both geographic and class grounds. Local residents, and particularly members of Historic Hilton, regard the Replica Committee as mainly made up of professionals, councillors and landowners. Particularly in relation to the latter two groups this characterisation reproduces a traditional distinction between 'farmers' and 'fishers', which is mapped spatially in terms of those who live above the raised beach and those who live below it respectively (see p.23).

The Committees thus represent microcosms not merely of the social groups they represent, but also of the ways in which those social groups are mapped spatially. The integral relationship between community and place is symbolically reinforced by the locations where the Committees meet. In the summer of 2001, the Replica Committee met 'above the cliff', at Glenmorangie House (formerly Cadboll House), now owned by the Distillery, but still perceived locally as the vestiges of the Cadboll Estate. Historic Hilton met 'below the cliff' at Community House or the Balintore Hotel and specifically resisted any suggestions that they too should meet at Glenmorangie House.

The same processes are echoed in relation to national committees and organisations which are seen as integrally tied to place, to such an extent that place can be used as a metaphor for state institutions and the power they represent, as in the phrase 'Edinburgh's coming', which was frequently used prior to and during the excavations in 2001. The continual emphasis, in local contexts, on 'placing' people, organisations and things, illustrates the great significance which is vested in relationships between people and place, and which is symbolically manifested in the relationship between the cross-slab and Hilton as a place (see the sections on conservation and particularly presentation, p.56-60, below).

6.4 Conservation

Another contested aspect of the debate surrounding the lower portion of the cross-slab was that of its immediate and long-term conservation needs. Although heritage professionals emphasised the difficulties of presenting the lower portion *in situ* (given that archaeological deposits, including human remains would have to remain exposed), it was conservation demands which were the main focus of debate about the need to lift the lower portion. There was little disagreement about potential sources of harm and the importance of looking after the remains, 'repairing' them and giving them 'treatment'. However, the location of conservation and the necessity of lifting the lower portion, as well as the expertise justifying such arguments, was subject to considerable dispute.

The interviews revealed considerable overlap between local residents' conceptions of sources of harm to the lower portion of the cross-slab and those of heritage professionals. Local residents often identified weather or 'the elements' as a general threat, referring variously to ice or frost, water, wind, sand and salt in the wind, and cold. They also identified human sources of threat, both malicious and non-malicious, including graffiti and physical vandalism, touching, rubbings, glass cases, travel, and conservation itself. Almost all of these factors were also raised by heritage and museum professionals with the exception of wind-blown sand. One area where there was significant divergence of opinion regarding threat concerned the effects of the ground or soil. During the excavation and at the public meeting, heritage and museum professionals emphasised that leaving the lower portion in the ground would be one of the greatest sources of threat to it. However, local residents often stressed that the soil was good for the well-being of the monument. They also expressed concern about it being unearthed. For instance, local resident, Duncan, noted that

the ground around it has been compressed lets say for over a thousand years [and] ice probably hasn't got near it. I think now [that it has been uncovered] ice and water will probably penetrate the Stone and get all around about the Stone.

The principle of preservation in perpetuity for future generations lies at the core of conservation ethics and was reiterated by most of the heritage professionals associated with the Hilton of Cadboll case. It was also shared to some degree by Hilton residents who talked about taking necessary if unpopular steps, for instance raising it from the ground, to preserve the Stone for future generations. However, emphasis was also placed on the more immediate responsibility that they felt to generations immediately before and after them. Furthermore, for local residents, the conception of the

monument as a living member of the community adds a further important dimension to the impetus to care for the Stone. For instance, one man stated that '*the elements are killing the stone*' (Duncan) and that he would be happy to accept the use of a glass case to protect it. Others suggested that the lower portion of the cross-slab would in some way die once removed from the ground, or if placed in a museum. It would become '*just a cold piece of stone*' (i.e. lifeless), but in the ground '*it can breathe*' (Christine) and in some sense is alive.

As might be expected this latter issue of the Stone as a living thing has important implications for people's perceptions of who is least likely to harm it and best placed to care for it. For instance, in discussing human sources of threat, local residents emphasised that no-one 'from here' would vandalise the Stone or the reconstruction. For instance, one woman, Jo, noted in relation to the latter that:

the children are so protective of that stone [...] they haven't sprayed anything on it you know they haven't destroyed anything of that stone. And I don't think we're going to have any problems apart from some idiot that comes in from well outside the place and I don't think ... erm, I think that would be very noticeable because it is this village and I think people would recognise a stranger.

Clearly it is 'outsiders' who are perceived as a source of threat in this sense. However, the physical location of the reconstruction next to the village is also seen as a source of protection, as local residents have a strong sense of guardianship over it and would recognise 'strangers'. In respect to heritage and museum professionals, local residents do defer to their expertise regarding conservation. However, they also wish to maintain overall responsibility for the well-being of the monument with such professionals helping them to look after the Stone. Furthermore, when acting without the approval of the community, heritage and museum professionals, like other outsiders, are even perceived as a source of harm, particularly with relation to transporting the monument and earlier techniques of conservation. As with ownership, having 'feeling' for the stone is significant here, as is knowing the people who will undertake its conservation.

The greatest conflict surrounding preservation was not, however, regarding its desirability, but about the implications of specific conservation strategies. During the excavation, conservation was perceived as a political weapon as the following two extracts capture well:

If I was in Edinburgh's position then I'd be doing exactly what they're doing, I would be giving Historic Scotland a wee bit of a hand to get doon

there and basically I would be digging up that site and I would be saying to them naw, this is definitely no' where the stone has stood and the stone is definitely in poor condition and it definitely needs to go to Edinburgh to get conserved and once we get it doon there it's definitely no' coming back. (Alan)

Well personally I think the stone obviously has to stay in the village. It has to stay, we, well we would really like it to stay in the ground but we, we've gone through all the politics of it having to come up to be conserved, and, you know, this sort of thing, but basically it shouldn't really leave the village, it doesn't require to leave the village, that has been proven. (Val)

Furthermore, the inaccessible nature of expert knowledge and the attachment of conservators to specific Edinburgh organisations also served to fuel people's suspicions and initiate demands for independent advice.

I'm obviously not having the information. I would like to see a report from say maybe not just one conservator, but more than one, who look at things independently just to see whether they are stating categorically that no way could that [...] be conserved there, nothing can be done to help it there, it has to be moved before we can do anything, or whether they might come and say well we could do something, we could do such and such a thing, we could arrange somehow to protect it in a certain way it just depends I would think how keen the conservator is for it to stay put. (Janet)

It is clear from the heritage literature (Foster 2001; Muir 1998), and from the interviews with heritage and museum professionals concerned with this case, that there are a wide range of possible strategies which could be adopted to address the *physical* conservation of lower portion and fragments. However, these remain elusive from the perspective of local residents and formal mechanisms for weighing up these different strategies in relation to social value are weak at present (see chapter 7).

6.5 Place of presentation

The importance of the cross-slab in symbolising the relationship between community and place has been discussed in detail in chapter 4 (pp.37-40). It was shown that both the newly discovered lower portion and the reconstruction act as mechanisms or metaphors for the expression of an embodied relationship between people and place. At the same time the fragmented biography of the cross-slab and the removal of the upper portion means that the monument provides an icon of displacement, and a focus for resisting displacement. It is not necessary to reiterate this

discussion in detail here, nor to discuss the social and economic value of having some kind of presence of the monument in the locality of Hilton, which was addressed in chapter 5. Rather, this section will concentrate on the ways in which the symbolic relationship between the monument and a particular place informs debate about appropriate forms of presentation (for a discussion of related issues concerning medieval sculpted stone more generally see Jeffrey 2003, 213-220).

Given this overriding concern with place and displacement it is not surprising that, with a few exceptions, most local residents would like to see the lower portion remain in Hilton, and if possible the upper portion returned. For local residents, and indeed for some heritage and museum professionals, the authenticity of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, and others like it, is powerfully bound up with a sense of place. There is a strong feeling that the monument was intended for a particular place when it was made, and that's where it belongs, that's its 'home'. For instance, Janet, who moved to the seaboard in the last ten years, argued that:

if there is something which was specifically designed to be in the ground in a specific area such as a stone which was put there as a monument for whatever reason at that time then I feel that is where it should stay, I think it loses an awful lot if you take it away.

Another local resident, Alan, who was born and brought up in Hilton, captured the sense of authenticity attached to experiencing the Hilton Stone at the chapel site through the following analogy:

it's, it's like a religious experience, like a musical experience, you could go buy a CD of whatever, eh [...]. It's not the same as having the real thing because what, what it actually means is the performance at the time, the whole ambience of that experience is what makes it, and OK say somebody listens to a CD of a particular concert or whatever, eh, that guy that listens to the CD has got a view of it, the guy that was there, actually there, his perception is totally different and that's the difference I see about the Hilton stone being back where it originally was, that's the difference.

Finally, a slightly different argument again is offered by Martin, a museum professional who works in north-east Scotland:

they're art objects which were created for a particular site so I think, I think there's probably an artistic [argument] ... If you see the Hilton [cross-slab], no matter how well lit or presented, the Hilton cross-slab in the National Museum of Scotland is not artistically being presented in the context that the artist intended.

From this perspective the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is very much a monument in terms of people's perception of what it was intended to be; something which was made for a particular landscape or locality and designed to be earth-fast in that place. The fragmented nature of the monument appears to alter this view as regards the small carved fragments, which are largely accepted as artefacts. However, as the following extract from an interview with Janet illustrates the lower portion of the cross-slab is still very much conceived in terms of a monument:

I think the, the fact that the base is the bit that's still in the ground like fixed [whereas] the little bits that have been chipped off you know by, whether it was at the time when they you know knocked it down, or whatever, for a gravestone, or whatever happened to it then erm, those bits that were knocked off I don't think have quite the same, erm importance isn't the right word, but if people have picked these up and taken them off and are conserving them somewhere, it's not quite the same as the actual stump being taken out of the ground.

It is the intentionally fixed nature of the lower portion which makes it qualitatively different from the small fragments and other finds. The intentionality of its setting was self-evident to anyone viewing the lower portion *in situ* during the excavation (see Figure 6). Furthermore, whilst the lower portion was not visible above ground as an upstanding monument prior to its excavation, its significance as the 'base' or the 'stump' of an absent monument, a monument that had been 'taken from its place' was reinforced by the reconstruction standing over it.

The question of whether the lower portion was found in the vicinity of where the Picts originally placed it is arguably of considerable importance in terms of these notions of authenticity and monumentality. However, the distinction between primary and secondary context was largely regarded as a technical archaeological issue by local residents. Its political significance was acknowledged in newspaper coverage and taken up by local residents. For instance, one member of the audience at the public meeting argued that: '*it's an ancient monument in what we now believe to be its original location or very near to that, what is anybody's right to start moving that*'. However, in terms of the symbolic relationship between the monument and place the distinction between primary and secondary context is largely inconsequential. For most local residents, witnessing the lower portion being unearthed powerfully reinforced the belief that the monument was created in Hilton and that this was its 'birthplace', even if the setting where it was discovered was not its original one. Furthermore, even if it is not exactly where the Picts put it, Hilton is

perceived as its 'home', because '*this is where the Picts lived you know, so I think it should stay here*' (Gavin). Thus in terms of the symbolic relationship between monument and place there is a much broader and fuzzier understanding of context than that employed in archaeological research.

The strong sense of place attached to the monument lies at the heart of the contention about the future of the lower portion. As discussed above, concern to maintain the relationship between the monument and Hilton not only informs debate about the eventual location of display, but also underpins much of the conflict about ownership and conservation. In terms of display, the conflict is articulated around an opposition between maintaining the lower portion in its locality and removing it to the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh to be displayed with the upper portion. From the perspective of heritage and museum professionals the idea of splitting a single object runs counter to curatorial principles about what is in the best interests of the object as well as our understanding and appreciation of the object through research and interpretation. The Replica Committee had placed considerable emphasis on the value of archaeological and art-historical research on the remains for the purposes of informing the design of the cross-face for the reconstruction project. Here, discussion will focus on people's perceptions of the broad differences between these two opposing modes of display.

To begin with, display within the locality is seen as essential to experiencing the kind of landscape the monument was made for, its weather and topography and so forth. For instance, as one local resident of Easter Ross explains.

Tony: *the Hilton Stone wasn't made so you could have a sense of place in Chamber Street [the location of the Museum of Scotland] a sense of place would have been by the sea, by Hilton, erm by the chapel.*

SJ: *Yeah. Do you think it's important then that you attempt in some way to maintain that original sense of place that it was designed [for]?*

Tony: *I think in an ideal world erm I mean in the Museum there isn't even a photograph of Hilton or the kind of place, you don't get an idea of where it came from. [...] You might think it came from a, a mountainous valley in the Cairngorms or, I mean there's nothing to say where it came from and there's nothing to link it to Shandwick and Nigg and Tarbat.*

Another interviewee, a local museum professional called Frances, makes a similar point drawing on the reconstruction as a point of contrast with the display of the upper portion in the Museum of Scotland:

One of the things I don't like about the display in Edinburgh is the fact that the stone is down in the basement in a fairly dark sort of closed in place and I think it just gives entirely the wrong sort of feel to the stone. I mean that's not anything you know that it would have been like and I think to see, one of the wonderful things about the reconstruction is that the thing really does have its place, to be able to see that in the open air, to be able to go and run your hands over it if you want to do that, but to sort of see it there, erm you know with the sea in the background and the rain sort of battering against it and also to see it in its new condition, I mean that just, you know, perhaps begins to give you some sort of idea of what these things were like to the people who made them and what amazing, you know, startling sort of impact they must have had in the landscape and I think that's lost altogether, erm you know, in Edinburgh at the moment.

There is also a concern that the character of the cross-slab is lost in the Museum of Scotland where people are saturated with too many objects, like *'too many ingredients in the soup and erm you're not sure what flavour you had or what dish you had'* (Tony). Such replication and saturation is perceived as contributing to a loss of any sense of place as illustrated by Alan in the following extract:

I think it's important for say some poor guy that's come from Japan [to see the Hilton Stone in Hilton]. He's wandering round Scotland and he's looking at these Pictish things and if he's standing in Hilton looking at the Hilton stone in the situation where these guys carved their stone and erected that stone it is a whole different experience than going to Edinburgh Museum, standing there and saying well that's the Hilton Stone, that's the Balintore Stone and that's the Nigg Stone and that's Dewar Soap Stone there and that other two hundred stones are belonging to wherever, eh that's the difference.

As the last extract suggests, experience of the monument in the locality of Hilton is also regarded as important in terms of engaging with, and imagining, the people who produced the cross-slab, as well as the subsequent generations who lived alongside it. In the same interview Alan goes on to present this as a kind of communion with past generations:

to actually go round the actual genuine ones in their genuine position it's a thousand times more valuable and, eh, it's like, even as Dolly herself was saying, these people from wherever come, [and] there's no abbey there now [referring to the chapel site], it's just a bit of grass wi' bumps on it, but they have an experience of the actual location,

realising that generations before them have been there when it was whole, or whatever, and they're sharing that experience and it is really the point of the sharing of that experience, eh, that's valuable.

Another local resident, Val, emphasises the importance of locality in stimulating the imagination:

I mean this is fresh air, sea birds, I mean you can see the setting, you can see them going down to the edge of the river and catching their supper or whatever, lighting the fire and black houses and the smoke going up, it's just the whole feeling of the place because you know it's in its actual setting, its actual location, it's got to be different from looking at it in a museum I think, it's got to be, that's what I feel anyway.

There is also a sense in which removing the Stone from the locality not only detracts from the monument itself and from people's experience of it, but that it also detracts from the locality which it is taken from. For instance, when asked if he feels there is a special relationship between the cross-slab and the landscape or this part of the country, one local resident, Gavin, replies:

Yeah, it's like the big stones that's on the top of the hill at Fyrish [...], I mean as far as I'm concerned they've always been there and if they weren't there the hill would look different you know.[...] It's erm, mind you Historic Scotland might want to take them down to Edinburgh as well. But you know I mean that's where the stone belongs actually in this area, so I think it should stay here.

All of the above arguments emphasise the integral relationship between the monument and place. In one way or another, this relationship is seen as contributing to a qualitatively different, and superior, experience of both the monument and the locality itself, not only for the people who live there, but also for visitors (and see Jeffrey 2003, 214-15). The few local voices who argued in favour of display in the Museum of Scotland did not directly challenge these arguments, but emphasised different priorities, such as the ability of NMS to conserve and look after it, the importance of reuniting the lower and upper portions, and the importance of telling a national story. With regard to the latter, one man argued that:

I think the history of Scotland should be condensed into one building. Eh or these historic things should be collected into one place and Edinburgh is the logical place, Edinburgh, or perhaps Stirling erm would be the logical places I think Edinburgh being the capital of Scotland but I think it's a sensible place for it, I really feel that it, it should go without saying that if Edinburgh Museum wants something and provided they're going to exhibit it.

Nevertheless, such arguments were scarce amongst local residents, and for that matter amongst Highland-based heritage and museum professionals. The opposition between Edinburgh and the locality of Hilton does, however, submerge a wide range of opinion about the specific mode of display to be adopted and the precise definition of locality. How local does 'local' have to be?; a question that is of critical importance to heritage managers (Foster 2001, 13).

6.6 Mode of presentation

The question of locality resulted in some intense and emotive debate amongst local residents during the course of the excavation of 2001, and during subsequent discussion of the future of the lower portion. Heavy emphasis had been placed by heritage, museum and conservation professionals on the need to protect the lower portion from the weather. However, in the absence of a museum in Hilton, or the seaboard generally, this meant that local residents were faced with a dilemma about where and how the lower portion could be protected whilst still maintaining a relationship with its locality.

Some local residents wanted the lower portion to stay in the ground, not only to protect it from Treasure Trove procedures as they interpreted them, but also for long-term display. Although viewed unfavourably in aesthetic terms, the initial solution presented was the erection of a glass case above it in a similar fashion to the Shandwick Stone. Despite the impracticalities of this, which were regularly emphasised by heritage professionals, for some people, powerful feelings about the authenticity and well-being of the lower portion were over-riding. For instance, when asked if she could explain her feeling that the lower portion should stay in the ground one woman responded:

Janet: *Well I've, I'm, I feel quite certain that if it is lifted out of the ground something is lost [...] Even if you know, [...] supposing everything goes the way that we were hoping it would go and that the stone would come back to Hilton.: There still is a little bit lost doing that [...] Not as bad as it going to Edinburgh obviously, it would still be back in Hilton and I mean, I can, I would probably eventually accept the fact that right it gets conserved, it's put back in Hilton, it's given a position as near as possible to its original site, it's displayed, it's got its glass case or whatever they decide to do with it and so on. Erm I can accept that I suppose as the next best thing to it staying in the ground, but again if I was coming to view this I would rather see it where it is in the ground personally. [...]*

SJ: *Hmm mmm. Yes, yeah.*

Janet: *Again it's back, I've got a very strong sense of sentimentality for lots of things [laughs]. [...] I mean I would like to go and think, go and visit sites or go and visit things and think gosh that's been there for so many hundred years, nobody has actually, they've maybe touched it, but nobody has actually moved that in all those years.*

For Christine, a local resident interviewed after the stone had been lifted, the strong feeling that it should go back into, the ground was less to do with disturbing the aura of contact with the past, and more a concern that the stone should return to its birthplace:

Christine: *We, we've taken it out, disturbed it, we've looked at it and it, I mean I know it has to have lots of things done to it to preserve it erm but I think once it goes back I feel it'll shine in its own.*

SJ: *Hmm.*

Christine: *And I hope it goes back where it was found.*

SJ: *Right.*

Christine: *Because I feel that that's right.*

SJ: *You feel that that's, that's erm the best place, better than say if there was a building here where it could be put?*

Christine: *If there was a building and it was going to, I don't know, I feel, I feel no it needs to go back into the ground.*

SJ: *Yeah.*

Christine: *I do feel quite strongly about that. It needs to go back where it came ... [pauses]*

SJ: *From?*

Christine: *Hmm mmm. Because I, although it, it would be lovely, if it was going to go into a building it would have to be in a, like a plinth or something [so] that you could see both sides.*

SJ: *Yes.*

Christine: *Erm, but it would be a stone, I think it's something more when it goes back to its original, like, birthplace.*

For many local residents, however, the connection between the Stone and its locality could be maintained at a broader scale. The use of a glass structure away from the chapel site, but within the Park, was acknowledged as one possible solution. Another was the use of a purpose-built building, or visitor centre, again preferably in the vicinity of the Park. Local and regional museums were considered to be more

problematic; satisfactory as a temporary measure in preference to the lower portion being taken to Edinburgh, they were still regarded as inappropriate for various reasons. For some it is because museums as institutions do not seem to provide a suitable environment for display of crosses and cross-slabs. Reflecting on their display in any form of museum one woman, Màiri, explained that:

I see, you know, these majestic things, you know, not only the Hilton stone or whatever, and [...] it takes something, it takes, it almost takes the magic from them, it really does. [...] And the people who come up [to visit] who knows what they'll experience when they see these stones, these artefacts in their own setting, maybe they'll get something special from them as well rather than in a clinical environment that really does take away from it, it does, hmm mmm.

Another person explains his preference for location within a landscape, if necessary within a glass case, in terms of his general experience of things in museums:

Ross: *[...] when I go into the museum and read those little labels and go, what does that do? What does that, it doesn't, it doesn't tell you about, it doesn't give you the heart of it, it just gives the bare bones, there's no soul, there's no erm I'm just surprised I'm waxing so lyrically about this because it's, it's, I just find museums very, very, very staid, very dead.*

SJ: *Yes, yeah.*

Ross: *Erm but that's just me.*

SJ: *It's the landscape that makes it alive for you?*

Ross: *Very much so yes, aha which erm obviously says a lot about who I am but I don't know how valid that is in regard to, it's valid for me but not necessarily for anyone else.*

However, proposals to use existing public buildings, most notably the new Seaboard Memorial Hall, seemed to cause as much controversy regarding their location, bringing the limits of 'locality' into focus. Despite its location near the boundary of the two villages, the Seaboard Memorial Hall is unquestionably located in Balintore rather than Hilton according to local knowledge (see Figure 16). As such the proposed display of the lower portion in the new building clearly undermined the role of the monument in the symbolic construction of community and place from the perspective of many Hilton residents, particularly those of long-standing association with the village. Furthermore, the fact that the boundary on which the Hall lies is no longer physically demarcated by a break in habitation actually appears to strengthen the consternation aroused by the proposal rather than make it more acceptable. As noted in chapter 4 (p.37), the blurring of community boundaries often leads to a more explicit and urgent emphasis on the relationship between community and place, and in particular the spatial demarcation of community. Far from being merely a question of practicalities the debate surrounding display of the lower portion is also about finding a location that can adequately represent the pivotal role of the monument in symbolising the 'heart' or 'soul' of the village.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Meaning and value

The Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is imbued with a wide range of meanings within various discourses derived from heritage management, art history, archaeology, folklore, oral history, and popular conceptions of the Picts (see pp.27-32). The cross-slab is seen as:

- a highly significant piece of **national and international heritage**.
- an exceptionally **elaborate and skilled piece of early Christian art** regarded as part of the mainstream of contemporary European art.
- a **monument which is intimately identified with the Picts**, who in turn are represented in popular discourse as a mysterious, wild, group of people who successfully resisted the Romans, and who have become the focus of origin myths, both for the present local population and for the Scottish nation as a whole.
- a **memorial to one of three dead Norse princes** within the King's Sons folk story, which links the Hilton, Nigg and Shandwick cross-slabs together in a localised narrative.
- a **monument which people's parents and grandparents talked of in detail**, recounting stories of tea parties on its back as it lay on the ground and protests from the men of the village when it was removed to Invergordon in the mid-19th century.

In addition to these 'obvious' denotative meanings, the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is also imbued with deep metaphorical, symbolic and other connotative meanings within local contexts; meanings which sometimes conflict with the role of the monument as an important component of Scottish national heritage. As illustrated in chapter 4, the cross-slab and the reconstruction are both symbolically construed within local discourses as living things, and indeed as living members of the community, having been 'born' in Hilton, and thus grounded in kin relations and notions of 'belonging' (see pp.34-5). These meanings are given further symbolic weight through intimate association between the different forms of the monument and the ground or earth, whether that is through the excavation of the lower portion and fragments, or through erection of the reconstruction (see pp.35 and 55). The earth is perceived as providing a source of well-being or

nourishment for the stone and tangible, physical evidence for the 'birth' of the monument in Hilton.

As a result of this symbolism the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab acts as a medium for the reproduction and negotiation of relationships within the community, and also for the symbolic construction of community as a whole (see pp.36-7). It also plays a fundamental role in the production of a sense of place, the monument simultaneously providing an icon of both place and displacement (see pp.37-40). In the context of a deep sense of pride in place, coupled with economic decline and geographical/social marginality, the monument plays a crucial role in the symbolic construction of Hilton (and to some extent the seaboard as a whole) as a place of significance. At the same time, in the context of historical displacement encompassed by the Clearances, loss of association with land, and emigration, the fragmented biography of the monument provides an icon for such processes of dislocation. Resistance to the removal of the lower portion, is thus a means of symbolically resisting historical processes of displacement and the kinds of people and organisations perceived to be responsible for them.

Much of the local social value of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is derived from the meanings it is attributed in local contexts, and the ways in which these meanings facilitate production of a sense of place. The monument fulfills almost all of Johnston's (1994) different kinds of social value outlined in her detailed discussion paper for the *Australian Heritage Commission* (see pp.41-2). It provides:

- a **sense of connection with the past and ties it in affectionately with the present**, through notions of direct Pictish descent (held by a small but influential proportion of the local population), through oral historical and folkloric narratives, and simply through the powerful feelings of connection and validation which people experience in relation to the material traces of earlier inhabitants (see pp.34-7).
- an **essential reference point for the production of community identities** within Hilton and the seaboard, serving to lift the village of Hilton 'above the crowd' and providing a mechanism for articulating relationships of belonging and community boundaries (see pp.34-7).

- **a disempowered group of people with a sense of historical engagement and agency**, providing an icon of displacement and a means to symbolically resist processes of dislocation and marginalisation (see pp.38-40).
- **a profoundly important mediator and metaphor for an embodied relationship between community and place**, as well as providing a mechanism for the production of Hilton as a place of significance (see pp.37-8).

These aspects of social value are reinforced through long-term association and ongoing local activities relating to the cross-slab and the place where it once stood, the chapel site in the Hilton 'Park' (see pp.42-4). These places **loom large in the daily comings and goings of life** in the villages, particularly Hilton, and are subject to a **palpable sense of attachment and ownership** by many in the villages.

The events and activities surrounding the monument in the last decade – in essence the reconstruction project, the excavations, and the local campaign to keep the lower portion of the monument in Hilton – have further enhanced many aspects of its social value. For instance, the premises in Hilton where the reconstruction was carved provided a focus for daily comings and goings, a meeting place for conversation and exchange of gossip, as well as the opportunity to watch the reconstruction 'grow'. Likewise the excavations provided a focus of discussion and interaction in the context of daily life, for instance at the viewing platform next to the site, in the street whilst walking the dog, at the Balintore Post Office, or Community House and so forth. Furthermore, the threat of the removal of the lower portion of the cross-slab provided a focus for community action, and, in the eyes of many participants, for the development of 'community spirit'. Such activities clearly had an important impact on people's social relationships and modes of interaction, for instance as relationships of authority in relation to the monument were negotiated, or where the position of specific 'incomers' within the community was transformed in light of their 'feeling' for the Stone and their contribution to the local campaign.

In addition to its immense social value in local contexts, the Hilton of Cadboll monument is also seen as having significant economic value in the sphere of local and regional development. Since the early 1990s, the monument, specifically in the form of the reconstruction and later the newly discovered lower portion, has figured prominently in local and regional development and planning documents (see p.45). The discourse of development through which these documents are framed places as much emphasis on social development, and the importance of empowerment, as it does on straightforward income generation through tourism. There is much talk

amongst professionals working in the development sector of 'capable, confident communities', 'prosperous communities', and 'communities rich in their heritage', and such language also dominates the policy documents produced (see p.46). Amongst local residents of Hilton and the seaboard, recognition of the potential for tourist-related development is usually framed by social concerns rather than direct income/employment generation. These concerns again return to the problem of making Hilton a 'place of significance' in the eyes of residents and particularly visitors; of making them see its beauty and its value, as well as providing the catalyst for production of a sense of solidarity and self-worth within Hilton and the seaboard (see pp.46-7).

Close observation and analysis of the meanings and values surrounding monuments, such as the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab, reveals that they are grounded in people's lived experience and as a result subject to change according to changing circumstances. Furthermore, such research exposes the inappropriateness of asking which narratives surrounding an historical site are 'correct'. The accuracy of historical perceptions is of little relevance in terms of their impact on people's daily experience and their contribution to the current cultural significance and social value attached to a specific site. Furthermore, in situations characterised by conflicting meanings and values, the assumption that historical meanings and values are fixed and continuous will neither aid understanding, nor facilitate the mediation or settlement of disputes.

7.2 Sources of conflict

Our attachment to place is fundamental, but may be unconscious in our daily lives until it is threatened. Our response to such a threat will be charged with emotion, as it is our emotions that are touched by the connection. Lacking the defined processes and parameters decision makers prefer, and that have become the basis of heritage assessment, it is no wonder that heritage professionals can easily be caught off guard by a sudden and unexpected community uprising in defence of place.

(Johnston 1994, 4)

In part, this study was initiated to gain greater insight into the conflict that is regularly encountered by archaeologists and heritage managers in attempting to conserve, manage, interpret and present early medieval sculpture (see chapter 1). The discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab proved to be no exception in generating intense debate and opposition, which was manifested at the public meeting and reported on extensively in local and national press. Such conflict is an increasingly visible

aspect of heritage management processes in cases such as this where significant levels of social value are invested in archaeological remains. In countries with colonial histories and politically active indigenous minorities, such as Australia and New Zealand, research has contributed to greater understanding of conflicts surrounding the historic environment and the diverse values and issues that may underlie them (see e.g. Domicelj and Marshall 1994). However, in Britain and other parts of Europe, the specific cultural and historical circumstances underlying such conflicts are poorly understood, despite being highlighted in recent years in the context of ethnic conflict, for instance, in the Balkans.

The topography of the specific dispute surrounding the ownership and location of the lower portion of the cross-slab is partly determined by the complex biography of the monument (see chapter 2). The removal of the upper portion to Invergordon Castle by the local laird, Robert Bruce Aeneas Macleod, in the mid-19th century resulted in a palpable sense of loss and anger perpetuated through oral historical and folk narratives. It also led to the eventual incorporation of the upper portion within the collection of the National Museum of Antiquities in 1921 (later incorporated into the NMS). For their part, heritage managers, archaeologists and curators have, to a large extent, been guided by the principle that the integrity of the object or assemblage be maintained through the allocation of finds; a principle which is enshrined in guidance notes for the allocation of finds by the Crown and by HS (see p.2; Scottish Executive 1999, 6). From their perspective, legal ownership by NMS of the newly discovered lower portion appeared to be an inevitable outcome of the historic acquisition of the upper portion (see Foster 2001, 16). This brought heritage managers into conflict with local residents, although if circumstances had been otherwise (i.e. if the upper portion did not exist or was not held within the national collection) HS might have pursued an alternative course of action in favour of local allocation (S. Foster pers. comm.).

Whilst these historical and legal contexts provide the framework for the decisions and actions of heritage professionals, however, they provide very little insight into the motivations and reactions of local residents. These need to be located with respect to the meanings and values surrounding the monument in local contexts. Chapter 6 provided a detailed analysis of the anatomy of the conflict surrounding the discovery and excavation of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. It was argued that whilst disputes apparently focused on procedural and legal frameworks relating to Treasure Trove and conservation, these were merely the surface

manifestation of more fundamental conflicts of meaning and value. The crux of the conflict lies in the distinct discourses of meaning and value, and the different modes of negotiating knowledge and authority, surrounding the monument in local contexts in contrast with the spheres of heritage management and national patrimony.

In local discourse, the monument is symbolically conceived as a 'living thing' and its relationship to the community is defined in terms of an idiom of kinship and belonging. As such, an inalienable relationship of belonging is created between the cross-slab and Hilton as a community/place, and this provides the foundation for the monument's value in local contexts in terms of the 'making' of community and place. Ownership outwith the community threatens to disrupt the relationship between monument and place, even if it is displayed locally (see p.50). In contrast, within heritage management discourses, the meaning of the monument is largely negotiated in relation to its scientific and historical importance as a means of understanding the past, and in terms of its aesthetic appeal, all of which contribute to its perceived national and international significance. Here emphasis is placed on its intrinsic value to future generations, as well as present communities, and consequently the importance of preservation in perpetuity. For the purposes of preservation for posterity, attribution of ownership to guardians endorsed by State organisations and legal frameworks is seen as a practical necessity (see pp.49-50).

An appreciation of these distinct, and largely incommensurable, discourses is crucial to understanding the grounds of the conflict. On this basis it can be argued that:

- Resistance to ownership outwith the community is rooted in the inalienable nature of the relationships of kinship and belonging that are attributed to the monument in local contexts and that are a fundamental aspect of its local meaning and value (see p.50).
- Dispute over conservation, is not about the importance of conservation *per se* (which is widely endorsed), but about the desire for some local involvement given the special 'feeling' for the monument attributed to members of the local community (see section pp.52 and 55).
- Opposition to the removal of the monument from the ground, or from the village of Hilton, is derived from the intimate relationship between the monument and its perceived 'birth' place, and the power it therefore acquires as a metaphor for the embodied relationship between community and place (see pp.37-40 and pp.56-60).

- Friction between local residents and representatives of national heritage agencies is further reinforced by the distinct modes of establishing knowledge and authority in relation to the monument within the local community on the one hand, and within national heritage organisations and legislation on the other (see pp.53-4).

The sense of historical disempowerment and lack of trust of state authorities expressed by local residents added another dimension to the conflict surrounding the lower portion of the cross-slab. Such feelings are a widespread characteristic of rural communities in Scotland (see Shucksmith *et al.* 1994), but specific social and historical circumstances clearly have a significant impact on how they are manifested. In this case, social memory of the Clearances offers a powerful symbol of betrayal, forced displacement and fragmentation of communities, and provides a narrative framework within which the specific biography of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab is interpreted in local contexts (see Cohen 1980, 172; Nadel-Klein 2003, 161 for a discussion of similar processes of historical emplotment elsewhere). The fragmentation and displacement of the monument supplies a powerful metaphor for these broader processes, but also the specific actors involved in determining the future of the monument in the past and today are 'read' within this framework. Thus, the Macleods of the Cadboll Estate, who removed the cross-slab from the chapel site and later from the Highland region, are situated within a long history of local land owners who have forcibly disrupted what are perceived to be authentic relationships between people/objects and places. Furthermore, organisations like NMS and HS and their representatives are readily situated within this historical plot (see pp.38 and 51). Whilst HS's wider policy of retention of new finds within local contexts would mitigate against such a reading by local residents, the specific nature of this case meant that such a strategy was not pursued (see above, p.63).

7.3 Some policy implications

This final section will address some of the implications for heritage management policy and practice arising from the study. These can be divided into three sections ranging from the specific to the general: those relating to the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and in particular the lower portion; those relating to early medieval sculpture in general; and those of broader relevance to heritage management, particularly in the domains of understanding conflict and assessing social value.

7.3.1 Hilton of Cadboll

This project was not designed to provide specific recommendations regarding the future of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. However, a

number of broad points can be made, which have implications with regard to negotiations and decision-making.

- i. There is clear and unequivocal evidence that the monument as a whole, and by default the lower portion, possesses immense social value in local contexts for the reasons described above. The social value of long-term maintenance of the lower portion in the locality therefore needs to be given serious consideration when weighed up against other areas of significance, such as its historic, scientific and aesthetic value. The social value of the lower portion, as a fragment, also has to be given considerable weight alongside conventional curatorial ideals about maintaining the integrity of the monument as a whole in a single location (as expressed by Foster 2001, 16; and many of the professionals interviewed for this project). This research demonstrates the social value of the reconstruction as a piece of public art and as a project embedded in the community. Nevertheless, it is clearly distinguished from the original in the perceptions of local residents and it would be unhelpful to see these different manifestations of the monument as substituting for one another (and see Jeffrey 2003, 214-16).
- ii. The issue of ownership, which has been a source of controversy throughout, needs to be negotiated in light of the discourses of kinship and 'belonging' that surround the monument in local contexts. The anticipated allocation of the newly discovered remains of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab to NMS on the basis of the historic donation of the upper portion (Foster 2001, 16) has been strongly resisted by the local community. The proposed distinction between NMS ownership and local presentation of the lower portion may enable the dispute to be 'settled'. However, this distinction needs to be treated with sensitivity and it must be recognised that ownership cannot be reduced to a legal practicality as many heritage managers had hoped: ownership outwith the village, to some extent at least, disrupts and undermines the perceived relationships of belonging between monument, community and place (for a fuller discussion see pp.49-50).
- iii. If the lower portion of the cross-slab were to be displayed in the locality of the Easter Ross seaboard, the social implications of the precise location of display must be considered alongside practical aspects. This research has demonstrated that the monument plays an important role in the construction of Hilton as a community and as a place of significance (see pp.33-40), in both the perception of those within the village and, for the most part, those who reside in the other seaboard

villages, Shandwick and Balintore. Consequently, any display location outwith Hilton will court controversy, particularly in light of a concern to reinforce village identities, which are increasingly subsumed within the notion of the seaboard as a single community (see pp.23-4). Boundary locations are likely to be especially fraught, as is clearly the case with the new Seaboard Memorial Hall, which sits on the boundary between Hilton and Balintore (p.60). Whilst this site may offer practical solutions, any proposals which do not attempt to negotiate the social and symbolic dimensions of such a location will encounter difficulties.

- iv. The research suggests that there is considerable openness to the precise mode of display that might be adopted for the lower portion, ranging from a free-standing glass case in the landscape, to display within an existing or purpose-built structure (see pp.59-60). Although many local residents expressed a preference for the Stone to be displayed at the location where it was found (either by re-presentation at the site after conservation, or not lifting the lower portion at all), most acknowledge the practical and conservation difficulties with such a mode of display. Reservations were also expressed about free-standing glass cases such as that used for the Shandwick cross-slab, but most were prepared to accept such a mode of display as a necessary solution to protecting the Stone. Perhaps the most important issue relating to mode of display is the way in which it impacts on the precise locations where the lower portion might be displayed (see p.60).
- v. Whether or not the lower portion of the monument is displayed in Hilton, there are a number of issues surrounding the presentation of the chapel site and reconstruction that should be taken into account in any future interpretation design. Current facilities for accessing the site and the location of display boards are contentious as far as many local residents are concerned, because they appear to be physically oriented towards visitors. Most local residents enter from the village where there is little provision for access and interpretation. Again social and symbolic aspects of the monument need to be taken into account alongside practical considerations. The decision to promote access from the road at the back of the village was taken to avoid congestion on the narrow roads through Hilton. However, in terms of the role of the monument in making Hilton a place of significance, as well as its potential for local economic development, it is considered desirable that visitors experience it along with the chapel site in the context of the village (see p.47). A further factor regarding presentation is that the

current interpretation panels privilege archaeological and art-historical knowledge and make little reference to the local social and historical contexts. In the development of future interpretation consideration might be given to the recent biography of the monument and the chapel site and the meanings with which they are imbued in local contexts.

- vi. Finally, lack of trust in organisations associated with the State, and particularly Edinburgh, has characterised much of the conflict surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll monument and the chapel site. This has been reinforced by lack of clear publicly available information regarding contentious areas such as Treasure Trove procedures and conservation requirements, and the complexity and confusion surrounding these areas in this particular case (see pp.52-3). The launch of a new website detailing Treasure Trove procedures in May 2003 will hopefully alleviate this problem somewhat, <http://www.treasuretrove.org.uk>, as indeed may the ongoing review of Treasure Trove arrangements in Scotland (Scottish Executive 2003). However, lack of trust was also exaggerated by the difficulties of identifying, and thus acknowledging, local modes of attributing knowledge and authority (see pp.53-4). Future negotiations would also benefit from direct engagement with local protocols of authority. It is important that the specific historical circumstances surrounding this lack of trust are taken into account in future negotiations and decision making, including social memory of the Clearances and the specific biography of the monument.

7.3.2 Early medieval sculpture

The present study highlights the socially and historically specific nature of the meanings and values surrounding the Hilton of Cadboll monument, and the ways in which they inform conflict over the ownership and presentation of the lower portion of the cross-slab. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify a number of broader policy implications, many of which directly relate to the issues highlighted by Foster (2001) in her article *Place, Space and Odyssey: exploring the future of early medieval sculpture*.

- i. Foster pinpoints the schizophrenic identity of sculpture – i.e. whether is defined as monument or artefact – as the most common cause of tension in disputes over the location of early medieval sculpture. This research suggests that categories such as ‘artefact’ and ‘monument’ are likely to be less prominent in local discourse than in heritage management and museological contexts. However, the ways in which items of early medieval sculpture are conceived as objects designed to be earth-fast in

- specific locations in the landscape places them firmly within the monument category. Even in the case of the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll monument, the whereabouts of which was unknown prior to excavation, it is very much conceived as something which has an integral and authentic relationship with its setting (see p.59). Wider discussion of the Shandwick and Nigg cross-slabs during the project suggests that similar attitudes surround these monuments, and by extension no doubt others further afield. Whether or not the recent historic location that people are familiar with is the monument's original location is irrelevant. It is people's perceptions and beliefs about a monument's association with place that are important *in this respect*, and which contribute to its current meaning and social value.
- ii. Foster (2001) provides an excellent analysis of the policy, legislative and conservation frameworks that have formed the focus of numerous high profile disputes surrounding the location of early medieval sculpture. Her discussion, however, is largely restricted to the heritage management context and this research complements it in revealing some of the local meanings and values which can underlie such conflicts. On the basis of Hilton of Cadboll it seems likely that early medieval sculpture elsewhere in Scotland, and beyond, plays a significant role in the construction of community and place. Pitt Rivers (1889) hinted at this when he argued that removing such sculpture to museums deprives country places of their 'traditions and old associations'. The present study adds weight and depth to this relationship and suggests that crosses and cross-slabs may have a complex and dynamic relationship with community and place that is only exaggerated by the threat of removal.
 - iii. This research very much reinforces the value of retaining early medieval sculpture as close as possible to its historic locality. However, it complicates HS's current emphasis on the *original* location of the monument. A piece of early medieval sculpture in a secondary location may be equally significant in terms of the social value attached to the monument today as one in its primary location, for the reasons discussed above. In respect to the locality proposed for any conservation strategy it will be necessary to gain an understanding of the specific social and historic circumstances surrounding each case. This is particularly pertinent, for instance, in relation to Foster's (2001, 13) question regarding how local 'local' needs to be when it comes to developing conservation strategies which involve some kind of relocation. If such monuments are involved in the construction of community and place, relocation outside of the perceived boundaries of that community will inevitably result in controversy and resistance. However, the nature and extent of the boundaries constructed in relation to community and place will vary on a case by case basis.
 - iv. As regards specific modes of conservation and display, the present study suggests cause for optimism regarding the development of solutions that ensure the preservation of early medieval sculpture. Conflict arises when the relationship between monument, community and place is perceived to be under threat. However, in the case of Hilton of Cadboll at least, there is widespread recognition amongst local residents of the desirability of protecting the recently discovered parts of the cross-slab. In this respect, modes of display such as glass cases are regarded as acceptable despite their perceived shortcomings. Only a few people adopted the more radical position that such monuments should be allowed to weather or 'die' to maintain their unmediated relationship with the open landscape (for further discussion of this issue see Foster 2001, 27-8; Walderhaug Saetersdal 2000, 174-5). As with all of the above points however it would be beneficial to research this issue more widely, and to gain an understanding of local social value in each specific case as conservation strategies are developed.

7.3.3 Wider implications

Some of the policy implications arising from this study, whilst pertaining to early medieval sculpture, are also of wider relevance in relation to heritage management policies and practices.

- i. The meanings and values surrounding archaeological monuments in local contexts are clearly an important aspect of their social value and broader cultural significance. HS operate on the presumption of maintaining objects in their local contexts, unless there are specific reasons for re-locating/allocating them elsewhere (Breeze 2000). Nevertheless, this policy is largely based upon the historic and aesthetic value of maintaining their association with local context, rather than a specific concern with social value. As this study demonstrates social values may not be commensurate with the historic, aesthetic and scientific values that frequently form the basis of significance assessment and decision-making. Whilst social and economic values are increasingly highlighted in heritage management policies and charters, in practice 'high' art and historic value tend to eclipse other criteria simply because the means of evaluating them are long-established and subject to continuous academic assessment (Bell

1997, 17; de la Torre and Mason 2002, 1). Indeed social value is often defined in terms of an academic interpretation of cultural significance, 'rather than any of the benefits which the population might be able to gain from the cultural heritage by and for themselves' (Bell 1997, 14). This study highlights the need to redress this imbalance, not only to achieve a more balanced assessment of the significance of specific sites and monuments to present-day communities, but also as a crucial step in avoiding or mediating conflict between local communities and heritage organisations (see Johnston 1994).

- ii. To incorporate social value into the heritage management process in a more meaningful way it will be necessary to develop specific mechanisms for its assessment in the context of scheduling, conservation plans and so forth (see Mason 2002, 23). Currently, much weight is clearly placed on the professional judgement and insight of specific heritage managers (de la Torre and Mason 2002, 1). However, the depth and complexity of the meaning and value revealed through the Hilton of Cadboll case is unlikely to be accessed through such modes of assessment. Close systematic observation of the uses and meanings of specific historic sites and monuments will be necessary, as indicated by the Council of Europe Charter (1986) *Recommendation on Urban Open Space*. A range of methods could be applied to such close observation, including those used in this study, and their potential has been discussed in depth in a number of publications, mostly emanating from new world contexts (e.g. Johnston 1994; Low 2002; Taplin *et al.* 2002; and see pp.5 and 7). Relatively time-consuming projects, such as the present study, are useful in establishing more in-depth base line information, but more rapid methods of research developed

elsewhere could be adopted for routine modes of assessment (e.g. see Low 2002). Indeed, active involvement of local communities in processes of significance assessment has also been proposed and developed (e.g. Australian Heritage Commission 1998; Johnston 1994, 22). It cannot be stressed too strongly, however, that such mechanisms are only effective when they are integrated into the heritage management process (Mason 2002, 23-5, and Low 2002, 47-8, offer models as to how this might be achieved).

- iii. The Hilton of Cadboll case clearly reveals that conflict can also be connected to friction between different modes of negotiating knowledge and authority in relation to specific monuments. Such tensions are now widely acknowledged in countries with indigenous minorities such as Australia, and steps have been taken to incorporate indigenous protocols of access, authority and ritual into the decision-making process as recommended by the *New Zealand ICOMOS Charter* (1992). However, distinct modes for negotiating knowledge and authority in local contexts that might clash with State-endorsed heritage and legislative frameworks are rarely recognised in European contexts, let alone acknowledged in the decision-making process. Bell (1997, 31-2) argues that such concerns might be relevant in European contexts at sites such as Holocaust camps and clearance settlements, where the perspectives of specific survivor and descendent groups should be incorporated within the heritage management process. This project suggests that the range of cases where the rights of indigenous, or local, communities should be acknowledged is more widespread, whether in reaction to specific conflicts, or in the context of more routine processes such as inventorying.

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- Tarbat Discovery Programme*, <http://www1.york.ac.uk/depts/staff/sites/tarbat>
- Treasure Trove in Scotland* <http://www.treasuretrove.org.uk>

9 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Back:** The Pictish symbol-bearing side of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab with hunting scene.
- Base:** A colloquial term for the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab excavated in 2001. See also 'stump' and 'lower portion'.
- Cadboll Stone:** A colloquial term for the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. 'Cadboll Stone' is commonly used by land-owners as well as local heritage, museum and local government staff. See also 'Hilton Stone':
- Class I:** A class of early medieval sculpture defined by Allen and Anderson (1903) consisting of undressed stones decorated exclusively with Pictish symbols. This classification is losing favour with art-historians and in its place many simply use the phrase 'symbol-incised stone'.
- Class II:** A class of early medieval sculpture defined by Allen and Anderson (1903) consisting of dressed symbol-bearing stones with Christian iconography, in particular a cross on one or more faces. This classification is losing favour amongst art-historians and in its place many simply use the phrase 'symbol-bearing cross-slab'.
- Conservation:** Action taken to secure the survival of both the fabric and cultural significance of historic buildings or cultural artefacts of acknowledged value.
- Cross-slab:** An upright stone cut into a regular (often rectangular) slab with a cross sculptured in relief on one or more surfaces and intended to stand vertically in the ground. (N.B. the arms of the cross do not significantly project beyond the edge of the slab.)
- Finds Disposal Panel:** In cases where the Crown does not declare finds from Historic Scotland's excavations to be Treasure Trove, it transfers ownership to the Secretary of State for Scotland. In such cases Historic Scotland acts on behalf of the Secretary of State and allocates the objects to museums on the basis of advice from its own expert advisory panel: the Finds Disposal Panel.
- Front:** Cross-face of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab defaced in 1676.
- Hilton Stone:** A colloquial term for the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. Hilton Stone tends to be used by residents of the seaboard villages. 'The Stone' is also commonly used and may appear in citations from interviews.
- Historic Hilton Committee:** The committee set up by the local action group in 2001 in order to orchestrate the campaign to keep the lower portion of the cross-slab in the locality. This Committee, in part, provided the basis for the Historic Hilton Trust.
- Historic Hilton Trust:** The Trust was established in December 2001 to secure the conservation, development and long term security of the chapel site and to secure ownership, loan and access to the finds. In March 2002, the Trust acquired ownership of the chapel site from Glenmorangie plc.
- Lower portion:** The technical term for the lower section of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab excavated in 2001, colloquially referred to as the 'base' or 'stump'. Lower portion is preferred in academic contexts as the uncarved tenon is still missing and 'base' is ambiguous, since it can also refer to the basal structure that surrounds and supports a sculpture.

- Preservation:** The state of survival of a building or artefact, whether by historical accident, or through a combination of protection and active conservation.
- Q<R:** The Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer is the Crown Officer responsible for the exercise of the Treasure Trove system in Scotland.
- Reconstruction:** The reconstruction of a building, monument or artefact as near as possible to a known earlier state, distinguishable by the introduction of new materials. Here the term is used to refer to Barry Grove's full-scale sculpture based upon the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab with conjectural reconstruction of damaged and missing elements.
- Replica:** An exact copy of an existing historic building or artefact (N.B. to be distinguished from reconstruction).
- Replica Committee:** The committee which oversees the Hilton of Cadboll reconstruction project. The membership is made up of representatives from Tain and Easter Ross Civic Trust and the Balintore and Hilton Community Council, as well as regional museum, heritage and government professionals and politicians.
- Social value:** Social value embraces the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group. It refers to a collective attachment to a place that embodies meanings important to a community.
- Stump:** A colloquial term used for the lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab excavated in 2001. See also 'base'.
- Treasure Trove:** The system through which archaeological objects that are deemed ownerless (*bona vacantia*) are claimed by the Crown. In Scotland all ownerless objects are subject to Treasure Trove, not merely treasure in the narrow sense of gold or silver objects.
- Treasure Trove Advisory Panel:** The expert panel that advises the Crown Office (specifically the Q<R) about which finds should be claimed as Treasure Trove and which museums should be entrusted with these finds.
- Upper portion:** The technical term for the section of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab on display in the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

