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Human Figurative Representation in Anglo-Saxon
Funerary Art, AD 400 – 750*

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Image and Performance, Agency and Ideology:
Human Figurative Representation in Anglo-Saxon Funerary Art,
AD 400 – 750

Lisa Mary Brundle

Abstract

This thesis investigates the topic of human imagery and hybrid human imagery rendered on metalwork of early Anglo-Saxon date recovered within eastern England. It presents the first definitive catalogue of its kind in this region and timeframe. Taking inspiration from recent transitions in thinking on early Anglo-Saxon art, the major topics of consideration include: a) the interrelationship between image, object and the user, b) the changing portrayal of human representation and the social implications of such developments and c) the emergence of new bodily gestures in representational art. These key themes might provide an understanding of how and why human imagery changed as it did, how and by whom it was deployed in life and death and the role this type of imagery performed in the construction and presentation of social identity.

Image and Performance, Agency and Ideology:
Human Figurative Representation in Anglo-Saxon Funerary Art,
AD 400 – 750



(Human image carried on a square-headed brooch from Snetterton, Norfolk)

Two Volumes

Volume I

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

OBJECTS		HERITAGE	
AB	Annular brooch	HER	Historic Environment Record
ASB	Applied saucer brooch	PAS	Portable Antiquity Scheme
BB	Button brooch	RCAHMS	The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
BF	Bridle fittings		
CB	Cruciform brooch	MUSEUMS	
FCB	Florid cruciform brooch	AN	Ashmolean
GH	Girdle hanger	BM	British Museum
GP	Gusset plate	CUMAA or MAA	Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
GSHB(s)	Great square-headed brooch(es)	EM	Ely Museum
M	Mount	GM	Grantham Museum
SB	Saucer brooch	LC	Lincoln ‘The Collection’
WC	Wrist-clasp	WSM or WSCP	West Stow Museum
Ae	Bronze	V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum
Fe	Iron		
		OTHER	
		Fig.	Figure
		Cambs.	Cambridgeshire
		Lincs.	Lincolnshire
		D	Diameter
		L	Length
		W	Width

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For my loved family, past and present

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis addresses the topic of human and hybrid human imagery depicted on metal objects of Anglo-Saxon date recovered within eastern England. The chronological range spans the early fifth to mid eighth centuries, beginning with the end of Roman authority and rule in the late fourth century and ending with the widespread cessation of furnished burial practices in the late seventh century (Bayliss et al. 2013, 464, 479). The geographical focus encompasses the modern counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire – representing the ancient early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Lindsey and East Anglia (Fig. 1.1). This thesis presents the first definitive catalogue of Anglo-Saxon metalwork carrying human imagery recovered from this region and dating to this period. It takes inspiration from recent transitions in thinking on early Anglo-Saxon art and focuses on the portrayal of the human form in early Anglo-Saxon and conversion period art, examining how early Anglo-Saxon craftworkers depicted the human form on metal objects and used metal to depict the whole and partial human form. The deployment of human imagery is analysed over time in terms of object type and the form of decoration used and the meaning/s inherent in the use and deployment of human imagery on metal artefacts is explored with the roles of maker and wearer in mind. Through wider contextual investigation of other regions and time periods, this thesis also debates the significance of anthropomorphic

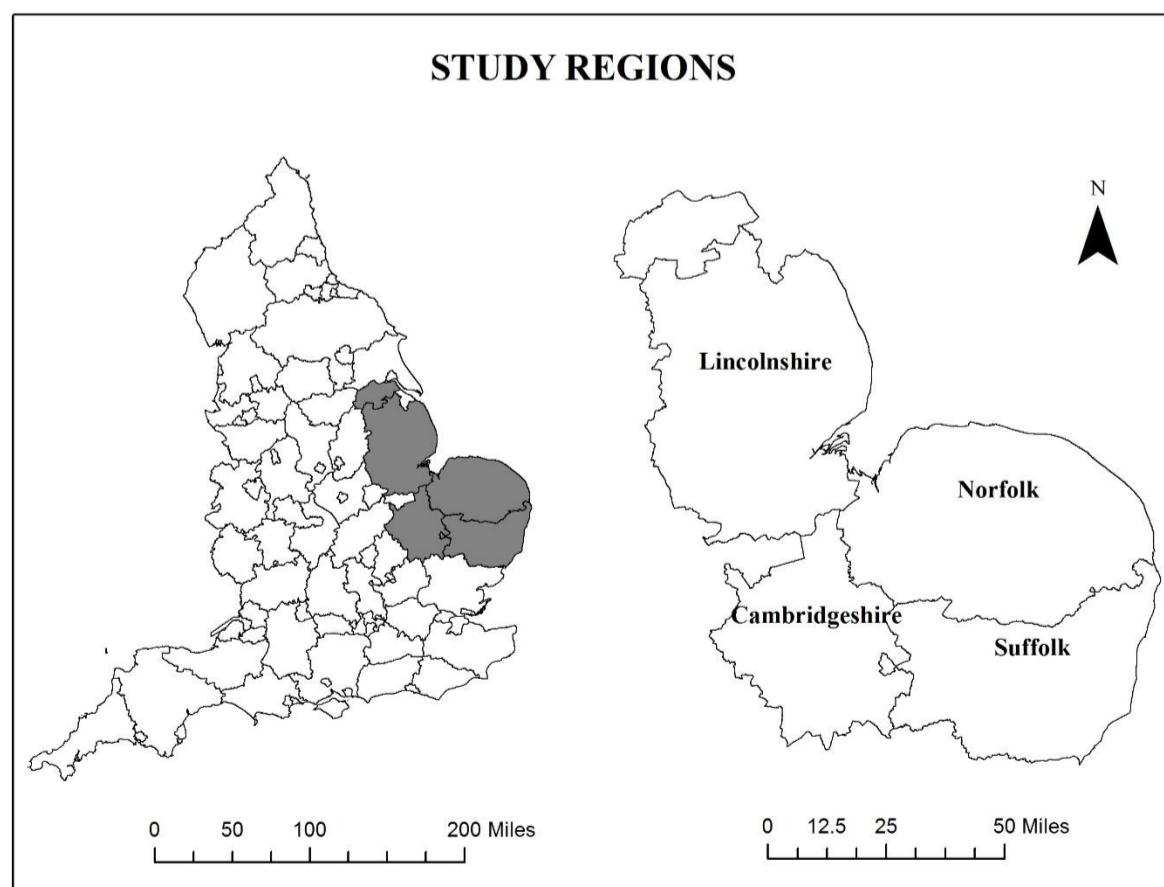


Fig. 1.1 Map of regions under study in this thesis

art and the shifting role it played in early Anglo-Saxon English society and new observations are made on local and regional preference and changing conceptions of the human form and its importance to emerging local to supra-local and elite identities.

1.2 ANGLO-SAXON ART PAST AND PRESENT

Ancient objects and their decoration have long played a key role in the study of the early medieval European past. Since Thomas Browne (1893), antiquarians and latterly archaeologists have worked to record, depict and catalogue and interpret material finds from the early medieval past. Anglo-Saxonism became popular in the seventeenth century, when ethnicity and origins became a primary concern in the growing field of antiquarianism (Smith 1856; Hawkes 1990; Swann 2001, 113; Hills 2006, 74-5; Semple 2013, 41, 69). The collection of ‘things’ proliferated, driven by a need to authenticate ideas and claims about English origin and descent (Thomas 2006, 7, 13). In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries scholars worked to translate Anglo-Saxon texts in order to fuel this burgeoning nationalist agenda. By contrast, early medieval artefacts remained almost entirely unrecognised (McCombe 2011, 50). One of the first key Anglo-Saxon collections was brought together during 1757 to 1773, by the vigorous work of Rev Bryan Faussett who identified these objects incorrectly as the products of “‘Romans Britonised” or “Britons Romanised” from the period immediately before the migration of the Germanic tribes’ (McCombe 2011, 49). In the late eighteenth century, *Nenia Brittanica* written by another clergyman Rev James Douglas provided the first overview of a recognised Migration Period metalwork collection deriving from cemetery excavations (McCombe 2011, 62). At broadly the same time, pre-Norman decorated stone sculpture was recognised included within catalogues of medieval monuments and paintings (e.g. Gough 1790; Lang 2001, 1).

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as nationalism became rampant in European politics and society, invasion and migration became key questions for Anglo-Saxon studies and the study of pots, dress fittings and weapons formed the mainstay of debate (Lucy 2000, 163-5). ‘Anglo-Saxon’ style was at the forefront of these discussions: Roman techniques and the imitation of classical designs on ‘Germanic’ artefacts were identified with the designs on late fourth-century belt-fittings discovered on the Roman frontier in the regions of the Rhine and the Danube (Lucy 2000, 167). Migration Period art was thought to represent different cultures, often invading ‘cultures’. The apparent translation of late Roman designs on the fifth-century metalwork discovered in funerary contents in England was considered by many as evidence for the invasion of England by Germanic groups (e.g. Leeds 1912, 1945). Leeds, for example, identified saucer brooches carrying geometric designs as material evidence for an invasion: brooches were considered dress fittings of the females that accompanied male Germanic invaders (Leeds 1912). This emphasis on migration has continued to dominate scholarship. By comparison with prehistoric archaeology in the UK, early medieval research has been slow to shake off the shadow of culture history (Moreland 2000; Williams 2007b, 3). Early medieval archaeology is still hampered by culture history labels. These are still used to define specific cultures and regions and art styles (e.g. Foster 1996; Graham-Campbell 2003; Henderson and Henderson 2004; Wilson 2008; Karkov 2011; Webster 2012a). A number of important exhibitions and subsequent published catalogues have helped define early medieval art styles and create a definitive understanding of differing types of object, their chronologies and varied regional styles, however, such publications have continued to embed traditional labels in early medieval studies (Backhouse et al. 1984; Wilson 1984; Backhouse and Webster 1991; Foster 1996; Graham-Campbell 2013). Such cataloguing is of course crucial, but the way in which catalogues have charted different ethnic/ cultural groups – Pictish, Irish and Anglo-Saxon – has resulted in an entrenched, fragmented perspective of the development of early medieval art and metalwork. In the twenty-first century, some early medieval scholars still work within a cultural-historical framework (Moreland 2000; Lucy and Reynolds 2002b, 8). The labelling of culture groups and time periods has proved difficult to shed. Williams however, has argued that academics need to think beyond labels such as Germanic, Anglian and paganism (2002b, 49) and Sam Lucy (2002) proposed that often social identities should be examined rather than ethnicities; arguing that ethnicity was bound to nationalist agendas.

This progressive thinking derives from discussions of burial data rather than art, but is still having an impact (e.g. Halsall 2006; Pohl 2013). Much of our corpus of early medieval material derives from the funerary sphere. By the late twentieth century, objects found in graves were no longer perceived as personal belongings, but instead interpreted as items deposited by mourners as a projected construct about the perceived role and status of the deceased. An influential paper by Peter Ucko recognised the high variability in mortuary behaviour and perceptions regarding the dead and the afterlife ‘between cultures and within a culture’ based on historical archaeological material (1969, 273). He questioned whether it is useful to reconstruct ‘burial customs’ and ‘identify different groups of people’ and ‘different religious beliefs’ (Ucko 1969, 273). In early medieval archaeology, the treatment of the corpse was considered to contain a complex of symbolic messages concerning the identity of the individual (Pader 1982; Richards 1984, 1987; Stoodley 1999). Weaponry, for example, is no longer accepted as a simple signal of a warrior’s burial, instead it is thought to signal a complex array of social aspects such as status, age and role (Härke 1990, 1997a). Likewise, female items are no longer accepted just as dress fittings or jewellery: the small pendant-like objects and girdle hangers in female graves for example are now thought to symbolise a particular age threshold and status, perhaps connected to the control and management of the household (Meaney 1981, 247).

Mike Parker-Pearson ignited the ‘archaeological study of the funerary practices that the living perform for the dead’ – the dead, he argued, ‘do not bury themselves, but are treated and disposed by the living’ (Parker-Pearson 1999, 3). Lucy and Reynolds (2002b, 8) suggested that more importance should be given to why and who an object was made for, the object biography and how it ended up deposited in a burial context. Inspired by such changes, discussions of the Anglo-Saxon funerary rite have shifted towards ideas such as ritual performance, the social use of space and place and the use of such funerary activity as a means of mediating and facilitating group and individual identities (Carver 2000, 38; Price 2002; Williams 2002b, 47). These theoretical advances have not yet been matched in current research on Anglo-Saxon art, which remains dogged by conceptions of a pan-Germanic belief system and fixed on topics such as origin myths and shamanism (Fern 2010; Pluskowski 2010; Sanmark 2010; Hedeager 2011; Martin 2011).

Prehistoric archaeology has played a primary role in enabling early medieval specialists to rethink the funerary sphere (Carver 2000; Williams 2006; Semple 2013). Prehistoric art is also now studied in terms of its effect on people rather than just its ‘meaning’ (Bailey 2005; Skeates 2005; eds. Renfrew and Morley 2007; Bradley 2009). Cognitive archaeology (which emerged in the 1980s) encouraged archaeologists to use art to examine how the minds of people in the past worked and the way in ‘which that working shaped their actions’ (Renfrew 2005, 41). In a world made up of sensory experiences and interactions with the physical world, it is crucial for archaeologists to engage with the idea of marshalling evidence for and evoking an understanding of human thought and senses (Gosden 2001, 164-5). This change means researchers have moved from examining the meaning of an object or an image, to exploring the role of that object and its decoration: images can now be examined as having an active part in social transformations (Williams 2006, 140-141, 2011).

Such thinking is finally having an impact on the study of early medieval art, largely through work in Scandinavia rather than in England (e.g. Back Danielsson 1999; Kristoffersen 2000a; Lindstrøm and Kristoffersen 2001; Back Danielsson 2007). New agendas are being set by recent publications that have begun to take a post-modern stance on the interpretation of early imagery. The study of the corporeal human body and its role in identity creation is at the fore of current archaeological debates (Fowler 2002; Williams 2004b; eds. Chapman and Gaydarska 2006; Graves 2007a, 2007b; eds. Renfrew and Morley 2007; eds. Boric and Robb 2008b; Fowler 2008; eds. Rebay-Salisbury et al. 2010; Croucher 2012). The importance of studying early medieval corporeal practices in Continental Europe (Effros 2002), England (Williams 2006) and Scandinavia (Back Danielsson 2008) is now well-established. The social significance, however, of the represented human body is still an area in need of further study. For several years it seemed that full-bodied human imagery was limited to a few high-status pieces, leading David Wilson to question if it was a pagan taboo for the Anglo-Saxon artisan to represent the human figure naturalistically or if

it was an outcome of a pagan iconoclasm (1984, 27). The PAS, launched in 1997, has changed this. The number of objects with human imagery discovered in eastern England through metal detecting has almost doubled the known catalogue in a decade (Fig. 3.1). We know now that the represented human form was an important constituent in Style I art in England (Leigh 1980, 1984; Dickinson 2009, 1) and from new finds we can also see that the full-bodied human form became important in the late sixth and seventh centuries. Full-bodied human imagery received attention in the past from Hauck, who made connections between the figures and legendary figures from Roman mythology (Hauck 1982, 342). Animal art has seen the main discussion (Dickinson 1979; Speake 1980; Høilund Nielsen 1999; Dickinson 2002, 2005; Fern 2005, 2007, 2010). Other authors have considered these figures as representations of cult and ritual. The naked figure with horned-headress on the belt buckle from Finglesham, for example, was assigned to the cult of Odin (Chadwick Hawkes et al. 1965). Even though the potential significance of full-bodied figurines distributed along the eastern seaboard has been noted (Pestell 2012, 86), no study has investigated the shifting usage, role and meaning of human representation in the early Anglo-Saxon era. To date, Meaney's brief discussion of figural art remains a lone synthesis (Meaney 1981), with the exception of Pollington et al which lists and describes some human depictions in the repertoire (2010, 427-461). This gap in scholarship and the new data exemplifies a need to examine human representation. Human figural imagery – partial or whole – therefore presents an opportunity to investigate concepts like the body and personhood. Objects and ideas were not passive things but they played a role in identity creation for social groups and communities, which were bounded by varied social and political agendas and behaviour.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This thesis aims to redress the recent focus on animal imagery in early Anglo-Saxon art by exploring the use and role of human imagery on metal objects in the fifth to mid eighth centuries. The study region is the east of England and this thesis presents the first catalogue of metal objects carrying human imagery dating to AD 400-750 recovered from the counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. This data set is used to explore:

- how the meaning and role of human imagery changed across time
- whether regional or local variations are apparent in its use and deployment; and
- how it was influenced by the social and religious changes in Anglo-Saxon England in the seventh and early eighth centuries.

This catalogue of imagery is investigated in light of recent and extensive published research on the deployment and meaning of human imagery on early medieval art in pre-Christian and early Christian Europe.

To meet these aims, this thesis sets out to achieve the following objectives:

- to identify and analyse the corpus of anthropomorphic imagery found on metal objects, derived from graves, spot finds and the material record in general, from East Anglia, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire in the period AD 400-750.
- to assess the broad take up of different types of imagery over time and establish evidence for regional or local variation in the choice and use of imagery.
- to analyse the relationships between image, artefact, use/ purpose and archaeological context.

- to investigate the developments and changing portrayals of human imagery and their possible influences and meanings.
- to interpret the use and meaning of imagery in terms of the known narratives of power, identity and belief in England between *c.* AD 450 – 650, focusing on themes of gender, gesture, performance and metaphor.

This study focusses on furnished inhumation graves and not cremation deposits as the number of useful metal finds in the latter is minimal. This study recognises that there are seven surviving metal objects from Spong Hill and Caistor-by-Norwich that carry human representation, which contribute to our understanding of the types of human representation portrayed in this time period. Although it acknowledges that there may be some social implications in connection to their use in the cremation rite, this is not explored here as there is not sufficient surviving data to legitimatise an exploratory study on this theme. This study does not examine material culture from known settlement sites, it is well-established that ornamented objects are predominantly found in burial contexts (Dickinson 2009, 1). It is acknowledged that occasionally ‘female’ assemblages (e.g. glass beads, needles, spindle whorls and brooches) have been found in *grubenhaus*, such as Car Dyke in Cambridgeshire (Hamerow 2012, 138). This is not explored here as the majority of ornamented objects derive from mortuary contexts (Dickinson 2009), but it is worth noting that recent literature has started to explore the possible significances of deposits at settlement sites (Hamerow 2006; Sofield 2012). Finally, bracteates carrying human representation are not included in this study as none were recovered from a grave context, but these are discussed in later chapters in terms of stylistic parallels. If this was an art historical study of human representation I could have included these objects, but the focus is on funerary. Bracteates operate outside the normal fifth to seventh century art styles and are their own separate genre of work, deserving a whole thesis to explore key questions – such as their connection with Anglo-Saxon art, their archaeological context and their treatment. Recent literature has started to explore bracteates from early Anglo-Saxon England in terms of single deposition, hoards and central places (Behr 2010b; Behr and Pestell forthcoming).

1.4 CHRONOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The time period under discussion is recognised as one of the key transitional periods in British archaeology, framed by the ending of Roman colonisation and the beginnings of early medieval polities and kingdoms (Campbell 2007, 1). The collapse of the Western Roman Empire caused social instability, but it does not appear to have triggered a series of dramatic social changes in England in the early fifth century. Britain in the sixth to seventh centuries was made up of individual localities and petty kingdoms and it is likely that complex and localised social dynamics existed, that influenced the varied use of objects in diverse social contexts (Lucy 1998). In this thesis, the terms used to describe time periods and their chronological dates can be found below in Table 1.

The idea of a mass migration has come under fire in recent literature (Moreland 2010). Well-excavated and published archaeological sites demonstrate instead evidence for continuity from the Late Roman period (Carver et al. 2009). Recent literature in bioarchaeology has exposed a greater complex dynamic of movement in the late Roman and early medieval era. Isotopic research supports the argument of internal change. Strontium and Oxygen isotopic analysis revealed that people in the fourth to sixth centuries demonstrate a more complex pattern of individual and population movement than which grave goods has previously indicated (Budd et al. 2004). Analysis of tooth enamel demonstrated that some individuals found in the fifth- to seventh- century cemetery at West Heslerton (North Yorkshire) have a ‘cultural rather than geographical marker’ (Montgomery et al. 2005, 126). Gowland examined Anglo-Saxon and Romano-British skeletons for differences in growth, dental wear and dental development (Gowland 2007). She found that the eruption ages and dental wear for juveniles were similar across these two time periods, pointing towards a ‘closer connection between late Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon burial

populations' (Gowland 2007, 57). Evidence also suggests that at some sites natives and nonlocals were buried in the same cemetery. Isotope ratios of strontium and oxygen at the early medieval cemetery at Bowl Hole, Bamburgh (Northumberland) found that over 50% of those buried were nonlocal, some individuals spent their childhood in Scandinavia, the southern Mediterranean or North Africa (Groves et al. 2013). This research strongly indicates the small-scale movements or continuities of people *and* it indicates that migration which was not necessarily restricted to the known historical framework.

The east of England remains distinctive, however, with the emergence of cremation and different object types and settlement architecture in the fifth-century marking changes in social composition and subsistence (Hines 1984; Hills et al. 1987; Hamerow 1997). Cremation practice diminishes in the sixth century and becomes a minority practice in the middle of the sixth century, increasingly restricted to the higher and elite segments of society (Bayliss et al. 2013, 526). Male and female furnished inhumation burials were abandoned in the 660s (*cal* AD 671 furnished burial for women and *cal* AD 669 for men) (Bayliss et al. 2013, 464, 479). Furnished male and female inhumations were at their peak until the mid-sixth centuries, a drop in the rate of furnished male graves during the 550s and 560s until the early seventh century with the appearance of high-status male barrow burials (Bayliss et al. 2013, 477). This drop is paralleled by female furnished inhumation graves, but in the 660s there is a 'new peak' in these types of graves and a 'rival in the popularity of ostentatiously furnished burial for women' (Bayliss et al. 2013, 479). The cessation of furnished burial AD 669-671 is later than key historical dates in early Anglo-Saxon England. Recent radiocarbon-dated graves indicate that furnished burial continued well after 'the mission of St Augustine of Canterbury in AD 597 and the Synod of Whitby in AD 664' (Bayliss et al. 2013, 466, 551). The account of St Augustine's mission is recorded in Bede's Ecclesiastical History, written in the eighth century and relying heavily on 'fragments of information which came to hum through tradition, the relation of friends, or documentary evidence' (Stenton 1989, 187) 187

In the sixth to seventh centuries there are general reductions in the quantity and geographical distribution of burial with grave goods, which are considered to have been independent of conversion (Bayliss et al. 2013). Rather these transformations can be accounted for other social and economic factors such as a decline in 'disposal material possessions' and a shift in expressions of individual and group social identity (Bayliss et al. 2013, 523-553). The cessation of grave goods is found more widely in western Norway and central Sweden – 'where conversion to Christianity cannot be a factor' (Bayliss et al. 2013, 551). The conversion period is described as 'the time period covered by the process of conversion to Christianity in England' (Geake 1997, 309). Geake suggests this period may have begun in *c.* AD 600 based on the re-emergence of Roman-styled accessories used in furnished burial, but she argues that it was not a religious shift. Rather, it was a secular response to the presence of the Church in England and a recreation of '*Romanitas*' as a means to 'assert and consolidate kingship' (Geake 1997, 295-7). The end of furnished inhumation graves is comparable with the end of cremation rite; both become 'socially-restricted burial practices in the years immediately before they were abandoned' (Bayliss et al. 2013, 526).

This time frame provides a number of opportunities:

- this is an era in which furnished burial was the norm in eastern England and when furnished burial rites began to change and disappear. The historical importance of this time frame and the survival of a complex material culture thus offer unrivalled opportunities to examine changing perceptions of the represented body and what this might signify within a dramatically altering world.
- recent research has begun to recognise the likelihood of a remnant and surviving 'British' population in the fifth to sixth centuries (cf. Härke 2011), which provides an opportunity to question long-held assumptions about human imagery and the influences on Anglo-Saxon art.

- refinement and advance on current approaches will also for the first time extract a greater meaning from this particular corpus of anthropomorphic imagery, which could have relevance for archaeological study beyond the narrow confines of the early medieval era in England, on early medieval Europe and even perhaps on human imagery in late prehistoric societies.

Published research on specific object types and art styles means that artefacts can be broadly dated (e.g. Salin 1904; Hines 1997a; Høilund Nielsen 1999; Dickinson 2005; Suzuki 2008). Established and tested regional chronologies provide a framework for the data collated in this study (e.g. Hines 1999). Meticulously recorded, dated and published cemeteries like Sutton Hoo are drawn on here as case-studies. The cemetery sites of East Anglia and Lincolnshire have also seen close study in recent years with a focus on social structures (Ravn 2003; Penn et al. 2007) and the varied purposes of cemeteries for early Anglo-Saxon communities (Williams 2002a). The refinement of chronology and the developments in archaeological research are ripe for the study of human representational art in early Anglo-Saxon England.

Table 1 Terms used to describe time periods and their chronological dates

Periodization	Date	Location	Reference
Early Anglo-Saxon	c. AD 450 – 650	South-east Britain	(Dickinson 2009, 1)
Conversion period or 'Middle' Anglo-Saxon Period	c. AD 660s and 670s	South-east Britain	(Bayliss et al. 2013, 553)
	c. AD 600		(Geake 1997, 309-310)
Anglo-Saxon period	c. AD 410/ 11 – 1066	South-east Britain	(Bayliss et al. 2013, 27)
Early medieval period	c. AD 400 – 1100	Britain	(Williams 2006, 3)
Migration Period/ Early Germanic Iron Age	c. AD 400 – 550	Scandinavia	(Franceschi et al. 2008, 304)
Merovingian Period/ Vendel Period/ Late Germanic Iron Age	c. AD 550 – 800	Scandinavia	(Franceschi et al. 2008, 304)
Viking Age	c. AD 800 – 1050	Scandinavia	(Franceschi et al. 2008, 304)

1.5 STUDY REGIONS

The geographic region under study comprises the modern English counties of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire (Fig. 1.1).

Geography/ geology

Evidence from the Domesday Book and Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian place-names for woodlands has identified that early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries were mainly located within open lands on the edge of woodlands (Roberts and Wrathmell 2003, 75). More often, cemeteries in the south and east are located within or near areas of brown sand or alluvium, the marsh or fenlands. Cemeteries in Lincolnshire that contain burials which include image-carrying objects cluster around key navigable rivers, including the rivers Witham and Trent and the estuary the river Humber.

Political framework

Post-Roman southern and eastern Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries 'lost any political cohesion', but by the late sixth century leaders of small communities were 'styling themselves kings' (Yorke 1990, 13). The *Tribal Hidage*, dating to the seventh century, accounts major kingdoms including the East Angles, Lindsey and smaller provinces in the eastern midlands (Yorke 1990, 13). The *Historia Brittonum* recounts the East Anglian kings called the Wuffingas, suggesting an origins for this royal house in the 'second or third quarters of the sixth century' (Yorke 1990, 61). The ostentatious boat-burials at Snape and Sutton Hoo acted as political statements in the seventh century, promoting Scandinavian connections in response to Christian Frankish Europe (Carver 2005, 306). After the demise of Sutton Hoo, the establishment of trading site in Ipswich articulates the development of dynastic power and regional kingdom-organization of the seventh and eighth centuries (Carver 2005, 498; Scull 2013, 47-9).

Anglo-Saxon and British

Late Roman burial practices shifted from cremation to inhumation with occasional depositions of spindle whorls, knives, glass beads and pins in the fourth century (Philpott 1993; Taylor 2001). By the fifth century, however, large cremation cemeteries were distributed across southern and eastern England. 'British elites' in the fifth and sixth centuries are suggested to have inhabited Lincoln, a Roman town, based on the burials and possible Romano-British church 'orientated east-west' and evidence of Class 1 and Type G penannular brooches and the high number of late Celtic hanging bowls (Green 2012, 66-71). Inhumation burial soon succeeded cremation as the dominate rite with burial in inhumation-only and mixed-rite cemeteries.

Characteristic archaeology

Some of the largest cremation cemeteries in early Anglo-Saxon England are located in Lindsey and northern East Anglia, including Loveden Hill and Spong Hill (Williams 2002a). Boat-burials are exclusive to Snape and Sutton Hoo in south East Anglia (Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001; Carver 2005). Particular feminine dress fittings are also characteristic of these regions, the Class C Form C3 wrist-clasp carrying Style I human faces are found in East Anglia and Cambridgeshire (and also Northamptonshire) (Hines 1993, 67-73). Other dress fittings from female graves could be described as an 'Anglian' form of costume, which often includes two cruciform, annular or small brooches worn on the shoulders and a brooch on the chest fastening a cloak, but there is some variation (Lucy 2000, 83-84). Male graves have less object variety and generally are represented with shields, spears or swords, but some distinctions have been made. In the 'Anglian' regions, bosses are typically found on the head and chest, suggesting the shield had covered the face, again there is some variation (Dickinson and Härke 1992, 65).

Excavations, major protagonists, recent developments including PAS

East Anglia and Lincolnshire have seen extensive exploration since the eighteenth century and finds and discoveries are well-published (e.g. Douglas 1793; Neville 1854; Thomas 1887). Key discoveries like the burial ground at Sutton Hoo and the subsequent archaeological investigations and comprehensive excavation reports have dramatically altered our knowledge of this period and played a fundamental role in the study of early Anglo-Saxon art and archaeology. In 1938 Basil Brown opened up Mounds 2, 3 and 4 at Sutton Hoo, discovering material including sword fittings and fragments of gilt bronze (Evans 2002, 16-18). The excavation was soon appropriated by Charles Phillips, W.F. Grimes, Stuart Piggott, Margaret Guido and O.G.S Crawford (Carver 1998b, 11-18) and this 'intervention' has been described as 'the point at which the collection assumed a status of national interest' (McCombe 2011, 202).

Conversion and Anglo-Saxon Kingship

The chambered ship-burial in Mound One was linked to historical sources written in the late Anglo-Saxon world, including the poem *Beowulf* which was drawn on to discuss the conversion to Christianity. Those leading excavations considered the items and the ship to belong to the ‘pagan Anglo-Saxons’ (Phillips 1940, 21). Others thought objects like the spoons and the silver bowls with cross-shaped ornamentation were overtly Christian symbols signalling an orthodox Christian standpoint (Lundqvist 1948, 134). In the late 1940s, the discovery of Sutton Hoo provoked numerous publications exploring possible connections between the mortuary practices and ornamented objects of the ‘East Anglian royal house’ and Uppland in Sweden, strengthened again by literary evidence of *Beowulf* (cf. Magoun 1953, 220; Welch 1987). Following models of ‘Germanic sacral kingship’ largely written by German authors in the 1930s and 50s, Chaney suggested the interactions between Anglo-Saxon East Anglia and Scandinavia also exemplify a similar model (Chaney 1970, 11). He suggested that objects from Mound One such as the standard, helmet, whetstone and shield represented allusions to sacral kingship (Chaney 1970, 7, 11). His argument, however, has since been discredited as there are no descriptions of what constitutes sacral kingship in the sixth and seventh centuries (Canning 1996, 28). Even so, objects from Mound One are frequently drawn on as comparative material to conceptualise ‘sacral kingship’ in the early medieval world (Mitchell 1985; Dobat 2006; e.g. Noble et al. 2013, 1147).

‘Golden Age of East Anglia’

The ornamented objects from Mound One were heralded as a ‘revelation of a new Pagan Saxon art’ in which ‘period-tendencies in the general style’ and ‘various influences that had not previously been so combined’ could be recognised (Kendrick 1940, 38). Sutton Hoo was the first thorough and descriptive volume on objects and ornamentation from an early Anglo-Saxon burial ground (Bruce-Mitford 1975-83).¹ Research continued to focus on the ornamented objects from Mound One. The animal-interlacing, the garnet cloisonné and mosaic glass and filigree work carried on early Anglo-Saxon objects from Mound One inspired the investigation of possible origins and technical influences of these designs (Speake 1980; Dodwell 1982, 4; Wilson 1984; East 1985). The shoulder-clasps, for example, were made with garnet-cloisonné motifs that parallel the carpet-like pattern depicted on Northumbrian manuscripts, implying the impact of pre-Christian elite metalwork on seventh to eighth century Christian items (Wilson 1984, 26, 38; Arrhenius 1985, 155). Other objects such as the Byzantine dish and gold coin were seen to represent ‘direct trade’ and ‘commerce’ with the ‘Eastern Empire’ (Dodwell 1982, 155).

Cognitive Archaeology

Despite Ellis Davidson’s nascent suggestion to explore ‘the significance of the burial mound in the minds of those who raised it’ (1950, 169), it was not until the emergence of cognitive archaeology in the 1980s that ‘ideology’ was recognised as a crucial concept by early medieval specialists. During further excavations at Sutton Hoo between 1983-1992, Mound One remained central to published research (Dooley-Fairchild 2012, 228). Martin Carver, who led these fresh investigations, was a key protagonist in the interpretation of the burial ground. He saw Mound One as embodying perceived or actual ideological expressions that shaped early kingdoms in the early Anglo-Saxon world (Carver 1989, 1992a, 1998a, 20, 2000, 2011, 36). In the past two decades the manufacturing techniques and the images carried on objects from Mound One have been explored in terms of identity, role and ideology of the people that produced and used these items (Bailey 1992; Wickham-Crowley 1992; Høilund Nielsen 1999; Coatsworth and Pinder 2002; Dickinson 2002). The discovery of Sutton Hoo also prompted the reassessment of known high-status barrow burials, such as Asthall in Oxfordshire and Snape in Suffolk (Leeds 1924; Dickinson and Speake 1992; Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001).

¹ Other collections, such as Taplow, discovered before Sutton Hoo are still without a thorough publication

The theoretical approach used to explore the significance of Sutton Hoo in the early Anglo-Saxon world paved the way for early medievalists to explore the cognitive landscape (Semple 1998; Williams 1998). The impact of Sutton Hoo is still visible in Anglo-Saxon scholarship *and* is also discernible in Viking Scandinavian research. Current research in early medieval mortuary archaeology is exploring the formation of ideology through conceptual paradigms including memory, belief and performance (Price 2002; Williams 2002a, 2003; Semple 2004; Williams 2004b, 2006; Devlin 2007; Williams 2007a; Price 2008; Semple 2008; eds. Carver et al. 2010; Price 2010; Semple 2013).

Regional Publications and the PAS

There are numerous published recent excavation reports (e.g. Cambridge Antiquarian Society: Quarto Publications, Cambridge Archaeological Unit, East Anglian Archaeology (EAA) and Council for British Archaeology and Oxbow series). County-based journals – such as the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology and History (SIAH) – provide a useful synthesis of recent stray or metal-detector finds, archaeological sites and thematic discussions. These journals are essential for the study of non-treasure finds and small-scale excavations. The regional-based journal EAA is crucial for the publication of archaeological sites in East Anglia. This journal is an academically refereed series with an editorial board of senior archaeologists from the region, maintaining and regulating the clarity and usefulness of the published material. County-based books are useful in terms of detailed knowledge of the topography, but are restricted in their discussion by the limits of the modern county. The publication on Anglo-Saxon Suffolk by Plunkett (2005), for example, provides a limited narrative as Suffolk forms part of East Anglia, an historically attested territory by the seventh century (Carver 1989; Yorke 1990, 58-71; Scull 1992; Wade 1993). A series of publications have provided a social and political account of historic kingdoms based on archaeological and historical sources; and linguistic and place-name evidence – such as the kingdom of Lindsey and East Anglia (Leahy 2007a; Green 2012; eds. Bates and Liddiard 2013). The PAS is represented in each county and has enhanced public relations and connections with metal-detector groups, subsequently increasing the number of reported finds. A metal-detector find, for instance, of a rare male figurine from Friston in Suffolk (PAS SF-01ACA7) recorded by the PAS has increased the number of human figural designs known in early Anglo-Saxon art (Brundle 2013).

Surviving and recovered metalwork

The metalwork of early medieval date that survives from these counties has seen considerable study. Strong correlations have already been identified between contemporary decorative repertoires in Scandinavia and Continental Europe and the art of this English region (Salin 1904; Hines 1984; Dickinson 1991; Høilund Nielsen 1999; Ljungkvist 2008). Evidence of trade and exchange indicates interactions across North West Europe (Hodges 1989). Trading links between Denmark and England are attested by evidence of similar amber and glass beads (Brugmann 2004, 30-2). Imported items from the Rhineland and Kent such as quern-stones and glass claw-beakers indicate interaction and exchange with near and distant neighbours (Hinton 1999, 57). Trading centres plotted on coastal locations in the North Sea and shared styles of brooches in England and Scandinavia, suggests the movement of style and technique. Helgö, for example, in Sweden produced 10,000 mould fragments (the majority being for square-headed brooches, equal-armed brooches and buckles), hearths, scrap iron and smelting pits indicating a large metalworking complex (Holmqvist 1975, 127-132; Leahy 2003a, 167-8). The seventh-century princely burial ground at Sutton Hoo provides an excellent exemplar of the continuity of political connections and exchange networks with Scandinavia and the Irish Sea basin in the late sixth to seventh centuries (Bruce-Mitford 1975-83; Carver 2005).

Research on metal dress fittings has in particular provided evidence of close affinities with comparable and contemporary items from Western Norway (Hines 1984; Plunkett 2005, 32). John Hines has claimed that Norway, rather than other geographically closer areas along the continental coast, provides the closest correspondence for changes in art styles, burial practice and the range of artefact types, in the sixth century (Hines 1984, 284). Significant social links between England

and Norway are therefore assumed and a common motivation or reason is suspected for these parallel changes (Hines 1984, 284). By the late sixth- to seventh- centuries a shift seems to have taken place in the range and types of objects in circulation and in mortuary practices connected to these object types. These changes are recognised as the result of influences from Merovingian Gaul (Welch 2011, 267). The arrival of Roman Christianity in Kent is thought to have promoted considerable social changes and introduced new influences. Bede accounts that missionaries landed in Kent in 597 and soon began converting the ‘English kings’ (Niles 1991, 120-121). The Sutton Hoo boat-burial funerals have been argued as being political statements, which served as ‘theatres of death’ to promote Scandinavian connections in response to Christian Frankish Europe (Carver 1992a, 330, 1995, 2005, 306).

The regions under consideration were thus interconnected with Scandinavia and Merovingian Gaul. Eastern England stands out as a hotspot of exchange and communication. These regions provide an ideal ground in which to explore the exchange of art motifs and ideas with other contemporary early medieval societies. These counties are rich in finds and as a result of the PAS, the corpus is no longer limited to finds from funerary contexts. There is a wealth of cemetery and settlement activity and a number of influential museum collections that provide ready access to early Anglo-Saxon metalwork. This rich array of data and the geographical spread – covering a core part of East Anglia and part of the ancient kingdom of Lindsey – also allows for a consideration of variations in style and use between two known contemporary kingdoms, as well as interrogation of *intra*-regional variations in the use of human imagery over time. In this way localised preferences for the deployment of human imagery on objects in the grave and on the corpse itself can be explored.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THESIS

This thesis is organised into eight chapters. In the next chapter, a review of relevant literature is presented. This is not a traditional literature review, instead it provides a critical exploration of the relevant themes and theoretical standpoints that have dominated the study of early Anglo-Saxon art. In this way Chapter 2 is more than a mere description, it is a stepping off point for this new study, setting out the theoretical groundwork for a new exploration of human imagery in Anglo-Saxon art. The literature review recognises that some representational art can be difficult to decipher. Very few published corpora present line-illustrations for each object and often photographic pictures in corpus volumes are of the entire object and the detailed imagery cannot always be clearly discerned. This indicates the need to visit museums and make first-hand observations of the image-content. Chapter 3, therefore, describes this process and the other sources used to gather data. Drawing on theoretical perspectives explored in the literature review, this chapter finds viable solutions to possible limitations and issues with data collection. The collected data is presented in Chapters 4-5 and includes a number of unrecorded and unpublished items that were found during first-hand investigations of museum collections. The thematic sub-sections in this chapter reflect the key themes defined in the literature review. Chapters 6-8 make sense of the findings from the region under study and investigate the data in terms of current theoretical perspectives that were examined in the literature review. Chapter 5 identified that female individuals predominantly wore objects carrying human representation. Chapter 6, therefore, focusses on how female bodily identity might have been expressed through decorated objects and how this might indicate the way in which the individual might have been perceived. This chapter makes some conjecture in terms of the potential role of human images and image-carrying objects in social performance. It recognises that the way in which the human face is deployed might refer to the re-conceptualisation of the human image, its meaning and use. The next chapter expands on this re-conceptualisation and examines the development of human representation over time and the social themes that are embedded within anthropomorphic portrayal. Chapter 7 suggests that the emergence of new ways of portraying the human form in the seventh century was an internal development that was strongly associated with other corporeal practices. Three crucial findings identified in Chapter 7 are explored in greater depth in Chapter 8: the development of full-bodied figures, a new repertoire of gestural expressions and

the first portrayal of the biologically-defined female sex. These themes relate to the shifting interplay between male and female expression and identity in the conversion period. Chapter 9 draws together all the key findings made in this thesis and makes conclusions in the context of early medieval Europe and the directions for further work.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Perspectives and Approaches

2.1 INTRODUCTION

What is art? What does the term imply in relation to the material culture and the population of Anglo-Saxon England?

According to Collingwood, 'art' derived from the Latin *ars* meaning 'the power to produce a preconceived result by means of consciously controlled and directed action' (Collingwood 1958, 15). In prehistoric studies, debate on the correct use of the term 'art' and what it implies has questioned the purpose and function of pictorial images (Bradley 2009, 3-4, 26-50). This debate has led to extensive work on Palaeolithic art, cognitive functions and religion – crucially questioning *why* Palaeolithic people made these images (Lewis-Williams 1991; eds. Chippindale and Taçon 1998, 2002; Helvenston et al. 2003). More widely, studies in prehistoric archaeology have explored how imagery was 'experienced in its original context,' how the motifs might have operated and what are the social implications for the development of imagery (Lewis-Williams 1991, 2002; Bailey 2005; Malafouris 2007, 292; Bailey 2008). Despite the large body of scholarship on early Anglo-Saxon 'art', a theoretical framework for the known corpus of decorative motifs has not yet been set out. Webster describes early Anglo-Saxon ornamentation as 'minor art' – referring to the 'scale' of the designs 'rather than significance' (Webster 2003, 12) while others discuss a 'symbolic repertoire' (Pluskowski 2010, 103) and 'social symbol' and 'symbols of power' (Dickinson 2005, 111, 161). Kristoffersen in relation to Migration Period art on Scandinavian brooches and sword mounts has put forward an even more ambitious idea: that the decorative repertoire itself is agent, 'penetrating', embodying and transforming it (2000a). Arguing using analogues from ethnographic data from North-West tribal American art, she proposes that objects might acquire their definitive existence through their utilitarian function, objects decorated with animals take on the active nature of the animal itself, protecting and keeping active watch over the wearer or contents: 'What we see as ornaments in the shape of animals are not ornaments at all – it is the creation of the animal in a flat form' (Kristoffersen 2000a, 272). In the last decade, the agency of material culture has seen extensive discussion (Latour 2005; Fowler 2008; eds. Knappett and Malafouris 2008; Robb 2010), but even this approach has now been rejected by some in favour of the idea that neither things nor humans transform or 'shape the course of events', but rather the network of non-human and human (Robb 2010, 505).

With, on the one hand, such a varied theoretical discourse on art and material culture and on the other, the highly traditional way in which Anglo-Saxon art and artefacts are still treated in scholarship, there is a need to set out the theoretical possibilities for this study of early and conversion period Anglo-Saxon art. This chapter provides a critical review of relevant theoretical standpoints and discourses, some of which have already touch upon early medieval art in England or on the Continent and others that have yet to be tested in relation to the Anglo-Saxon decorative repertoire. The first section introduces the study of identity and the body as a research topic, outlining current theoretical viewpoints on how the physical body formed part of social performances and the implications for the study of human imagery. The chapter then moves on to outline what is currently known about human representational art and what inferences scholars have made based upon this evidence. The final section outlines current scholarship on the interrelationship between art styles in use in this time period and politics, gender and belief within the Anglo-Saxon world.

2.2 IDENTITY

The study of identity through material culture is not a new study area for early Anglo-Saxon mortuary archaeology (e.g. Pader 1982; Richards 1984, 1987; Dickinson 1991; Richards 1992), but it was not until c. 2005 that it was developed and defined as a methodological approach towards the past. Gender, age, status, ethnicity and religion were the central focus of identity theory (Diaz-Andreu et al. 2005). Identity has been defined as ‘linked to the sense of belonging’ (Diaz-Andreu et al. 2005, 1), Insoll also makes a similar case and argues that archaeology is to reconstruct ontology - ‘the essence of humanity’ (Insoll 2007b, 14). Identity theory now covers a range of social aspects including sexuality and the body (cf. ed. Insoll 2007a) and connects to other theoretical avenues like body theory (eds. Hamilakis et al. 2002; eds. Boric and Robb 2008b). Identity is not ‘a static thing, but a continual process’ that facilitates interaction between people and modes in which identity is acquired and maintained through choice and agency (Diaz-Andreu et al. 2005, 2). Identity theory should take on board the blending, reworking, adaptation and flexibility in the conceptualisation of identities (Insoll 2007b, 14). The themes often listed under ‘identity’ are cultural constructions (Kamp 2001, 3; Insoll 2007b, 6) and are habitually employed in social archaeology.

Over the last few decades the published corpora that have appeared have created catalogues of information concerning object types (e.g. Dickinson and Härke 1992; Hines 1997a; Suzuki 2008). While this provides a useful source for chronological analysis, these types of corpora are rooted in nineteenth century concepts of ‘national costume’ and ‘romantic and national movements’ (Pohl 1998, 40). Walter Pohl suggested that ‘Avar belts and weapons in a grave might as well have belonged to a person who spoke Slavic and considered himself a Bulgar, especially in the periphery of the khaganate’ (Pohl 1998, 41). A similar question was asked by Guy Halsall: whether an Anglo-Saxon ‘is a migrant or someone who has adopted Anglo-Saxon identity’? (Halsall 2006, 235).

‘Germanic’ Identity

This attitude has also been expressed by Anglo-Saxon archaeologists: how can material culture identify a real or perceived Germanic immigration? (Hamerow 1997, 33). The term Germanic is however, problematic. Halsall encapsulated the problem: ‘To accept the Germanic nature of such burials we have to assume some unifying pan-Germanic mentality or ethos which allows groups of ‘Germans’ suddenly to adopt an aspect of a supposedly common ‘Germanic’ material culture ‘heritage’, even when they have never used it before, on the ground that another group or groups within the huge area of ‘Free Germany’ at some point or other *did* bury their dead, or build their houses, in this way’ (Halsall 2006, 235).

Similar to the catch-all term ‘Celtic’ in Iron Age studies, which was coined by nineteenth-century philologists (James 2001, 87) the term ‘Germanic’ in ‘Germanic migration’ overtly simplifies the complexities of movement in the early medieval period. In more recent years, the study of burial customs in relation to ‘Romano-British’ and ‘Germanic’ identities has been heavily criticised (Lucy 1998, 2000, 155-173; Moreland 2000). Perhaps the reason for avoiding the term is due to it being convoluted. Multiple identities that are being expressed in mortuary contexts (age, status, gender, religion etc.) may not link to an ‘ethnicity’ or ‘ethnic’ group. Certainly, this issue has been discussed elsewhere (cf. Curta 2001, 21). The dearth of historical sources that describe other social-groupings in Scandinavia attests to the scholarly pursuit of ethnicity (Rundkvist 2007, 48-9). This lack also attests to the viewpoint that early medieval Scandinavian people imported and exported goods, but stayed within the locale or moved/ invaded other lands and did not receive immigrants or conquering foreign groups (e.g. Ljungkvist 2009). For Walter Pohl, the archaeological evidence for costume cannot be viewed as an ethnic identity, but it can be seen as a social distinction (Pohl 1998, 42). He suggested that ethnic identity was not simply about the dress fittings and accessories that adorned or were buried with the dead, but a network of social aspects including:

- ‘actual or notional common origin

- a shared memory of the past and
- common territory, language, outward appearance and dress, customs, myths, norms, beliefs, codes of honour identity' (Pohl 2013, 3).

It is debatable whether 'identity' can be determined through burial contexts or not. Many early medieval archaeologists are now less inclined to debate 'ethnic' identities based on material culture from burial sites (eds. Lucy and Reynolds 2002a). Mortuary material culture, however, of early medieval North West Europe continues to be interpreted within a culture-historical frame (Carver 2005; Dickinson 2005). The tentacles of culture-history can still be felt through social archaeology. Social archaeology examines material evidence for social change and attempts to reconstruct social organisation (Chapman 2000, 570-571; Dark 2000, 88). Despite recent attempts to identify social organisation through early medieval burial data (e.g. Ravn 2003; Sayer 2010) it is an almost impossible task to interpret real social change and social organisation through burial data. As Heinrich Härke (1997b, 25) proposed in *Burial and Society*, the grave is a 'hall of mirrors' – meaning there are diverse, distorted and multiple reflections, but, which is the real reflection? The grave is arguably an enigma of perceived, actual and mythical identities. Identities can be changed and reconfigured during burial processes to serve a particular ideology, belief, or socio-political venture of the buriers and/ or the newly deceased.

Yet, there may be a method by which to examine identity. Scholarship that examines social organisation with burial data oversimplifies and underplays the emotional and cognitive complexities of death and burial. Contingents of published research on early medieval Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon archaeology have recognised the importance of studying the emotive and cognitive relationships engendered by death and burial i.e. the manipulation and treatment of the corpse. These include, examining attitudes towards the dead in terms of commemoration, agency and social memory (Williams 2006) and expressions of ritual, memory and ceremonies (Price 2002; Back Danielsson 2007; Price 2008; Semple 2008; Price 2010; Semple 2013). Identity can be explored through the role of funerary rite with ritual performance, social use of space and place and how these mediate, facilitate and curate group and individual identities (Williams 2002b, 47, 2006; Devlin 2007). Moreover, the treatment of the body is thus a vital research component that might further our understanding of bodily identity and its application.

Political identity

The significance of Migration Period art has long been connected to religious and socio-political ideologies (Behr 2010c, 453). Animal iconography, for example, rendered on Migration Period objects have been connected to shamanistic ideas, in this sense the depiction of animals was essential for upholding political authority (Hedeager 1999, 154). Pesch recently described the homogenous appearance of Salin's Style I animal art across Scandinavia and early Anglo-Saxon England as a 'corporate design' of the 'Germanic elites' (Pesch 2007, 382-3). Behr proposed that in the fifth century historical context, 'emerging central places in northern Europe were characterised by establishing control over religious rituals' (2010c, 463). She argues that the appearance and spread of Style I was crucial in creating a 'common identity, a shared ideology with collective religious ideas' (Behr 2010c, 462-3). No equivalent central places are known in early Anglo-Saxon England, but it is possible that burial grounds may have acted as places of 'assembly' (Williams 2002a, 2004a). Speake suggested that Style I spread into early Anglo-Saxon England via Kent (Speake 1980, 94) and developed into a style of its own (Hines 1994, 52). Many early medievalists believe the Style I designs are encoded with ideas of ethnogenesis and the users of these designs carried a cultural tradition that reflected a Scandinavian origin myth (Leigh 1984, 1990; Hines 1997a; Dickinson 2009; Martin 2011). In particular, the human and animal designs are thought to associate with 'shamanistic beliefs and a cult of a pre-Viking Odin or Woden' (Dickinson 2009, 1). Only one study has attempted to identify historical groups and kingship through the distribution

of Style I in England (Shepherd 1998). Shepherd thought the frequency of animal and human bodily parts (e.g limbs, heads and arms) might represent grammatical symbols used by social groups. It is, however, unclear how these symbols constitute kingship or power dynamics and it is well-established that these designs are riddling and are often open to two interpretations (e.g. Leigh 1984). Dickinson argued that Style I was an inherited repertoire deriving from federate male forebears (Dickinson 1991).

Although it is thought Style I was introduced to early Anglo-Saxon England via Kent, it is also possible that Style I designs originate from a repertoire used by elite individuals in late Roman Britain (Webster 2003, 2011, 2012a). Regardless of the origin, Style I designs have not been pinned down to particular social groups, rather as a means to create some sort of social cohesion through the production and display of images from presumably shared oral narratives. In this way, by using and displaying objects carrying Style I, individuals and groups were maintaining and curating some kind of origin myth that involved the Roman and Scandinavian worlds.

In southern Scandinavia, Style I gave way to Style II by the middle of the sixth century; in England, however, Style I continued at least ‘until the second half or even the end of the century’ (Dickinson 2009, 1). The transition from Style I to Style II in the later sixth- and seventh- centuries has been argued as being concurrent with changing social structures within families and political hierarchies (Stoodley 1999). Style II is also suggested to have formed part of an Anglo-Saxon elite repertoire that was transmitted into East Anglia through Danish affiliation by an elite Wuffing lineage of the mid-late sixth century (Høilund Nielsen 1999). Developed locally and signalling descent from the Danish *Scyldings*, it has been argued that the Anglo-Saxon elite employed such designs to legitimize their ‘right to paramount position’ in East Anglia (Høilund Nielsen 1999, 200). It is thus thought that early Anglo-Saxon art was manufactured to signal Scandinavian heritage and to legitimize the authority of elite groups.

Power structures: cemeteries and settlements

The establishment of the trading port in Ipswich and the ‘production’ site at Coddendam² articulates the development of dynastic power and regional kingdom-organisation in the seventh century (Newman 2003; Carver 2005, 498; Scull 2013, 47-9). Ipswich is one of several known emporia. Others include Hamwic (Southampton) and Lundenwic (London) and are thought to act as ‘administrative’ and ‘economic’ hubs that brought in craft-workers and traders ‘regionally and internationally’ (Scull 1997, 274). Handmade pottery dating to the seventh and eighth century in Ipswich implies that there was settlement activity of the pre-Ipswich ware phase on the north bank of the river Orwell (Scull et al. 2009, 313). Scholars have termed the site a ‘special-purpose settlement’ because of the ‘unique’ ceramic evidence for ‘overseas trading contacts’ (Scull et al. 2009, 313-314). In past literature, this trading site was considered to have been a ‘royal initiative’ given the close proximity of Sutton Hoo, the possible burial ground of the Wuffingas dynasty and the palace at Rendlesham (Wade 2001, 4). In recent years, this interpretation has come under fire. Hines, for instance, challenged that this model is an ‘anarchic and primeval view of the Roman to Anglo-Saxon transition, where virtually everything had to be re-established following a systemic collapse’ (Hines 2013a, 40). This, however, is not the claim made in recent discussions on this site by Scull and Wade. They argue that this settlement site is a

‘context of developing inter-regional exchange, itself developing from the socially and politically embedded exchange contacts directed to and controlled by an elite which are attested in the archaeology of the sixth century’ (Scull et al. 2009, 316).

² The wealth of finds (including scrap or off-cut copper-alloy, which could indicate a possible workshop at the site) at Coddendam has been interpreted as a ‘productive’ site (Newman 2003, 104-105)

The royal or aristocratic connection cannot be completely discredited. This settlement could have ‘functioned under royal oversight and taxation’ (Scull et al. 2009, 316). Scull et al. proposed that this ‘special-purpose settlement’ represents an ‘integration of political, economic and ideological functions’ in one place, comparable to central-places in Denmark and South Scandinavia in the Migration and Merovingian periods (2009, 317). Numerous human figurines, anthropomorphic pendants and *guldgubber*³ have been found at contemporary large central places or *emporium* and aristocratic settlement sites (Helmbrecht 2011, 404). Such aristocratic sites include Gudme, Tissø (Jørgensen 2003, 175, 197, fig. 19.15), Lunda (Andersson et al. 2004) and Helgö (Lamm 2004).⁴ Objects carrying anthropomorphic imagery are also found in the early towns of Kaupang, Birka and Hedeby (Helmbrecht 2011, 422). Helmbrecht argues that the new finds carrying human figures, which are largely from *emporium* and aristocratic settlement sites in Vendel Period Scandinavia should be interpreted as a precipitate of trade and production (Helmbrecht 2011, 403).⁵ Tim Pestell has recently highlighted the potential significance of the distribution of the early Anglo-Saxon figurines along the eastern seaboard in regards to ‘settlement and the exchange of ideas’ (Pestell 2012, 86). Even though he notes that this region has ‘traditionally been most productive for metal-detecting and where the liaison between detectorists and archaeologists has been longest established’, the rarity of human representation in this time period signifies the ‘special nature’ of these items (Pestell 2012, 86).

Gender and role

In Anglo-Saxon England, Style I was not deployed in such profuse quantities in male graves as female, but it has been considered that male grave goods with Style I were particularly prestigious (Dickinson 2005, 111, 2009, 8). Scandinavian studies have identified that Style I in south-western Norway was employed for the local and regional manufacture of elite female jewellery, Style II was used for horse-gear and weaponry of elite males inter-regionally (Hedeager 1999). Magnus suggested that Style I ‘partition’ art in Scandinavia was predominantly found on female grave goods and *horror vacui* (filling all available space with designs) and extreme stylization was found on male objects and the large brooches of high ranking women (Magnus 1999, 170). In the late twentieth century Roth asked why the majority of objects that carried pictorial representations were connected to the female sphere (Roth 1986, 18). There is however a distinct lack of exploration on the interrelationship between female individuals and image-carrying items. Discussions have focussed upon the male role or the masculine world as the Style I imagery has been interpreted as full of male animals and male heads with beards or moustaches and sometimes helmets (Williams 2006, 91; Pollington et al. 2010, 430-433; Martin 2011, 376).

Martin has conjectured that women wore such symbols in order to appropriate the concept of dominance or indeed this type of iconography might have been embedded within the ideology of male craftspeople or their patrons (Martin 2011, 376, 2013, 10). Martin sees the image-bearing items, specifically cruciform brooches as they form his main research focus, as having been commissioned and distributed as ‘gifts to specific women’ (Martin 2013, 11). He further argues that female individuals would ‘benefit from their association with this masculine power structure through displaying these gifted objects’ and ‘demonstrating their knowledge of its complex iconographic subjects’ (Martin 2013, 11). Although Martin suggests that women were not passive in this, the notion of the female body as a display for masculine power is perhaps rooted in a traditional androcentric interpretation in which female individuals take a subordinate role. This recent study forms part of a series of published research that has focussed upon Anglo-Saxon masculine power through late fifth- to sixth-century weaponry

³ Small portable objects, ranging from 7-8mm to over 30mm in height and are made of gold foil

⁴ A site of ‘unusually high density of buildings and evidence for extensive resource consumption in the form of many metal finds’ (Jørgensen 2003, 175)

⁵ ‘Die wenigen Funde mit Menschendarstellungen dürften hier wohl am besten als Niederschlag von Handel und Produktion gedeutet werden’ (Helmbrecht 2011, 403)

and defensive equipment and ornate seventh-century equipment deposited within male graves (Härke 1990, 1997a; Dickinson 2005; Hadley 2012).

It has been recognised that we must challenge the traditional and unfounded interpretation that early Anglo-Saxon society was founded on a warrior ideology (Gaimster 2001, 152). Previous models have been accused of failing to consider how women could have maintained and regulated control over their place in kinship networks, their role in economic production and in ‘constructing political analyses and initiating cultural change’ (Gilchrist 1997, 46-7; Gräslund 2001, 91). Many scholars have clearly demonstrated that some high-status women had a prominent role in religious, social and political contexts (Gilchrist 1997; Behr 2001, 51-2; Gaimster 2001; Gräslund 2001; Geake 2005). Gaimster proposed that prestigious objects expressed social identity that associated explicitly with women (2001, 152). Bracteates, for example, might signal key female position in political spheres and how women took on the role of representing family groups as an individual with power and wealth (Gaimster 2001, 152). Recent advances in the study of human representational art have proposed that embracing human figures upon gold foils perhaps represent varied types of marriages involving different forms of power displays by both men and women (Ratke and Simek 2006, 261). These examples indicate that new theoretical perspectives on objects and human representational art are useful in the exploration of the negotiation of power between male and female individuals.

Religion and belief

According to Webster, brooches and the art they carried would have signified ‘particular status and affiliation, both social and religious’ and that these objects would have been worn during ‘special occasions, including feasts and religious ceremonies’ (2012a, 17). She goes on to argue that the ‘messages embodied in the miniature cosmos of their decoration would have had particular resonance’ with such religious ceremonies (Webster 2012a, 17). Scholars have suggested that Style I art was a product of conflicting religious ideologies in this period. For example, Wicker (2005) argued that animal styles expressed a pagan mentality in response to the ‘other’ and Cramp (2008) argued that the Anglo-Saxons searched Christian art for similar ambiguities to add to their own artistic repertoire. A shared approach to Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian representational art is the use of later historical literature. This approach ascribes mythical characters to images e.g. Woden/ Odin from Sagas and this has led to the interpretation of an Odin-warrior cult (e.g. Avent and Evison 1982; Dickinson 2005; Pollington et al. 2010). Human representational art on early Anglo-Saxon material culture is often pinned to mythical Norse gods. The rationale behind this interpretation is based on earlier scholarship on Scandinavian bracteate art, these often depict interacting human figures and animals and have been ascribed to the Nordic god Odin and his horse. The object and image was suggested by Hauck to have acted as an ‘analogy charm’ as part of a pre-Christian healing technique, affording well-being to its recipient(s) (Hauck 1977b, 500, 1992b, 126, 1998). In this way, Anglo-Saxon scholarship on art often interprets the human face or form as being a god-like figure, typically Odin/ Woden and in turn the art and object is interpreted as being amuletic or apotropaic (e.g. Webster 2002b, 2003; Dickinson 2005). It is never fully explained, however, what the images were perceived to protect against and if it suggests that the body was perceived as being vulnerable and how apotropaic expressions might have shifted over time.

It has been noted that ornamentation might have been selected to evoke certain memories and ideologies from the past and their burial with the dead might have thus mediated a symbolic link with ancestors (Williams 2006, 40). Art objects worked their ‘technological magic’ in two principal social contexts: political ritual and ceremonial, or commercial exchange (Tilley 2008, 29). Interpretations of imagery in this time period have focussed on animals. Horse motifs, for example, depicted upon cremation urns as symbols of transportation of the elite (Williams 2001). Williams explored human-animal relationships, but with reference primarily to the body in cremation rites. He examined cremated animal remains that were deposited within urns and the possible significance of this practice and animal figures depicted upon cremation urns in mortuary and shamanic ideology. Drawing on ethnographic analogies and later Norse mythology he argues the animal designs upon urns helped the

transition and reconfiguration of the identity of the newly deceased (Williams 2001, 203, 206). Fern builds on this narrative and suggests that different horse motifs and horse and rider graves reflect a belief in Germanic origin myth (Fern 2010). Animal-human relationships have also been discussed by Pluskowski and Sanmark. Pluskowski considered zoomorphic Style I and II imagery in association with ecological and faunal evidence in mortuary contexts and argues for a generic pagan belief-system centred on animal-human relationships (Pluskowski 2010). In a similar way, Sanmark views the figurative bird, boar and wolf images of the later sixth and early seventh century as evidence for a shamanistic ideology. Sanmark draws on earlier work by Glosecki that examines later (and Christian-authored) historical evidence for shamanism, she suggests that representational art of animals capture the essence of the physical and real creature in its environment and thus the animal image might have been perceived as 'alive' and 'capable of independent action' (Glosecki 1989; Sanmark 2010, 167). It is not made clear if such an interpretation extends to figurative human representation, but a clear suggestion is made that an image might have been perceived to capture the essence of what it portrays.

This concept is certainly not new and has been discussed by scholars working on Migration Period art. An influential paper on the exploration of the effectual role art played was published by the Scandinavian psychologist and archaeologist dual-team Lindström and Kristoffersen on Norwegian animal art in the Migration Period (Lindström and Kristoffersen 2001). Taking a relief brooch and scabbard mountings as a starting point, Lindström and Kristoffersen discuss the reversible, 'split-representative and gestalt formation of animal art' (2001, 67).⁶ Whilst the reversible image is of two objects or characters at once, the split-representative image follows Levi-Strauss's theory of an image that appears 'cut open and flattened out and thereby is shown from both side simultaneously' (Levi-Strauss 1963; Lindström and Kristoffersen 2001, 67). Robert Layton describes split representation as entailing the depiction of 'an animal figure as though its body had been split lengthwise and opened out' (Layton 1981, 154). In this way, the depicted creature appears like a skinned animal that has been stretched across the object (Lindström and Kristoffersen 2001, 68). Levi-Strauss suggested that the split-representation expressed a form of transformation, the ornamented object 'merges' with or 'becomes' the animal/ creature (Levi-Strauss 1963, 258-261; Lindström and Kristoffersen 2001, 68). This split representation occurs in several cultures and aids visual communication (Layton 1981, 153; Gombrich 1984, 269; Gell 1998, 192-196).

There is still a question as to whether early Anglo-Saxon art might have been perceived as having animacy or not. Animacy or animism is rooted in 'anthropomorphism – the tendency to impute human attributes such as will, agency and responsiveness to supposedly inanimate entities – is an abiding feature of human cognition (Guthrie 1993; Gell 1998, 121). Guthrie suggested that the cognitive mind is more than prepared to see the world as an animate force, for example it is strategically better to 'presume that a boulder is a bear (and be wrong) than to presume that a bear is a boulder (and be wrong)' (Guthrie 1993; Gell 1998, 121). However, Gell argued that

'to say that one attributes "animacy" or "anthropomorphism" to something does not explain what a thing must be or do to count as "animate" or "anthropomorphic". It is not animism, anthropomorphism, or anything like it, to attribute "life" to a tree, which adults in our society agree is a living thing' (Gell 1998, 121).

How is life attributed to an inanimate thing/ object? Gell argued that things/ objects come to life when there is a sense that the thing or object is 'manifesting biological activity' for example if the stone idol hears a prayer or if the idol bleeds (Gell 1998, 122). Objects can also have life if they maintain the appearance of being alive – and are thus imbued with 'ritual animacy' (Gell

⁶ The German word *gestalt* refers to signs that are 'composed of elements that together can be seen as wholes' (Lindström and Kristoffersen 2001, 70). The Oxford English Dictionary describe this term as a "shape", "configuration", or "structure" which as an object of perception forms a specific whole or unity incapable of expression simply in terms of its parts (e.g. a melody in distinction from the notes that make it up)' (OED).

1998, 122). Early Anglo-Saxon objects might not have bled, but the chip-carving technique used to portray animal and humans has been suggested to make the images appear animate, the 3-dimensional quality of the images would have allowed light to create shadow – perhaps creating the impression that the motifs are moving (Speake 1980; Kristoffersen 2000a).

2.3 THE HUMAN BODY

The Human Form

It has long been established that the representations upon gold bracteates of the Migration Period are probably founded upon a long oral tradition, the classical pictorial world of the Romans heavily influenced Germanic art and this resulted in *Interpretatio Germanica* (Roth 1986, 9). Wilhelm Holmqvist suggested that the anthropomorphic style phenomenon must have emerged exclusively from the late Roman world (1951, 59). Whilst figurative Germanic art hinted at Roman art (Kendrick 1938, 77) it has been recently suggested by Capelle (2003, 41) that the concealment of the human form was particularly ‘un-Roman’. Roman art was interpreted and reused in a new social world. In this new social context the human form was represented by disarticulated body parts, half-bodied figures and heads, which are embedded within animal and geometric motifs. Within this new world the artistic expressions were constituted by two key types of art: Style I and Style II.

Style I appeared in England in the second half of the fifth century and was succeeded by Style II in the late sixth and early seventh centuries (Dickinson 2009, 1). These two designs were used across much of Europe during the fifth and sixth centuries, respectively (Haseloff 1981). Sometimes there are discrepancies in what types of designs are included or excluded within the Style I and II repertoire. In a recent study on art and its archaeological context, Dickinson excludes full-face masks on triangular applique or vandykes⁷ as some of these are imports from Continental Europe and are thus not bona fide Anglo-Saxon (Dickinson 2009, 2). Human heads are also extremely rare within the Style II repertoire, but these faces are found upon prestigious items alongside the ribbon-like animal motifs. In discussions on this style, the distribution and significance within Europe have been investigated (Høilund Nielsen 1999), but human imagery within this repertoire has been disregarded. George Speake noted that the human faces found upon the vandykes for the drinking cups found within the high-status, male barrow burial at Taplow (Buckinghamshire) were ‘decorated with face-masks and not Style II ornament’ (Speake 1980, 75). Webster proposed that these human heads within the Style II designs are remnant of an earlier repertoire of Style I (Webster 2003, 16). It thus seems tentative if these human heads should be interpreted as part of the Style II repertoire. A series of human images thus appear to function outside the current stylistic classifications for early Anglo-Saxon art. Many disarticulated heads are treated as insular traditions nascent with connections between Scandinavia or the Continent and England. While human faces like the vandykes might represent Continental influences of production, these designs functioned beside a series of contrasting and similar human representations.

This approach thus cross-cuts traditional styles and examines the human form as a theme. Recent discussions on the use of styles have suggested that it is crucial to remember that the communities and individuals in the past never viewed these objects or imagery as we see them in a museum today (Scott 2006, 628). The use of the term ‘style’ and ‘art’ have been generally accepted and used by scholars for the past century and are firmly rooted in scholarship from the late nineteenth century. These terms are perhaps a product of an antiquarian past when scholars organised and arranged the material past into groups and types and created corpora so that a chronological or relational sense could be made of the intangible past (Schwartz 1995; Hazan 1999, 25-86). Bernhard Salin’s 1903 publication ordered and classified pre-Christian art animal motifs of the fourth to the ninth centuries, heavily influenced by a culture-historical archaeology approach – a theory which emphasised the defining of distinct cultural and ethnic groupings according to their material culture. Often, through focussing

⁷ Vandykes are copper-alloy appliques or triangular mounts, which carry repoussé decoration and are usually riveted to a vessel

on style - e.g. Style I - the artistic detail is overlooked and scholars remain fixed on the transforming animal and human figures, leading to broad-brush arguments that the designs are 'homogenous' and correspond to a unified belief system or fixed identity (see above p. 31-32). Other designs and forms are thus overlooked. The terms 'style' and 'art' have served to facilitate a methodical approach to the past, but recent archaeological approaches strongly suggest that such terminology is anachronistic and is perhaps not a pertinent tool to explore the role of visual culture of past societies and the ways in which people perceived and experienced their world.

Full-bodied Figures

Even though only six fragments survived, the 'dancing warriors' motif or 'Design I' rendered on the Sutton Hoo helmet has been the primary focus of discussions on figurative imagery on early Anglo-Saxon metalwork. This design has been examined in terms of close stylistic parallels with East Scandinavia and its possible symbolic meaning (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 186-197). Notably, there are two chief viewpoints on the meaning of this design: performance and origin myth, which are discussed here.

Holmqvist first suggested that these figures might portray a form of 'dance' or 'pantomime' (Holmqvist 1960, 121). This interpretation of performing figures was later ascribed to the naked, horned-helmeted figure bearing spears rendered on the belt buckle from Finglesham (Davidson 1965, 27). Davidson suggested that this type of figure could represent a 'possessed warrior of Odin' or 'special champions' of Odin (*Einherjar*) that helped 'decide the course of battle' and therefore symbolised 'victory and defeat' or a ritual dance 'in honour of the war-god' (1965, 26-27). Arent followed this viewpoint and suggested the Sutton Hoo figures reflect real-life performances that were acted out 'in honour of the gods' (Arent 1969, 141). Bruce-Mitford did not refute or agree with the concept proposed by Arent, rather he firmly interpreted the figures as 'performing a spear dance' (1978, 188). He based his interpretation on the notion that they were not wearing 'war gear', but 'civilian or ceremonial dress' and two of the spears that were not held could be 'conceived as lying on the ground' - a detail, he noted, distinctly different to the Scandinavian parallels (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 188-189). Wickham-Crowley built on the premise that these figures were performing and suggested that the horned figures could relate to Woden's cult and a rite-of-passage for men, when males become men (Wickham-Crowley 1992, 50-1). This interpretation could equally be as true as Davidson's suggestions. Gunnell, however, in his study on the earliest forms of 'drama' in Scandinavia re-ignited Davidson and Arent's argument that these motifs could portray human enaction i.e. humans performing and role-playing (Gunnell 1995, 36-7). He explored this notion further and suggested that the inclusion of unnatural costumes (humans in animal disguise, for example) could indicate that such representational art is not intentionally depicting mythological narrative e.g. gods, but human enaction i.e. humans performing and role-playing (Gunnell 1995, 36-7). Similar concepts have been considered for full-bodied figures in Scandinavia. The bronze plaques, for instance, from Torslunda in Sweden that depict a figure in a wolf guise positioned next to a horned human figure, may represent cultic activities in which the agents depicted wore animal skins to carry out a zoomorphic transformation (Kaliff and Sundqvist 2004, 67; Back Danielsson 2007, 113).

Other scholars have interpreted these scenes carried on the helmet and purse-lid from Sutton Hoo as an 'ancient cult of shamanistic magic' that stems back into Bronze Age Scandinavia (Glosecki 1986, 310-312). Full-bodied figures are predominantly found upon masculine objects such as a helmet and a belt buckle. Magic and belief, have been at the centre of interpretations for full-bodied human figures; Arent and Glosecki suggest that the dancing figures that bear weaponry might simply represent a belief in 'war magic' (Arent 1969, 132, 142-144; Glosecki 1986, 313). Similar to Gunnell and others, Arent argued that these figures need not represent gods, but 'heroes who can be identified in history and/ or epic' (Arent 1969, 132). The figures, perhaps referring to specific heroes, might represent an early form of the Germanic and Icelandic medieval epics (Hauck 1957, 4-5 as cited in Arent 1969, 132). The concept of mimetic performance is certainly well-established for these types of figures.

An alternative interpretation has recently been suggested by Neil Price. He argued that these horned figures bearing weaponry could represent material expressions of a ‘common belief in elite genealogical descent from Odin-Woden’ (Price 2002, 372-3). The concept of such imagery relating to an origin myth is not new, however. In the late nineties, Karl Hauck argued that the figural motifs on the Sutton Hoo helmet parallel motifs from the ancient world and hint at an origin myth. The figures on horseback that bore spears and the dancing warriors were compared to imagery of the Dioscuri – the twins Castor and Pollux from Greek and Roman myth, which were often depicted as helmeted horsemen carrying spears (Hauck 1982, 342). His argument focussed on genealogy and origin myths as accounted in early texts and discussed common themes in ancient and early historic literary sources. The twins of Hengist and Horsa, Romulus and Remus, Castor and Pollux, Ibor and Agio, for example, were suggested to relate to the paired boars and horses on the shoulder-clasp, the paired wolves/bears either side of the man on the purse lid and the dancing paired humans on the helm (Hauck 1982, 362). In this way, the grave goods from Sutton Hoo have been argued as an artistic play on multiple origin myths (Hauck 1982, 362).

Masks and Faces

The humanoid faces generally are constituted by eyes, cheeks, nose, sometimes they are represented with a mouth and facial hair and a headdress or wavy hair with spirals. In early Anglo-Saxon scholarship the use of the term ‘mask’ to describe human faces has been used to refer to an artistic definition and not a practice involving masks (Leigh 1980; Dickinson 1991; Cramp 2008). Scholars have circumvented discussing human faces as masks by describing masking practice in historical literature, but not actually making a connection between the two (Pollington et al. 2010, 449-450). In Scandinavian writing, however, Style I human faces in Scandinavia has been associated with a broader masking practice that seems to have been widespread across the early medieval northern world (Back Danielsson 2007, 139-169, 253). It has been recently questioned if the heads represent a full-bodied figure, a severed head or a mythical or ritual character (Pollington et al. 2010, 449). It was proposed that the heads might represent severed heads, perhaps associating with Germanic and Celtic mythologies that describe acts of beheading and dismemberment (Pollington et al. 2010, 449). This is certainly a convincing notion; however, it does not explain why some of these severed heads were represented with beaked-heads.

These human faces with beaked heads are termed “biting beasts” and this design is also associated with the man-between-two-beasts motif and *Tiermenschen* (see Pollington et al. 2010, 448-449; Martin 2013).⁸ The complexities of early Anglo-Saxon art are perhaps mirrored by the overlapping terms used to describe human representation. While the terms can be useful as a design category, it is unclear if these motifs were ever understood as biting – as opposed to whispering or speaking into the ear of the human head (e.g. Bruce-Mitford 1974, 43). Certainly, in past scholarship the human heads and animal designs have been noted to give the impression of enaction (Vierck 1967, 112). It has long been noted that human heads appear to have shapes that extend from their mouths (Vierck 1967, 110, 112). Erä-Esko interpreted this motif as fire breath, drawing on parallels from Christian sources. St. Mark’s Lion from the Codex of Lindisfarne is portrayed with an elongated narrow tail entering the lion’s mouth (Erä-Esko 1965). Erä-Esko (1965) interpreted this narrow tail as fire, which relates to the appearance of the lion with ‘brightness’ and ‘fire flashing forth continually’ as described in Ezekiel 1:1-14. Vierck, however, proposed that this imagery was the physical manifestations of later Old Norse accounts that describe breath and concepts of the soul, mind and thought (Vierck 1967, 129). Similar to Vierck, Hauck also recognised that figures were not just random decorative characters, but the objects carried a pictorial image of an event which involved interactions between animals, humans and geometric shapes (Hauck 1977b, 483). He interpreted human heads upon bracteates as ‘whispering’ into the horse’s ear or ‘breathing’ on its neck to heal it (Hauck 1977a, 499-501, 1983, 522; Wicker 2005, 536).

⁸ *Tiermenschen* is a German term, meaning animal-men

Hauck and Vierck's hermeneutic approaches remain a controversial argument and are generally favoured by Scandinavian scholarship (e.g. Magnus 1999; Lindstrøm and Kristoffersen 2001; Behr 2010a; Kristoffersen 2010; Hedeager 2011, 159) and less so in American discussions (Polomé 1994; Starkey 1999; Wicker 2005, 536).⁹ Charlotte Behr noted that the three recent critics of Hauck's interpretation are Americans (Behr 2011 pp. 200-229 as cited in Wicker and Williams 2013, 169). Nancy Wicker and Henrik Williams questioned why this is the case: 'is it that outsiders are able to think more freely, or that they have less at stake politically and academically by questioning the canon?' (2013, 169). In British discussions the application of Hauck's ideas has been labelled as 'controversial' (Dickinson 2009, 1). Some scholars, however, have used his work. Leigh, for instance, adopted Hauck's interpretations for Style I ornamented on objects in Kent (Leigh 1980, 369-430). Others remain sceptical (Davidson 1988, 174; Hines 1997b, 2013b). Hines, for example, noted a number of 'shockingly counter-intuitive' interpretations of the iconography by Hauck. He remarked that Hauck's 'confident insistence that the *Vogelgeleit* on many bracteates, the "accompanying bird", stands for Odin's pair of ravens, despite the fact that it usually appears alone and is rarely depicted in a pair, and manifestly shows none of the characteristic features of a raven: it is a bird of prey' (Hines 2013b, 254). In some of his interpretations, Hauck reads 'unrecorded mythology and ritual history from the bracteates' – arguing that his reading of the figural motifs could have been lost in literary transmission (Hines 2013b, 254). This concept strikes interesting questions on the relationship between oral narrative and material representation; Hines proposed several valid questions including whether the pictorial scenes exist independently from the literary evidence and could the figural images have modified and reinterpreted the stories (Hines 2013b, 255). Other academic literature refers to Hauck's ideas with a postmodernist standpoint (Dickinson 2002, 178, 2005, 111-112, 2009, 1; Fern 2010) or circumvents his published material completely (Webster 2003; Karkov 2011; Webster 2012a). As Wicker noted the difficulties of this interpretation rest on the idea that the artisan/ jeweller may have had restricted surface space in which to create an image and so it appears as if the human heads are interacting with the animal figures. Wicker points out, however, that there are no accounts of healing lameness in Old Norse literature and the 'whispering' is based on Christian practices (Wicker 2005, 536). Yet concepts of a soul, mind and thought and the connection between transforming animals and humans do appear in historical texts (Lindstrøm and Kristoffersen 2001).

One criticism, however, of the above is that the interpretations relied heavily on historical accounts that were written several generations later and within a Christian context. However, textual sources are certainly still used today for analogy, providing an insight to perceptions or realities of how people may have made sense of the world (see for example Hawkes 2002). Social themes have been extracted from later historical sources to explore material culture within the early medieval period (Price 2002, 2008, 2010; Hedeager 2011). In terms of their validity, Vierck demonstrated that it was possible to extract meaning from the available textual and material resources in order to identify cognition and mentalities in early medieval society. Vierck offered a significant and critical contribution to the study of the history of early medieval art, he searched beyond the nineteenth-century premise that these artistic designs were simply a barbaric imitation of Roman art and identified that the detailed study of animal styles had been ignored because it was not an accepted 'illustration of reality' and seemed far removed from tradition (Vierck 1967, 137). Vierck achieved what Bakka and Zeiss, among others, indicated (Zeiss 1941; Bakka 1958). Through a contextual approach, which includes a close examination of representational art, historical accounts and anthropological concepts, a window to real or perceived mentalities of an early pre-Christian society was created. Moreover, Hayo Vierck demonstrated a new and invaluable approach to art, which would be later disregarded and ignored by scholars examining early Anglo-Saxon decorated metalwork in the late twentieth century. Influenced by earlier scholarship, he

⁹ Wicker rightly notes that 'Polomé was Belgian, but his entire scholarly career was in the U.S' (2013, 169)

established the concept that bodily, physical phenomena may be represented upon early Anglo-Saxon objects and as such signified symbolic value (Vierck 1967, 128).

Scholarship in the twenty-first century has treated human faces – and more broadly Style I – as a grammatical symbol. Cramp, for example, considered the positioning of the human faces upon objects and what heads in profile or outwardly facing might represent (2008, 8). Cramp suggested that the mask in profile is suggested to indicate an ‘impersonal he/ she’ whilst the outwards implies ‘intentness and relates to the role ‘I in speech with its complementary you’ (Schapiro 1973, 38-39; Cramp 2008, 8). The source of this idea is from medieval art, which embodied ‘different modes of composition’ within a single picture ‘to convey a duality of meaning or to mark an important distinction’ - Schapiro also explains how this motif is present in Greek sculpture (Schapiro 1973, 38-40).

As outlined above, other interpretations revolve around the likeness of heads to other practices – such as severing and disembodiment of heads and a masking practice (Back Danielsson 2007; Pollington et al. 2010). While these interpretations sound plausible, the scholars have taken one type of image – the face – as a pastiche that seems to have no detailed difference across media or geographic locations. David Leigh, however, has clearly demonstrated that there is a great variety of human heads carried upon early Anglo-Saxon metalwork (Leigh 1980, 327-355).

Raised hand

This bodily gesture of a raised forearm and extended thumb characterises Style I and is not restricted to human figures; animals and hybrid beings are sometimes represented with a raised zoomorphic limb (Kendrick 1938). Such imagery on bracteates has been suggested to imitate Roman emperor art, which was adopted by Germanic mentality (Kendrick 1938, 77). Emperor Art is a raised hand gesture, which was a communicative symbol; when the emperor would speak the right hand would be raised (Barasch 1990, 17). Human faces and raised forearm have long been related to emperor art and the *gestus* position (Holmqvist 1955, 19; Dickinson 2002, 178). Kendrick, however, did not relate this gesture to Odin. In a study of human representation, Torsten Capelle recognised that the splayed thumb cannot be simply attributed to *Kaisergestus* (or Emperor gesture) as there are no clear images in Roman or Kaiser medallions of a human figure with a splayed thumb (Capelle 2003, 40-1). He remarked that there are no successful interpretations of the splayed thumb, but suggested that this gesture was used in order to represent a human characteristic in clear contrast to any zoomorphic form (Capelle 2003, 40-1). Indeed the significance of the hand and head as signifiers of the human form was first noticed by Salin (1904, 14). The splayed thumb is also recognised as a particular gesture, perhaps with some significant meaning (Leigh 1984, 389). Such human characteristics perhaps acted to constitute elements and changes in the animal-human figurative balance (Hedeager 2003, 113).

Transforming bodies

The animal-men imagery have been considered to represent a state of transformation, these figures have merging and ‘ambiguous’ animal and human limbs, heads and torsos (Leigh 1980, 1984). Tania Dickinson recognised that these figures are often abbreviated and she argued that the transferral of select designs onto an object realised the ‘inherent, transformatory potential’ of Style I (Dickinson 2002, 166). The notion of ‘transformation’ was realised through the lack of surface space that could be embellished (Dickinson 2002). Other designs that might be considered as transforming or transformed include the beaked-human heads. These are double entendre designs that are constituted by a pair of profile-faced beaked heads which make up an *en face* human head. This design is different from the animal-men motif. The beaked-human head design acts like an optical illusion or visual riddle, if it is turned 90 or 180 degrees it transforms into another design – from human to animal and vice versa. This has been identified as a deliberate invention, a design that has a double entendre and a reversible quality (Leigh 1980, 344, 356, 357). This design might also relate to the biting beast design that is constituted by beaked heads positioned near a human face (as discussed above).

In his examination of the artistic repertoire on early Anglo-Saxon great square-headed brooches (hereafter abbreviated to GSHB or plural GSHBs), one of the main conclusions that Leigh drew was that the images were designed to create a sense of ambiguity for their viewers (Leigh 1980, 356-369). The concept of ambiguity stems from Bakka who considered that fragmented Style I designs were used to disguise the imagery and deceive the viewer (Bakka 1958). These images have been interpreted as hidden depictions of animals and humans that were not meant to be immediately perceived, but were intended to be seen separately (Leigh 1984). Klingender argued that these Style I designs were intentionally manufactured as undecipherable so that their potential powers were rendered harmless (Klingender 1971, 103-6). Vierck, however, opposed the use of the term 'ambiguous' and argued that the chronological distance between its creation and decipherment in the twentieth century makes the decipherment of such, supposedly, ambiguous imagery difficult to interpret (Vierck 1967, 140).

Treatment of the body

In early medieval scholarship, the treatment of the body has been explored in terms of the use of grave goods and mortuary structures which visual displays were created for the viewer (Williams 2006). Such conceptual perspective considers the body as an artefact which 'delivers fixed meanings' and in this way the early Anglo-Saxon corpse is interpreted as 'the scene of display' (Meskell 1996, 6-7; Boric and Robb 2008b, 4). This approach is a social constructionist perspective, meaning that the concept of the funerary visual display was constructed by the author. Visual culture was discussed by Williams within a narrow focus of funerary material culture thus creating a limited analytical vista in which to discuss the body and display (Williams 2004b, 2006, 2007a). Recently other scholars have explored the material remains as embodiments of how 'people lived their lives in the past' (Boric and Robb 2008a, 4). The relationality between various embodiments can thus be compared and contrasted. The concept of embodiment stems from the work of the French phenomenological philosopher, Maurice Merleau-Ponty who in *Phenomenology of Perception* discussed that the living body and its fleshy experiences constitutes the subject's point of view and subjectivity itself (Merleau-Ponty 1962). To identify the significance of the human image, the significance of the corporeal human body must be addressed and sociological scholarship has identified two key concepts that are essential in the study of the fleshy body:

The concept of 'techniques of the body' (Mauss 1973)

This refers to the way in which people relate to and treat their bodies (Williams and Bendelow 1998, 49).

'The lived experience of the body-subject as the existential basis of our being-in-the-world' (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Williams and Bendelow 1998, 49).

This alludes to the notion that the body is observed from various perspectives e.g. left, right, below, above, at a distance or close and that the world is experienced through the body's sensory perceptions, thus it is a 'practical relationship to and involvement with the world' (Williams and Bendelow 1998, 53). This means that attitudes and understandings are engendered by engagements and interactions with people, place and objects. These interactions and engagements are created through sensory perceptions and bodily behaviour. This outline of key theoretical thinking on the body serves as a reminder that bodies are not artefacts that exist in the landscape alongside monuments (Crossland 2010, 390). In a recent appraisal of material culture studies, Crossland criticised that there has been an 'inadequate consideration of specific forms of embodiment or the role of the individual' in archaeological narratives (2010, 390). She proposed that by questioning bodily boundaries i.e. human-animal and human-machine scholars can undermine modern subject-object distinctions (Crossland 2010, 391-2, 405).

Crossland proposed that to reformulate our perception of the connections between human and non-human in the past and in the present we need to question and problematize bodily surfaces and boundaries (2010, 404-405).

Gesture and Bodily Metaphor

The study of bodily gesture and material interactionism might be one way of exploring bodily surfaces (Knappett 2011, 64). Based on the study of Jean-Pierre Warnier on praxeology, Knappett suggested that this shift from ‘the body proper to bodily conduits and gestures’ is a more fruitful area of enquiry (Warnier 2001; 2006; 2007 as cited in Knappett 2011, 64). In early Anglo-Saxon archaeology the mortuary arena and grave assemblages have been considered as a chaîne opératoire – a social network of connections that connects the living and the living, and the living and the dead, through gestures of curation of the deceased and deposition (Williams 2006; Devlin 2007). The objects within the grave have been studied for their symbolism and how they might have been used with social performance to re-create connections between the deceased and the living. Combs, for example, found in graves have been suggested to symbolise the gesture of curation and care of the corpse, activities that would have reworked and renewed relationships between the living and the dead (Williams 2007c). Although Williams does not explore Anglo-Saxon literature that discuss the symbolism of hair and combs (see Böhner 1944), it is clear that the discussion of the body within its wider social context and embodiment provides a fresh theoretical perspective on material culture.

This theoretical perspective raises an important issue that there might be a connection between an object’s symbolism and gesture. This connection can also be observed in a paper on the Sutton Hoo shield by Tania Dickinson, which argued that this object served to enhance and promote ‘the protective capability and responsibilities of his adult masculinity and through this the exercise of power over kindred, household, community and even kingdom’ (Dickinson 2005, 161). It is considered that through the inherent qualities of the shield, the images might have been thought to possess the power to avert evil influences. The shield’s close proximity to the body – its defensive role in martial performance to protect the flesh – thus acted as a metaphor within society. The user was perceived to have inherited the qualities of the object, underpinning the link between the functional role of an object and the imagery it carries.

In recent years in the study of material culture it has been recognised that an object type and the exploration of it metaphor might enable a different perspective on the innovation of the object (Knappett et al. 2010, 589). In his study on the prehistoric Near East and the Mediterranean, Knappett, Malafouris and Tomkins suggested that in order to identify the significance of the ceramic vessel revolution in this time period then the objects must first be interpreted as ‘containers first and as a technology of fired clay second’ (2010, 589). They proposed that the concept of containment might act as a transposable metaphor that has wider implications for understanding society. Rather than taking the angle of: a ceramic revolution in prehistory, the authors asked ‘what does it mean to contain? Where does the notion of containment come from?’ (Knappett et al. 2010, 589). It was suggested that ‘containment’ does not simply refer to ‘the physical capacity of a clay vessel to contain e.g. to hold a liquid, but rather with the interactive properties, possibilities, or affordances that emerge because of the vessel’s ability to contain’ (Knappett et al. 2010, 591). What is more, this metaphor has resonances with the body. The ‘skin is a boundary between inside and outside’ and even the ‘wrapping of the body in garments will relate to the conception of the skin as a surface’ (Knappett et al. 2010, 593, 596). This idea thus relates to the body as a container. Knappett argued that this theoretical standpoint removes the division of ‘the material world into basic categories such as artefact and landscape’ (Knappett et al. 2010, 596). In this way, it problematizes the connection between the human and object and we can consider what and how objects mean and do (Knappett et al. 2010, 607). The exploration of the interrelationship between material and metaphor cross-cuts convention typologies and recognises the significance of inter-media associations (Knappett et al. 2010, 596-7).

In early medieval archaeology, some inter-media associations have been explored. Coatsworth (2008), for example, recognised the stylistic connection between stone and textiles. She argued that some ornamentation carried on Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture was a skeuomorph of textiles, imitating the appearance and texture of fabric (Coatsworth 2008). The study of metaphorical associations is limited in early Anglo-Saxon archaeology, with some exceptions. Williams, for instance, suggests that the post-cremation processes of ‘collecting, transporting and disposing of the cremated remains created a “second body” for the deceased in their ancestral state’ (2004b, 277). Collecting the cremated remains could have re-created a ‘unified whole or body for the dead’, in this way transporting the dead in urns could have ‘served as a metaphorical “skin” for the deceased’s “second body” following the cremation’ (Williams 2004b, 282, 284). Williams concluded by stating that these processes vested the corpse with agency: which would ‘influence future funerals and so reproduce the mortuary tradition as a means of commemorating the dead and the past’ (2004b, 282). This exploration on bodily metaphorical associations raises several pertinent questions that are relevant for this thesis:

- What are the wider social implications of the treatment of the body in post-cremation processes in regards to how people perceived the body prior to death?
- How did this body metaphor change with the cessation of cremation practice?
- How did this bodily metaphor relate to buried individuals and their perception of the role the body played in belief and ideology?
- How might this bodily metaphor relate to animal-human hybrid imagery, which is largely carried on metalwork and not cremation urns?

The interrelationship between body metaphor and material culture has direct relevance for the development of human representational art and the types of objects that carry these motifs, which is discussed below in Chapter 6.

Analogy

The employment of analogical reasoning is not new. An analogical approach was quite common in mid-twentieth century discussions on Migration Period art (Böhner 1944; Vierck 1967, 128). In the last two decades, the use of analogous material has been drawn upon from Norse literature (Dickinson 2005, 2009). It is long-established that there might be connection between the sensory perceptions and gestural expressions of the animal figures from the textual sources and the representational art carried upon elite objects. Wickham-Crowley, for example, recognised the shared iconicity between Odin’s two ravens and the raptor heads rendered upon the lyre from Mound One at Sutton Hoo (Wickham-Crowley 1992). Similar to Dickinson, she considered that the imagery might have some meaningful connotation for the object type. Wickham-Crowley argued that these animal figures represent a genealogical link to Woden, the ‘birds speak to temporal nobility, with the connotation of status and fierceness, but they also speak of life after death, a way of seeing through new eyes to another reality’ (Wickham-Crowley 1992, 53). Others have examined how the represented animals seem to communicate with human figures by their bodily gestures. Bruce-Mitford suggested that the wolves that flank the human figure on the purse-lid from Sutton Hoo have their lips curled slightly apart, ‘pressed against the side of the man’s head, as though the animals were whispering in his ears’ (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 43). This gesture, however, could also be interpreted as swallowing the human figure (Branston 1974, 88). Similar to Bruce-Mitford, Glosecki offered a more compelling and analogous interpretation. He compared this scene with Odin’s ravens Hugin and Munin that sat on ‘either shoulder of the shaman-god, whispering secret knowledge in either ear’ (Glosecki 1986, 316). It is, therefore, important to recognise the interrelationship between various designs upon the object and

the connection between art and the object. What is more, as clearly demonstrated above, there is a need to explore material culture and its materialities in the context of analogous textual sources.

2.4 SUMMARY

This literature review identified the lack of a rigorous theoretical framework for the known corpus of early Anglo-Saxon art. This imagery is often referred to as part of a symbolic repertoire, a social symbol or symbols of power. In contrast, specialists on Scandinavian Migration Period art have considered such imagery to not represent an animal or be an ornamentation. Rather, the shapes of animals are ‘the creation of the animal in flat form’ –animal qualities are embedded within the object during the manufacturing process creating a new being (Kristoffersen 2000a, 272). Such conceptualisations seem to have had little or no impact on the theoretical approaches used in the study of early Anglo-Saxon art, with the exception of the suggestion that structural frames of objects could have referred to perceptions of cosmology (e.g. Webster 2003). There is thus a need to examine theoretical possibilities for the study of early and conversion period Anglo-Saxon art. Identity theory and the body as a research topic are pertinent themes to explore as they relate to the user and the image-content.

It has been remarked that identity ‘is not a static thing, but a continual process’ that facilitates interaction between people (Diaz-Andreu et al. 2005, 2). New approaches in identity theory have had an impact on terms used to describe groups of people. In recent years, for instance, the term ‘Germanic’ that is often used to describe the people living in fifth to seventh century England, has come under serious fire (Halsall 2006, 235). How are we to identify what constitutes ‘Germanic’ was there a ‘unifying pan-Germanic mentality or ethos’ which allowed groups of people to become Germanic? The use of this term is equivalent to the usage of ‘Celtic’ in Iron Age studies, the term Germanic overtly simplifies the complexities of movement of people and ideas in the early medieval period. A growing body of bioarchaeological literature has recognised a more complicated pattern, with some Anglo-Saxon cemetery sites showing a strong biological connection with the Romano-British past, while others have a mix of nonlocal and native people – but which is not identifiable through grave goods and presumably this is not identifiable through representational art either. This investigation of identity in fifth- to seventh-century England is, therefore, directly relevant to the study of art in use in this era. The application of ‘Germanic’ to early Anglo-Saxon art equally implies that the people that used animal and human imagery shared the same principles and ideologies in fifth to seventh century England. The terms ‘style’ and ‘art’ have served to facilitate a methodical approach to the past, but recent archaeological approaches strongly suggest that such terminology is anachronistic and is perhaps not a pertinent tool to explore the role of visual culture of past societies and the ways in which people perceived and experienced their world.

The description of Style I as a ‘corporate design’ of ‘Germanic elites’ (Pesch 2007, 382-383) equally implies that organised groups of people wore special badges to distinguish themselves from the masses. Motifs embedded within Style I are thought to contain messages of ethnogenesis, connecting to the Roman and Scandinavian worlds. Individuals and groups who were buried with such ornamented objects are likely to have been perceived as having a special status within the community, who maintained and curated some kind of origin myth. Some have argued that Style II embodied origin myths that signal descent from the Danish homelands and legitimised the wearer’s right to authority over others (Højlund Nielsen 1999, 200). Current literature has thus interpreted human and animal imagery as a means to promote origin myths to serve a political cause, perhaps similar to our modern viewpoint on propaganda. It is apparent, however, that some human designs have been excluded from these discussions. Some scholars do not even consider human heads to have been part of Style II. A similar problem has been identified for the rare depictions of full-bodied human forms. These designs, however, functioned beside a series of contrasting and similar human representation and focussing on the human image cross-cuts traditional styles. It is pertinent to ask what these human heads portrayed alongside Style I and II motifs and full-bodied figures might signal about the shifting

social and political networks in the seventh century. There is thus a need for the investigation of human imagery and its development. Chapter 3 thus sets out a methodology to interpret and assess these images, Chapter 4-5 present the findings.

Repeatedly, scholars have interpreted full-bodied figural motifs as real-life enactments or performances, only some cases, this imagery was referred to as associating with an origin myth. Disembodied human heads have been interpreted as giving the impression of enaction - pictorial image of an event which involved interactions between animals, humans and geometric shapes. Notably, Vierck (1967) demonstrated that it was possible to extract meaning from the available textual and material resources in order to identify cognition and mentalities in early medieval society. He established the concept that bodily, physical phenomena may be represented upon early Anglo-Saxon objects and as such signified symbolic value (Vierck 1967, 128). Vierck's astute observations on human imagery were ahead of his time. He also made a perceptive observation on human and animal designs that have been described as 'ambiguous' imagery is anachronistic (1967, 140). He argued that it is the chronological distance between its creation and decipherment in the twentieth century that makes the decipherment of such ambiguous imagery difficult to interpret (Vierck 1967, 140). Other key critiques of shared motifs in Migration Period and early Anglo-Saxon art have questioned the stylistic influences of some designs. Capelle, for instance, recognised that there is little evidence to support a direct analogy with the Roman Emperor art and the raised hand motif. No other interpretation has been offered, implying a need for an examination of gestural expressions and their possible stylistic influences. These two themes: physical phenomena and gestural expressions are related to innovative research topics on the body, embodiment and bodily boundaries.

Taking inspiration from philosophical works such as Mauss and Merleau-Ponty, archaeologists have started to explore the material remains as embodiments of how 'people lived their lives in the past' (Boric and Robb 2008a, 4). However, in a recent appraisal of material culture studies, Crossland criticised that there has been an 'inadequate consideration of specific forms of embodiment or the role of the individual' in archaeological narratives (2010, 390). By questioning bodily boundaries i.e. human-animal and human-machine scholars can undermine modern subject-object distinctions (Crossland 2010, 391-2, 405). Further, to reformulate our perception of the links between human and non-human in the past and in the present there is a need to question and problematize bodily surfaces and boundaries (2010, 404-405). One way doing this might be to examine bodily gesture and bodily metaphor. As noted above, in early Anglo-Saxon archaeology the mortuary arena and grave assemblages has been considered as a *chaîne opératoire*, embodying gestures of curation and deposition (Williams 2006; Devlin 2007). This theoretical approach to material culture raises a valid question on the connection between an object's symbolism and gesture. The symbols on shields, for example, have been considered as protective and in turn the user has been interpreted as having 'protective capability and responsibilities' (Dickinson 2005, 161). It is worth paraphrasing that: the inherent qualities of the shield, the images might have been thought to possess the power to avert evil influences. The close proximity of the shield to the body coupled with its defensive role in martial performance perhaps then acted as a metaphor within society.

In recent years, scholars have suggested that by considering the function of an object e.g. a vessel is a container, concepts such as containment might act as a transposable metaphor that has wider implications for understanding society. Similarly, in recent literature on early Anglo-Saxon mortuary archaeology, body metaphor has been explored. Williams investigated the interpretative possibility of the metaphorical associations connected with post-cremation processes; arguing that by collecting, transporting and disposing of cremation remains in urns the dead is given a second body and a new skin. This approach raises questions that are pertinent to the study of human representational art in this era. These included questions concerning the wider social implications of the treatment of the body, how body metaphor changed over time, how might the animal and human imagery carried on metalwork relate to bodily metaphor? These questions are thus explored in Chapter 6, which investigates the interrelationship between image, object and user.

Similar to the usage of body metaphor, the use of analogous material crucially provides a social background to the meaning and development to representational art. When used with caution, textual sources such as Norse Sagas and Anglo-Saxon poetry, prose and law codes can provide a wealth of otherwise inaccessible social information. It is important to recognise the interrelationship between various designs upon the object and a need to explore material culture and its materialities in the context of analogous textual sources. Human designs and their changing portrayal are thus cross-examined with relevant textual and archaeological sources in Chapters 7-8.

A key theme that was identified in the literature review is gender. It is well-established that women were buried with objects bearing Style I and males were buried with items carrying Style II (Høilund Nielsen 1999; Dickinson 2009). Almost immediately, it seems there is an interrelationship between biological sex and representational art. Recently, the idea that women were given such ornamented objects, through ownership of such items female individuals appropriated concepts of dominance and would 'benefit from their association with this masculine power structures through displaying such gifted objects' (Martin 2013, 11). Martin also conjectured that through 'demonstrating their knowledge of its complex iconography' the female individual would also benefit (2013, 11). The notion of the female body as a display for masculine power is perhaps rooted in a traditional androcentric interpretation in which female individuals take a subordinate role. Further, the concept that women would demonstrate their knowledge of the imagery implies the existence of a known repertoire of motifs that embodied varied meanings and the female individual would be able to communicate to others what the designs signified. It also implies that these particular female individuals had little else to do in society other than to solve riddles and teach others how she did it, spread origin myths and to display her allegiance with her male counterpart via the decorated objects. Over a decade ago, Gaimster recognised that we must challenge the traditional and unfounded interpretation that early Anglo-Saxon society was founded on a warrior ideology (2001, 152). Since the late twentieth century, many scholars have clearly demonstrated that some high-status women had prominent roles in religious, social and political contexts (Gilchrist 1997; Behr 2001, 51-2; Gaimster 2001; Gräslund 2001; Geake 2005). Recent advances in the study of human representational art have recognised that embracing figures rendered on gold foils share a strong parallel with varied types of marriages – involving different forms of power displays by both men and women (Ratke and Simek 2006, 261). This contextual study by Ratke and Simek (2006, 261), which draws on historical and archaeological evidence, indicates a useful method to explore the negotiations of power between male and female individuals. This theme reoccurs throughout this thesis and is explored in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The creation of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in 1996 in the UK has had a significant impact on the number of known and recorded metal finds of early medieval date (Collins and Allason-Jones 2010). Prior to this metal objects of early Anglo-Saxon date were largely derived from burial contexts and many were retrieved in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the east of England, prolific excavators like Jarvis (1850), Neville (1852, 1854) and Thomas (1887), created large collections of dress fittings, jewellery and weaponry derived from extensive excavations at barrow cemeteries such as Linton Heath in Cambridgeshire (Neville 1854). Metal objects carrying human imagery dated to between AD 400-750 form the basis of this study. This chapter outlines the way in which this data was collected, recorded and analysed. The approach developed here has taken account of numerous issues that affect the study of metalwork, for example the bias in the record created by the better preservation of metal objects over wood or other organic items that may also have carried such imagery. These issues and problems are reviewed and analysed below. Linking back to the aims and objectives of the thesis (see p. 20) and the theoretical themes identified in the literature review (p.41-44) issues and themes pertinent to the challenges of this thesis are also discussed to maximise objectivity. Finally, the way in which representational imagery has been recorded in the past and the way it has been undertaken here are also dealt with and the methods of recording explained.

3.1 SOURCES

The primary dataset was initially created from a comprehensive search of published excavation reports, regional journals and antiquarian publications. A considerable wealth of grey literature exists for the counties under study. Unpublished literature was accessed via the regional Historic Environment Records (HERs). Some data was initially accessed online via heritagegateway.org.uk (Cambridgeshire Lincolnshire Norfolk and Suffolk HER offices), but it quickly became apparent that visits to HERs were more beneficial in terms of collecting and assessing data. Unpublished reports, photographs and illustrations were often unavailable online; an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery, for example, at Ruskington (Lincolnshire) remains unpublished (Palmer-Brown 1995). Despite extensive quarrying around the site destroying much of the site, the Lincolnshire HER has archived a series of correspondences, letters and illustrations of the archaeological excavations and casual finds from the site during 1871-1985. The field notes noting particular grave goods could be matched against the objects held at 'The Collection' in Lincoln and Grantham museum. A GSHB, for example, carrying human imagery could be matched up to archived records of grave 5A including object positioning, object assemblage, sex and age (HER reference 64179 - MLI89329).

A request for information was sent to the Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk HER offices using the search criterion: early Anglo-Saxon cemetery *and* AD 400 – 750. Funerary sites from the late Roman period to the eighth century were thus included within this search. The quality of this kind of data varied, an issue noted in other research (Moore 2003). Sometimes there is 'limited information on small finds, variation in categorisation, chronological definition and site type, usually defined by individuals with no standard system either within or between SMR's/ HER's (Moore 2003, 16). There was some variation in the categorisation of cemetery sites, the majority of so-called 'sites' were actually find-spots that are presumed to have been disturbed burial ground; this issue is discussed below. The Norfolk and Suffolk HER offices held photographic catalogues, while the Norfolk HER also had an illustration catalogue. To maintain a correct database, these

photographic and illustrative records were cross-examined with the parish folder to iron out any discrepancies. No inconsistencies were found. This type of facility did not exist at the Cambridgeshire or Lincolnshire HER offices, emphasising the individualised nature of HER offices and the lack of a standardised system. Although individual key finds might be mentioned or even illustrated by drawing or photograph, it was clear that even key well known finds were sometimes unregistered by the HER. By contrast, new finds were also discovered in these archives, but the information was sometimes so minimal or the original material now so inaccessible that the object could not be included in the study.

A recent development in the UK – the PAS – provided an additional, rich source of information, ‘recording over 860,000 objects in an online database’ (Robbins 2013, 54). The PAS is an invaluable interface between the public and the HER, promoting a code of practice for responsible metal detecting and recording of small finds. The PAS was started in 1997. Norfolk and North Lincolnshire formed part of the first six regions of the pilot scheme and in 1999 the scheme expanded, covering the whole of England and Wales (PAS website). Today, the PAS central unit has a department in the British Museum, the Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure and the online database is managed by 36 Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) with a team of advisors and specialists. Early medieval specialists, Helen Geake, Kevin Leahy and John Naylor are National Finds Advisers for the PAS and often they direct the FLOs to specialists working in particular fields. Tania Dickinson, for instance, has dated and discussed objects carrying Style I designs. Since the renovation of the website, the search criterion is now very precise in regards to dates and time periods. There are a number of options, including searching for an ‘ascribed culture’ with an option to select ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘early’, alternatively exact dates can be input. Regions can also be selected, enabling an efficient search.

Its nationwide coverage and data across all time periods means that distribution patterns of objects can be investigated (Robbins 2013). New research has interrogated PAS data and how it might contribute to current understandings of the frequency and distribution of early Anglo-Saxon mortuary sites in East Anglia (e.g. Chester-Kadwell 2005). The number of known early Anglo-Saxon portable objects has also significantly increased. Since its inception, for example, the PAS has recorded 808 whole or fragmented cruciform brooches, significantly contributing to the known number of cruciform brooches in this time period (Martin 2011, 9, 19). Exceptional and unique finds have also been reported. The swivelling seal ring, for example, from Postwick (Norfolk) that carries a possible ‘betrothal scene’ and the name of Baldehild is the first of its kind found in Britain, provoking questions surrounding the social implications of its find spot (Webster 1998/1999a; Bland 2009, 65-66). A new finds group of 3-dimensional, human figurines has also been recorded on the online database (e.g. Friston from Suffolk, PAS no. SF-01ACA7). The PAS scheme has thus netted a new and unparalleled early Anglo-Saxon dataset as well as increased the number of known artefacts from this time period and has provoked new methods and approaches in the identification of archaeological sites.

The data in this study was collected from published material, HER grey literature and PAS online database and was computed into an Access Database. This method adopted in this study enabled the successful creation of a catalogue of finds and sites and it became apparent that museum collections in the study regions and major national museum collections needed to be interrogated. This stage of work fulfilled a twofold purpose:

- new finds were identified – finds not on the HER
- all known items sporting human imagery could be examined first hand and if necessary newly recorded.

A total of 400 objects carrying human imagery are catalogued here (Appendix 1.1, Tables 1-4) presents the frequency of objects carrying human imagery from the excavation reports, HER and PAS. Table 2 shows the number of objects viewed from each region under study. From the 400 objects, 138 objects were from excavation reports and 60 objects were from other

sources – which include museum catalogues and regional journals that identify stray or casual finds. From the online PAS database 90 image-carrying objects were recorded and 112 objects from the HER offices. The bulk of the PAS and HER finds could not be viewed as these are frequently returned to the finder, but the vast majority of objects from excavation reports were viewed. 149 objects were examined first-hand at the museums listed in Table 3.

Table 2 Number of objects viewed in this study

County	No. of objects viewed	No. of objects in study	% viewed
Cambridgeshire	44	68	64%
Lincolnshire	24	80	30%
Norfolk	37	157	23%
Suffolk	44	95	46%
<i>Totals</i>	149	400	37%

The museums were visited in 2011-2012, there were two repeated visits. I visited the Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology twice as some objects were unable to be viewed during the first visit. Two visits were also required for Ipswich Museum. The first appointment illuminated a novel earscoop that was on temporary loan from a private collector. This object had not been published or recorded on the PAS or HER and was so minute it required an SLR camera with a macro lens, this required a second visit. Some objects viewed at museums had find notes. A GSHB, for instance, from Tuddenham (Suffolk) had a catalogue card with notes on the curatorial management of the object, noting the label is missing, but probably belongs to the Tuddenham group (MAA 1927.680). This find note raises the questions of the authenticity of this object belonging to grave 6. Although it does not have an archaeological context, this object can be examined for the types of human imagery it carries.

The information gathered for this study has been entered into an Access database. Access was chosen on the basis that information can be queried via a range of criterion and data can be contrasted and compared in multiple ways. Access can store high quantities of descriptive data in one file. Each of the four counties in this study has its own folder. Based on the extensive literature review and the theoretical standpoints and questions identified for the study (see pp. 20-44) a series of criteria were developed (Table 4) based on the archaeological information that is available in an excavation report in regards to the object, imagery, corpse, grave context and wider setting of the cemetery. A snapshot of the Access Database is presented in Appendix 2, Table 1.

The collected data is presented in Volume 2. An extensive catalogue of human images are presented in Volume 2 under the heading 'FIGURES' (the images are catalogued by themes e.g. gesture, hair and headdress) and these are all listed in Appendix 2, Tables 1-15. The in-text citations to figures are referred to as 'Vol. 2, fig. x' – which is short for Volume 2 and the figure number. Appendix 1.1 presents all the objects in this study and their current location or their record details (e.g. museum, HER or PAS) and object measurements, when available, are listed by county (some figures in the 'FIGURES' and main text are not to scale). Appendix 1.2 lists the types of cemetery that human representation is found and objects bearing wear/ repair are listed in Appendix 1.3. Appendix 2, Tables 2-15 presents full list of designs and reference to figure numbers. Appendix 3 presents the types of grave assemblages the image-carrying objects are from, the grave plans and cemetery plans. The data was then queried and analysed according to a series of general and then more specific questions, the lists and thematic catalogues are explored in more detail and the results are presented in Chapter 4-5.

This methodology creates a manageable and viable corpus to investigate the developments and changing portrayals of the human form. Other sources are drawn on in the discussion chapters. Comparable historical sources and parallel material from Scandinavia and Continental Europe are discussed to explore possible influences and meanings of these images. Key developments and social themes identified in Chapters 6-8 are interpreted in the wider context of social transformations in the

early Anglo-Saxon world. As Chapter 2 identified in the Literature Review, for interpretative purposes there is a need to problematize bodily surfaces and boundaries to examine the links between human and non-human in the past. One way of doing so is to investigate the treatment of the body in grave contexts and representational art (pp. 41-42). Later sources, such as the *Sachsenspiegel* as used by Ratke and Simek for example, are examined for analogous gestural expressions that are portrayed on Migration Period Scandinavian gold foil (Simek 2000; Ratke and Simek 2006). The use of later historical sources for interpretative purpose is challenging. A key criticism is that textual sources such as the Norse sagas were written several generations after the imagery was produced, within a Christian context. Historical sources can often offer insights to perceptions or realities of how people may have made sense of the world, but it has long been established that caution has to be used when associating imagery with much later textual sources. Hines recently notes that it is possible the pictorial scenes in the Migration Period may have existed independently from the literary evidence or that the figural motifs may have modified and reinterpreted the stories (Hines 2013b, 255). Price, however, suggested that it might be useful to consider human representation in terms of historic literature when there are substantial similarities and associations between image and text. He proposed that if the imagery correlates with the descriptions of garb, objects or bodily actions then we can avoid ‘simplistic attributions’ and make more useful connections with characters from later texts (Price 2006, 182). Relevant sources used here include historical and legal texts (e.g. the earliest laws) and comparative archaeological data pertaining to the human body (e.g. burial practices, pathological evidence for bodily treatment etc.). Comparable historical materials from the medieval and Roman worlds are crucial in the exploration of the role of human imagery and bodily performance, as identified in the Literature Review (p. 43).

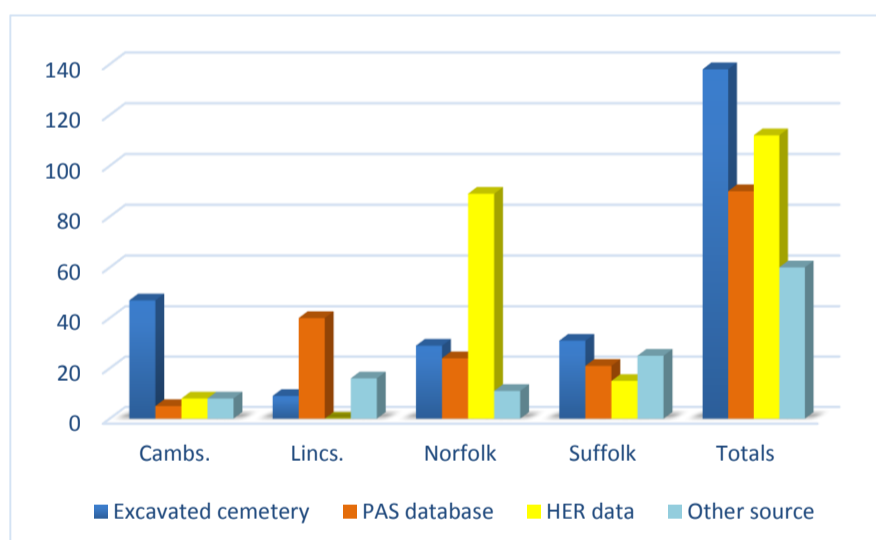


Fig. 3.1 Graph illustrating the frequency of image-carrying objects recovered from published excavation reports, the PAS database and the HER.

Table 3 Museums visited.

County	Museum
Lincolnshire	The Collection, Grantham Museum, British Museum and the Northern Lincolnshire Museum
Cambridgeshire	Ashmolean, Ely Museum and the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
Norfolk	Norwich Castle Museum and the British Museum
Suffolk	Ipswich Museum, West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and the British Museum

Table 4 Information recorded in Access Database and presented in Appendix 1-4.

Information collected in this study	Explanation
Grave ID	Grave ID given in the excavation report
Location found	The location the object was found
Museum and accession no.	The museum the object is kept in and accession number of the object
Object type	The type of object
Find number	Excavation report find number
Material type	Material the object is made from
Condition of object	Condition of the object (sign of wear/ repair)
Date of object manufacture	The century the object was probably made in
Measurement	Dimensions of the object (length and width)
Motif description	Description of the design based on existing catalogues, discussed further below on p.56
Inhumation	Is the object from an inhumation burial?
Cremation	Is the object from a cremation burial?
Un-stratified	Is the object from an un-stratified context?
Type of burial site	Inhumation-only, mixed rite or cremation only
Sex	Biological sex of the skeleton
Age	Age of the skeleton
Body position	Corpse bodily posture
Bioarchaeology	Any information regarding the condition of the skeleton that could indicate the health of the individual
Object location in context	The position of the object
Landscape context	Description of the burial landscape (e.g. reuse of prehistoric remains)
Burial context	Description of the grave in association with other burials
Burial ritual	The burial ritual or custom that is suggested in the excavated report
Other	Any other relevant information that does not belong in the above categories
Reference	Bibliographic reference

PAS Data

In line with most cemetery excavations, graves under discussion here are often only dated through a relative system that maps out broad chronologies based on grave finds and stratigraphic relationships between grave cuts. Objects are thus dated either by archaeological context or in rare instances by association with radio-carbon dated burials – such as Mound 1 and Mound Seventeen at Sutton Hoo. The imagery on objects of course allows additional dating on the basis of style and motif. The stray finds and objects are usually stylistically dated using Salin’s Style I and II criteria. Style I developed in the second half of the fifth century, which was succeeded by Style II in the late sixth and early seventh centuries (Dickinson 2009, 1). All known object types carrying human representation are listed in Appendix 1.1, Tables 1-4. These have been dated by the excavator, the PAS and in some cases by me through their direct mortuary context and style or by using parallels. Table 5 (p.52) outlines the object types and it describes how they have been dated. There are some caveats, however, to using typological dating. Many objects were kept in circulation for many years, perhaps over generations and may not have been deposited in the grave until long after their initial manufacture. Some have attempted to overcome this by creating an arbitrary date for objects with wear and repair that takes account of the potential longer circulation time. This too is problematic, however, as we have only a limited grasp on the range of usage for objects. In addition, certain designs and styles may not have developed as part of a linear artistic output. It is possible that the popularity of styles or motifs waned and re-emerged at a later date. This said,

established dating for Style I and Style II provide an invaluable chronological framework from which to begin to explore the shifts and developments in early Anglo-Saxon human representational art.

Table 5 Object types and their dates.

Object type	Date	Reason ¹⁰	Reference
Cruciform brooch	Late 5 th – 6 th c.	P	Mortimer 1990; Martin 2001
Florid cruciform brooch	6 th c.	P and St	Mortimer 1990; Martin 2001
GSHB	6 th c.	P	Hines 1997; Nielsen 1997
Applied saucer brooch	Late 5 th – 6 th c.	P	Nielsen 1997
Button brooch	Late 5 th to 6 th c.	P	Nielsen 1997
Wrist-clasp	Late 5 th to 6 th c.	P	Hines 1992
Gusset plate	Late 5 th to 6 th c.	P	Hines 1992
Workbox	7 th c.	A	Hills 2011
Mounts	Potentially dating between the late 5 th – 7 th c.	A and St	
Die	Potentially dating between the late 5 th – 7 th c.	St and A	
Drinking horn	6 th - 7 th c.	P	
Figurine	7 th c.	P	
Sword chape	6 th c.	St	
Ear scoop	7 th c.	St	

3.2 LIMITATIONS AND ISSUES

During the data collection a number of key issues and limitations were recognised. These include:

- Find context

The majority of cemeteries recorded by the HER have evidence of ‘sub-surface deposits’ i.e. burials; a few sites, however, are conjectured to be Anglo-Saxon cemeteries based on find spots. Items are generally found through metal-detecting or are casual finds, such as ploughed up artefacts and bones. For example, the HER records that in 1833 a landlord described his ‘great plough was at work breaking up the old park or fields’ extracting finds such as the ‘bones of 80 bodies with several curiosities attached to them’ (Coleby Park, Lincolnshire HER 60372 – MLI82104). Bland suggested that the PAS and HER find spots can be mapped and seen to reflect ‘regionality of the distribution of types of artefacts’ (Bland 2009, 74). Recent research on early Anglo-Saxon objects from cemetery and settlement sites has questioned whether these finds can be interpreted as representing a ‘site’ (Chester-Kadwell 2005, 80-1). In the past, archaeologists have suggested that two brooches from the same field perhaps associates with a cemetery (Chester-Kadwell 2005, 80). Chester-Kadwell follows this interpretation – she suggests that the comparison of ‘detected and excavated artefacts suggests a series of indicator finds’ – thus suggesting that objects such as wrist-clasps, buckles and brooches are indicators of grave goods (2005, 81). In her study she addresses this issue by ticketing the frequency of objects within a field to suggest how strong a ‘candidate’ the site is for mortuary deposits– starting from one object for weak likelihood and more than 25 objects for strong likelihood (Chester-Kadwell 2005, 81 table 6.1).

¹⁰ P = dating by parallels with other objects from good archaeologically datable contexts; St = stylistic date; St I/ II; stylistic date based on style I or II criteria; A = object from a dated archaeological context.

This is a useful way of contributing to our understanding of the frequency of mortuary sites in Norfolk and within the wider landscape. Certainly controlled experimental work has indicated that artefacts can be ‘displaced by ploughing by distance of several meters’ depending on the type of soil, land use and agricultural regimes (Dobinson and Denison 1995, 51). The increasing numbers of early Anglo-Saxon dress fittings (such as cruciform brooches, whole or fragmented) raises the question of the circumstances of loss. Do these objects represent disturbed graves, casual losses or some other circumstance? There are some inherent problems with assuming a mortuary context. How representative, for instance, is this approach for burial grounds with non-metallic grave goods? It is possible that metal objects may have been involved in ritualised depositional acts at special places or deposited in settlement features that have been heavily disturbed over the centuries. These finds recorded by the PAS are likely to have an additional biography that can only be speculated on without further research on the types of fragments that are found juxtaposed with natural and artificial features they are found close to. Katherine Robbins outlined five key issues in the processes of how an object moves from its use in the past to its presence in the present within an archaeological dataset. She proposes that:

- a. ‘Not all objects in a single body of material culture will be lost or buried in a particular time or place;
- b. Of those that are buried, not all will be preserved;
- c. Of those artefacts that are preserved, not all will survive to the present;
- d. Of those that survive, not all will be exposed where a collector may see them;
- e. Of those that are exposed to the collector, not all will be recovered’ (Robbins 2013, 55).

An additional issue of data quality is the accuracy of find spots that are recorded on the PAS database. This information is reliant on the finder and it has been suggested that certain factors might impair the accuracy of the find spots. These include:

- the ‘find was made a long time ago’
- the ‘finder did not keep a record of where it was found’
- the ‘finders are unwilling to pass this information on because they are concerned about the use to which such information may be put – either that it may be published and that would encourage other detector users to try to detect on “their sites” or that archaeologists might approach the landowner and recommend that he or she stops allowing metal detecting on that site’ (Bland 2009, 71).

It is possible that casual / metal-detected finds or objects in museum collections that are reported to derive from a cemetery found in close proximity to known cemetery sites (with sub-surface deposits of burials) then these items could relate to disturbed graves or at least accidental losses/ ritualised deposits of items during mortuary associated activities (e.g. funeral/ visitations). There are sufficient published cemetery reports from the region to examine relationships between objects and context through case studies. It is not assumed that all casual or metal-detected finds derive from a disturbed grave, but are employed in this study as representative of general trends on metalwork deposition practices across the region. Leahy noted that distribution maps of stray and detected finds could represent an ‘historical reality or merely concentrations of fieldwork’ (2003b, 138). He proposed that if there is a good coverage of finds and historically known zones such as woodlands then ‘the recorded pattern of metal-detector finds is providing us with a credible distribution of Anglo-Saxon metalwork’ (Leahy 2003b, 138-140). For the region under study, the detected finds are distributed across the entire region (Fig. 5.4) some areas are lacking or scant, but these zones are the coastal margins and areas of woodland at Domesday (Fig. 5.3)

The historical relationships between metal detector users and archaeologists within the study areas will also have an impact on the reporting of finds, thus affecting this study (Dobinson and Denison 1995, 19-21 table 10; Kershaw 2013, 15; Robbins 2013, 70). Fig. 3.1 illustrates the frequency of objects that were recorded by the PAS in 2011. Cambridgeshire has the lowest finds reported and Norfolk represents almost half of the finds recorded across these four counties. This distinction might reflect the regions non-traditional finds recording process (Dobinson and Denison 1995, 19-21) rather than representing variation in the production and use of the human form. It has, for example, been observed that Norwich Castle Museum has been long established as having strong connections with detecting groups (Dobinson and Denison 1995, 20-1). Notably, Tony Gregory's important work with detectorists in Norfolk played a key role in developing connections with these groups, raising awareness among professional archaeologists to communicate with the public effectively about reporting detected finds (Green and Gregory 1978; Gregory 1983, 1991). A closer inspection of Anglo-Saxon finds recorded on the PAS database reflects a similar finding – see Fig. 3.1. Lincolnshire and Norfolk have the most finds, perhaps attesting to the good relations formed between the detector groups and the museum (Dobinson and Denison 1995, 20-1).

It is also possible that the low frequency of metal-detected finds from Cambridgeshire might also relate to the natural topography. A large proportion of this county is constituted by fenlands, making this land unsuitable for metal-detecting. The low frequency of Anglo-Saxon finds in Suffolk is perhaps surprising. We might expect key archaeological sites, such as Sutton Hoo, to attract metal-detectorists. Feasibly, the 'national' status of Mound One generated by the media and museums in the twentieth century (McCombe 2011, 126-149) may have attracted the attention of metal-detectorists or night-hawkers before the establishment of the PAS. Equally, it is possible that the extensive surface collection, metal-detecting and field-walking surveys of Anglo-Saxon sites in south east Suffolk conducted during 1983-88 (Newman 1995) may have had an impact on any future metal-detector or casual finds. Rendlesham, located near Sutton Hoo was surveyed in 1982, prior to the widespread survey of south east Suffolk. The fields in Rendlesham were the focus of attention for illegal metal-detecting notably so because Bede referred to "king's country-seat of Rendlesham, that is Rendil's House" in the *Ecclesiastical History* (Plouviez 2009). A new survey conducted in 2008 noted lootings taking place even during the archaeological work. It was not until March 2014 that details of this important site were released to the mainstream media, perhaps to protect this vulnerable location from additional nighthawkers.¹¹ Markedly, the media reported that archaeologists were working alongside metal-detectorists and many high status objects were found. It is probable that many items looted by nighthawkers prior to, during and after the archaeological surveys are now in private collections. The surviving finds, however, indicate an occupation area that was 'particularly large, rich and important settlement' that was probably inhabited during the seventh century, concurrent with the nearby burial ground at Sutton Hoo.¹²

Chester-Kadwell's study might be a useful approach for one region, but it cannot be applied to the dataset that is collated here. Each region has its own traditions of finds recording of metal-detected and casual finds and topography and history of un-intrusive archaeological fieldwork. Applying a general criterion for all the regions would thus generate a discrepancy in representation. However, this does not rule out the examination of human imagery and the object type. It is possible that comparative data can be drawn upon – if a similar object is found within a grave assemblage – on the possible way it was worn or used and the gender and status of the user. The PAS objects can be examined in terms of broad distribution patterns and the types of engagements people had with material culture. It is crucial to consider in this discussion on un-stratified objects that metal was a valuable commodity that could be melted down and used again (Mortimer 1988, 229-230, 1991; Dobinson and Denison 1995, 50). The PAS data cannot be considered as wholly the product of mortuary rites and sites –

¹¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-26519496>

¹² <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/articles/anglo-saxon-royal-village-discovered-12698.html>

these finds could represent a range of potential types of activity and place. This limitation does not impinge however on any potential analysis of the relationships between object types and the pictorial images used to decorate these artefacts.

- Recovery in cemeteries

The full extent of a cemetery may not have been recovered and the condition of the site that was excavated may compromise interpretations that concern the mortuary variability and burial rituals. Fonaby (Lincolnshire) is an example of a badly disturbed early Anglo-Saxon burial ground (Cook 1981). Many objects with ornate decoration were recovered, but the context of some of these graves and the burial ground has been heavily disturbed by agricultural activities. Although this study is not reconstructing social structures through burial evidence (if it had then this type of disturbance would heavily distorted the analysis) it does reduce the quality of the data. Other issues that this study takes into consideration include:

- Burial preservation (external structure, organic material)

External structures of the burial, mounds for example, may have been wiped out by post-medieval and modern activities, but excavation can indicate whether the grave had a mound by discolouration in the soil and its spatial positioning within the cemetery. Yet, nineteenth century excavations may not have recorded such detail and this could distort the analysis of the burial and its context. Natural movements in the soil could alter a sealed-context burial, but the position of an artefact can generally indicate if the object was part of the mortuary costume or if it was deposited separate from the immediate burial attire of the cadaver (Watson and Edwards 1990, 97).

- Grave good preservation

Metallic objects left in the soil for hundreds of years corrode, especially in damp conditions and will stain any adjacent organic material (Watson and Edwards 1990, 101). Ironwork, however, corrodes quicker than copper, lead, or silver alloys and whilst waterlogged conditions are aggressive toward metal they promote better preservation of organic material (Watson and Edwards 1990, 101). Therefore, through the bias of preservation in burial environments this study anticipates a very limited, if at all, quantity of iron based objects that carry artistic designs. Anthropomorphic imagery may have decorated organic objects like wood, leather and ivory deposited within the grave. For example a double-headed cultic figure made from wood dating to the late sixth century was found from the Fischerinsel, Tollensesee/ Neubrandenburg, Germany (Schutz 2001, fig. 50.). The bias in preservation, however, indicates that copper, lead and silver alloys form the primary dataset and this means that the material remains that have generally survived, for example the good preservation of copper-alloy metalwork and the poor survival of textiles, may generate biases in archaeological interpretation. For example, metallic objects could be analysed as a heavy-weight signifier of identity, but clothes worn by the cadaver may have equally identified with key aspects of social life (Williams 2006, 38).

- Mortuary practice

Another crucial point is that the mortuary rite that was practised by early medieval communities has an effect on this study. Whilst inhumation provides a secured context with intact objects to analyse, the act of cremation reduces the quantity and

quality of artefacts and art. Often objects were burnt with the corpse leaving only fragments of objects and melted, distorted imagery on the artefacts.

- Conservation techniques

Decoration on metallic objects may be compromised by the conservation undertaken on the object in the laboratory i.e. how the object has been cleaned (Watson and Edwards 1990, 97). Archaeological techniques for moving metallic and organic objects from graves to conservation involves the block lifting of soil, therefore features and stratigraphy may be potentially destroyed (Watson and Edwards 1990, 98). This means that an important relational aspect between object and grave may be irretrievable.

- Regional variation in the chronology

Although there are some commonalities, burials cannot be considered as homogenous i.e. uniform in nature. Mortuary sites are heterogeneous, constituted through single burial events over a course of several generations. In other words, cemeteries are not like scenes from a pop-up book, but are places of complex, interconnected and on-going performative arenas for social, political, cultural, religious and emotional themes (Price 2010). In different regions or localities individuals and/ or communities may bury the dead in a particular way at different temporal moments, the link between regional typology (objects, mortuary rite) and chronology is thus not an easy affinity or harmonious connection. There are few absolute dates for deposits in burials before the seventh century (Hines 1999, 68; Bayliss et al. 2013) and scholarship that has attempted to identify regional chronologies using material objects from the burial context (e.g. Penn et al. 2007) overlook other social considerations as to why we find variation in the grave. Objects may have been taken out of circulation and buried soon after their manufacture or were kept in circulation, passed on as heirlooms and were not deposited in the grave for several generations, thus distorting chronological sequences (e.g. Williams 2006, 26).

3.3 IDENTIFYING HUMAN IMAGERY

The key question for this study is: by what method are anthropomorphic designs identified in early Anglo-Saxon art? Since the late nineteenth century, the methods used for the identification of these designs have been much contested. Bakka, for example, identified a beard where Leigh later recognized a mouth (Bakka 1958, 34-5, fig. 25 as cited in Leigh 1980, 349). Leeds conjectured that a form was a 'clumsy addition' that had no purpose, but Leigh noted how this 'clumsy addition' could in fact also represent a mouth (Leeds 1949, 56 as cited in Leigh 1980, 352). Both interpretations could be correct. Not all motifs are so perplexing, however. The presence of human bodily parts within designs, in particular hands with thumbs, for instance, are recognisable (Capelle 2003, 41).

Established Style Terminology

The process of observing the human form within early Anglo-Saxon art has become finely tuned over the years and a distinct terminology has been developed to describe recognised designs within early Anglo-Saxon art. This research employs well-known terms used in published corpora on objects and art of this time period, including:

- Animal-man or *Tiermenschen*

Zoomorphic and anthropomorphic bodily parts combined to create a half-human and half-animal design (Leigh 1980, 396; Haseloff 1981, 180-196).

- Hand-and-helmet or Emperor art

Human face, raised forearm, collar and conjoined forearm and leg. This hand posture has been identified as emperor art and has been associated with Odin- type images similar to that upon bracteates (Kendrick 1938, 77; Dickinson 2002, 178).

- Man-between-two-animals or 'biting heads'

Full-bodied human figure that is portrayed between two creatures (Bruce-Mitford 1974, 43). The depiction of a human head near animal heads is also used to describe this type of motif (Schoneveld and Zijlstra 1999, 193; Olsen 2006, 486). Since the mid twentieth century, animals heads positioned near human faces in Anglo-Saxon art have also been termed 'biting heads' or 'down biting heads' (Leeds 1953; Thompson 1956; Chadwick 1958).

- Human figures with weaponry or animal companions

The full-bodied human figures that are depicted with weaponry or animal companions have been associated with Odin (Davidson 1965, 27; Wickham-Crowley 1992, 49).

- Disarticulated heads

Disarticulated bearded-faces with bird-like creatures rendered on brooches have been interpreted as portrayals of Odin/ Woden, whilst the other figures might depict 'supernatural beings' that warded off evils. The small human heads that inhabit represented animal bodies are also suggested to link to Odin (Wickham-Crowley 1992, 49; Webster 2012a, 17).

- Full face heads/ masks and profile faces

This design is 'characterised by a continuous eyebrow/ nose/ mouth ridge, by prominent round eyes, similarly shaped nostrils and several lines or bars or rings separating eyes and nostrils. Some versions also display round cheeks beneath the eyes' (Leigh 1980, 328).

- Human heads that metamorphose or composite masks

Designs that transform or metamorphose - i.e. the ornamentation transforms into another if the object is turned 90 degrees (Leigh 1980, 356).

- Figures with horned or bird- headdresses

Horned or bird-headdress figures are found rendered with full-bodies and with disarticulated heads (Helmbrecht 2008).

- Ceremonial dancers or tumbler figures with bent joints

Bruce-Mitford identified the pair of human figures represented upon the Sutton Hoo helmet as 'dancing warriors' or as 'leaping' figures (Davidson 1965, 23; Bruce-Mitford 1978, 186-9). The human figure that is represented between two beasts has been identified as in an 'acrobatic manner or a dancing position' (Leigh 1980, 389). The bodily comportment of the human figure on the Finglesham belt-buckle might indicate that this figure is rendered as if in mimetic performance (Davidson 1965, 27; Shepherd 1998, 64-5).

- Rider and fallen warrior

This description is only associated with Sutton Hoo helmet, one of the plaques carries a human figure upon a horse and a fallen figure stabbing the rider's horse (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 190-7).

- Faces bellowing substances

Vierck associated human faces with a triangular or hexafoil form below the mouth as representing 'atem' or 'breath' – the heads seem to be 'blowing out a divine breath or tongue of fire or a 'tongue of fire' (Vierck 1967; Dickinson 2002, 178).

- Bound man

This design is of a human face with drawn up hands to the mouth and a sinuous, zoomorphic body. The hands seem to be bounded. This design has been interpreted as representing the owner, 'bound in supplication to the gods' (Pollington et al. 2010, 434).

New Style Categorisation

In this study I have identified and catalogued four new types of figural imagery in early Anglo-Saxon art, including:

- Hands on chest and waist
- Folded arms
- Hands on hips
- Stroking/gripping/pulling beard
- Gripping forearm/wrist

The first three styles relate exclusively to the three-dimensional human figurines and the gripping/pulling beard relates to a scabbard mount from Great and Little Chishill (Cambridgeshire). The final motif – the gripping forearm/wrist – relates to images carried on the large drinking horns from Taplow (Buckinghamshire) and is explored in Chapter 6.

Non-figurative Designs

Not all Style I designs have recognisable human limbs, heads or thumbs. Tania Dickinson suggested that geometric images on saucer brooches intentionally emulated human facial features, which could have been an intentional technique to 'reduce zoomorphic images to geometric ones' (2002, 174). For GSHBs, David Leigh also ascribed geometric motifs to abstract human facial and bodily parts – such as 'lentoids = hips or nose, triangle = hip, disc = nose, drop-shape = nose' (Leigh 1980, 421). Leigh extended his interpretation of the geometric patterns and suggested that some designs could be mammalian, while S-shaped motifs could refer to snakes or serpents (Leigh 1980, 370).

Established anthropological scholarship has recognised that as humans we have a tendency to anthropomorphise things i.e. attributing human behaviour and characteristics to an inanimate entity (Guthrie 1993; Gell 1998, 121). Guthrie suggested that the cognitive mind is equipped to view the world as an animate force, for example it is advantageous to the individual to 'presume that a boulder is a bear (and be wrong) than to presume that a bear is a boulder (and be wrong)' (Guthrie 1993; Gell 1998, 121). Guthrie went on to suggest that human perception has a need to 'note the presence of other people' and the detection of a human form has priority even if the image is schematic or figural (Guthrie 1993, 103). There are two arguments

here. When artefacts are examined there may be a tendency to see animals or humans in the ornamentation, which is perhaps influenced by contemporary media that draw on anthropomorphism as a common tool to promote a product or service (Guthrie 1993, 122-151). On the other hand, it is possible that it was designed in such a way so that its early medieval viewer could see multiple human and animal forms. This is a circular argument and cannot be neatly resolved, but it does indicate the subjective nature of analysing 'abstract' or non-figurative anthropomorphic imagery. Due to the subjectivity of non-figurative anthropomorphic imagery, it is not included in this study.

Returning to early Anglo-Saxon objects and bearing the above discussion on anthropomorphising in mind, two objects are discussed to establish an objective approach to the available material. A mount from Fring (Norfolk) carries abstract designs Fig. 3.2 and a GSHB from Little Wilbraham (Cambridgeshire) has decipherable imagery (Fig. 3.3). In terms of the object from Fring, recognising a human or animal design is fairly subjective and on first glance there are no particular distinguishing features that are wholly human or indeed animal. On second inspection, however, it could be observed that the pear-shaped form may refer to eyes with the pupil in the centre, beneath this eye there are three eye-bands and the form in the centre perhaps refers to the nose area. Moreover, there is an inverted image of a helmeted face with a circular pellet eye, three eye-bands and the large curled eye of the anthropomorphic face could refer to a beak. This type of imagery might be an intended visual riddle. In contrast to the Fring mount the two human heads on the brooch from Little Wilbraham are less stylised and can be clearly identified. Both of these objects carry a design that fit into the established criteria of this study, both demonstrating human facial characteristics. Yet, it can be argued that there is an observation and recording issue with such objects that have a similar pictorial representation as the Fring example. Despite close examination, there is the possibility that non-figurative or more abstract designs, which may refer to the human form, might not have been understood as anthropomorphic in design during the first-hand examination of the object. This means that a representative sample of abstract anthropomorphic images may not have been collated. In order to reduce subjectivity this study does not include objects that carry images similar to those sported on the Fring example. This study focuses on images that are figurative i.e. motifs that represent forms that are recognizably derived from life. This sharpened examination of anthropomorphic imagery enables a focussed and critical investigation of figurative representation.



Fig. 3.2 Mount from Fring (Norfolk).



Fig. 3.3 Great square-headed brooch from Little Wilbraham (Cambridgeshire).

Human Designs and Other Motifs

On some occasions, different research approaches have extracted representations of the human form from the overall design on the surface of an object. These motifs could be argued as geometric in form and non-relational to the physiological human form. An example of this is carried on the GSHB from Chessell Down (Isle of Wight); on this object there is a long tear-shaped form extending from an anthropomorphic head, which has been recorded as part of the human head (Arnold 1982, 104). This motif is not a face bellowing substances, a recognised design described above. Rather, the rectilinear shape is extending from the scalp (Fig. 3.4). Such an interpretation raises the question of how can the extent of individual motifs be identified?

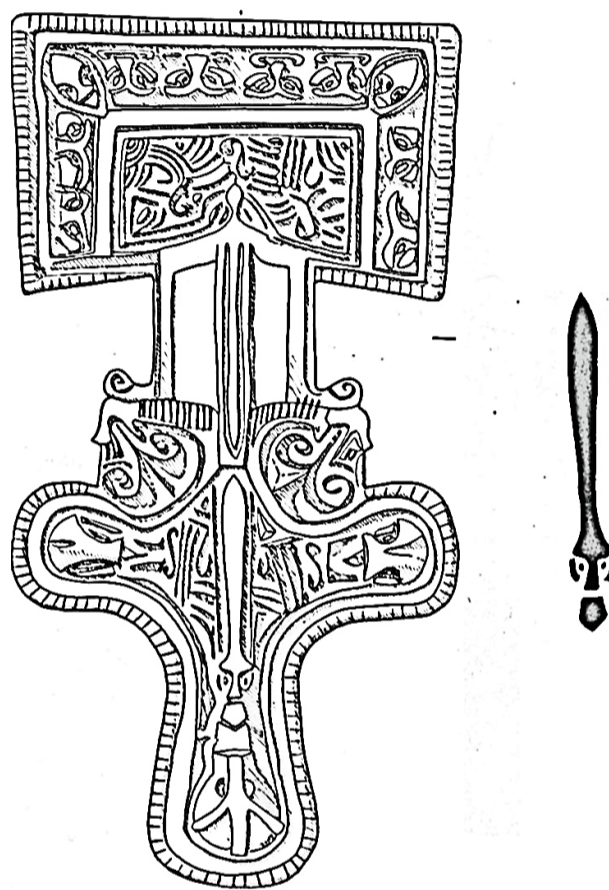


Fig. 3.4 Great square-headed brooch from Chessell Down in Kent (after Arnold 1982). Not to scale.

For example, might this be a headdress or an abstract portrayal of the human head? This rectilinear shape is in fact a structural element of the object, termed the 'footplate bar' (Hines 1997a, 5). The structure and its surface can play a dynamic role. Leroi-Gourhan noted how rock art images at Lascaux were deployed at locations on the cave wall that emphasised the structural relationships between the varied creatures (Leroi-Gourhan (1982) as cited in Richards 2006, 220). A connection between surface space and imagery has also been made for early Anglo-Saxon portable objects. Dickinson argued that some Style I designs might have been abbreviated or added to in order to fit the available surface space of objects (Dickinson 2002). The structural frames of early Anglo-Saxon objects organise and give structure to the complex Style I designs (Webster 2003). Many authors have stressed that the structural components might have a close relationship with animal and human motifs (Leeds 1949, 14; Leigh 1980, 402-403; Webster 2012a, 15-17). It should not be ruled out that once the 'meanings of the individual components become better understood it will be possible to define a single, unified conception conveyed' by an object as a whole (Leigh 1980, 412-3). The way in which the human designs are displayed on the object with other motifs and structural elements could have conveyed messages and meaning.

3.4 SUMMARY

This study of available sources for data has underlined some crucial points for examining early Anglo-Saxon art in the region. There is some variation in the quality of information. The high volume of objects recorded by the HER from Norfolk reflects the long-term and developed connections between detectorists and museums. The majority of relevant objects from Lincolnshire are recorded through the PAS. The low volume of finds from excavated cemeteries is likely to reflect the large-scale cremation cemeteries and the minimal survival rate of metalwork during the cremation process. Cambridgeshire has a high number of finds from cemeteries, reflecting the extensive excavations conducted by antiquarians in the nineteenth century and new discoveries and excavations of cemetery sites. Suffolk demonstrates almost equal quantities of image-bearing objects from excavated cemeteries, the PAS database, HER and other sources (e.g. local journals), which could indicate a gradual increase in the discovery and excavation of early Anglo-Saxon burial grounds.

The total number of objects carrying human imagery (393) represents a manageable corpus that can be cross-examined and investigated for changes in how the meaning and role of human imagery changed across time. Overall, the majority (34%) of finds are from excavated cemeteries with published reports, 28% from HER offices, 22% from the PAS database and 15% from other sources (i.e. museum catalogues and county based journals that identify stray or casual finds). The majority of objects with secure archaeological contexts, objects from disturbed cemetery contexts (e.g. Ruskington and Sleaford in Lincolnshire) and stray finds recounted in cemetery reports to be from the same site (e.g. Barrington in Cambridgeshire and West Stow in Suffolk) were examined first-hand. Although only a handful of finds reported on the PAS could be viewed (e.g. the Carlton Colville, Suffolk figurine at the British Museum), the online records frequently included photographs or illustrations of the finds. Museum visitations also illuminated novel finds that are relevant to this study, but are not recorded on the HER or PAS database. The PAS finds provide valuable information on any developments in the use of human representation in regards to the types of objects human imagery is carried on. Information from published cemetery reports can be drawn on as case studies to investigate connections between object, imagery, user and the archaeological context.

Without further evidence such as skeletal remains or archaeological features, casual or detected finds could well have been from a disturbed grave, settlement, a ritualised deposit or another type of site. It is, however, still possible to identify the types of human designs that are carried on these objects. If a comparable object is found within a grave assemblage it is also possible to speculate on how this object might have been used or worn. As investigated in Chapter 2, in the last few decades the identification of human designs embedded within Style I have become finely tuned and there is now a recognised terminology to describe certain motifs. Non-figurative anthropomorphic imagery (i.e. geometric designs that might represent human bodily parts) is excluded from this study as the identification of possible human motifs constituted through geometric forms is subjective. It was argued that the relationship between human designs and other motifs should not be discounted in the analysis of the relationship between image, artefact, use and archaeological context.

CHAPTER 4

Human Motifs and Designs in Eastern England

A total of 400 objects carrying human imagery is catalogued in Appendix 1.1, Tables 1-4. Fig. 3.1 on p.50 presents the frequency of objects carrying human imagery from the excavation reports, HER and the PAS. The largest proportion derives from graves and cemeteries: 138 objects carrying human images were recorded in excavation reports, 90 from the PAS database, 112 from HER offices and 60 other sources. The bulk of the PAS and HER finds could not be examined first-hand as these are frequently returned to the finder, but the vast majority of objects from excavation reports were examined at museums. A total of 149 objects were examined first-hand at the museums listed in Table 3.

As Chapter 2 has outlined, much previous work has connected such images to mythology and pre-Christian beliefs. It is clear therefore that such imagery has the potential to inform on the identity of individuals and groups from a variety of perspectives. The distribution of human representational art is also likely to prove informative although any distribution is dependent upon the location and distribution of cemeteries. Patterns of use over time could help elucidate evidence for the signalling of local identity and inform on the use of human imagery in funerary practice. Mortuary contexts have been argued as embodiments of multiple funerary processes and rituals (Williams 2003, 2006; Devlin 2007) which can allow us to explore how groups and individuals may have expressed ideology and identity. If image-carrying objects are part of these funerary processes then they offer a valuable means of interrogating the way in which human imagery was used by different social groups on a variety of scales. The main body of designs is presented in thematic headings and visually catalogued in the Appendix. Their use, deployment and importance is intensively interrogated in Chapters 6-8.

4.1 FULL AND PARTIAL HUMAN BODIES

2-dimensional Motifs

Full-bodied representational art is extremely rare in the corpus and only a small collection of artefacts carry such imagery, (listed in Appendix 2, Table 2). The types of objects that carry full-bodied figures include a workbox from Burwell (Cambridgeshire) which carries a scene of a human that appears to be stabbing a zoomorphic creature (possibly a dragon?) with a sword or dagger (Vol. 2, Fig. 1a). A mount with a horned male figure holds a pair of spears (FAHG-8EAAA3) from East Cambridgeshire; the exact find-spot is unknown (Vol. 2, Fig. 1e-f). A mount from Loveden Hill (Lincolnshire) hosts a representation of a man holding two serpentine-type creatures (Vol. 2, Fig. 1h). A mount forms a human figure from Caistor (NLM-A243C8) and a human figure on a plaque or mount fragment from Caenby in Lincolnshire resonates with the pair of human figures carried on the Sutton Hoo helmet plaques and might have originally portrayed a full body (Appendix 2, Fig. 4f; Bruce-Mitford 1978, 206, fig. 153). Similar to the twin figures rendered upon the Sutton Hoo helmet, the Caenby figure also brandishes two spears. A purse-lid from Sutton Hoo carries a male human figure that stands in-between two lupine creatures (Vol. 2, Fig. 3g). A unique gold swivelling bezel from a Frankish seal-ring found in Postwick dating to the seventh century carries two full-bodied figures that have been considered as a 'male and a long-haired female' that are 'embracing' (Vol. 2, Fig. 1g) (Webster 1998/1999b, 31; Karkov 2011, 123). Two further objects could be described as illustrating an almost-complete

full body. The GSHBs from Little Wilbraham (grave 3 and 40) carry two human images with full-faces and beards, raised human hands (with thumbs) and a single leg and foot, a piece (Vol. 2, Fig.4a: c-d). The distribution of these motifs is illustrated in Fig. 4.1. The majority of these motifs cluster along the East Anglian coast and near the fenlands, a small scattering are also found in the northern most part of the region. Of note is the close proximity of the find-spot of the Frankish seal-ring at Postwick to Norwich, which has been suggested to have been a possible early distribution centre (Wade 1993, 145). These two areas are also connected by a possible navigable river the River Yare.

3-dimensional Renderings

Six 3-dimensional figurines from Great Waldringfield, Tuddenham-St-Martin, Eyke, Halesworth, Friston, Carlton Colville dating to the seventh century (Webster 2002b, 2002a) and possibly a seventh figurine from Mildenhall (Suffolk) are rendered with a full body. The body of the figurine from Tuddenham-St-Martin resembles a stretched trapezoidal form. On each side of the object is a prominent central rib running down the length of the piece. At the top of the base is a hollow cylindrical area with the perforation running between the top of the two ribs. The lower half of the piece is also hollow. This lower hollow aspect may suggest it was an application for another object. The body of the figurine from Great Waldringfield has a central loop in the middle section; the loop is decorated on the back with three small ring-and-dot motifs. The figurine from Carlton



Fig. 4.1 Map showing the distribution of full-bodied human figures.

Colville has a perforated hoop, enabling the object to be suspended, but the Halesworth and Friston figurines have no structural aspects that would allow such attachment or suspension. Other 3-dimensional imagery includes the ear scoop from Coddenham (Suffolk) and mounts from Thimbleby (Lincolnshire) and Aldborough (Norfolk) (Fig. 6.6a-c). In Fig. 4.2 and Fig. 4.3 the distribution of 3-dimensional, full-bodied human representation can be seen to track along the eastern coastal zone of East Anglia, notably in close proximity to the *wic* – an early trading site at Ipswich which probably has its origins in the seventh century (Wade 1993, 145). Pestell has recently highlighted the potential significance of the distribution of the Anglo-Saxon figurines along the eastern seaboard in regards to ‘Anglo-Saxon settlement and the exchange of ideas’ (Pestell 2012, 86). Even though he notes that this region has ‘traditionally been most productive for metal-detecting and where the liaison between detectorists and archaeologists has been longest established’, the rarity of human representation in this time period signifies the ‘special nature’ of these items (Pestell 2012, 86).



Fig. 4.2 Map showing the distribution of 3-dimensional human imagery

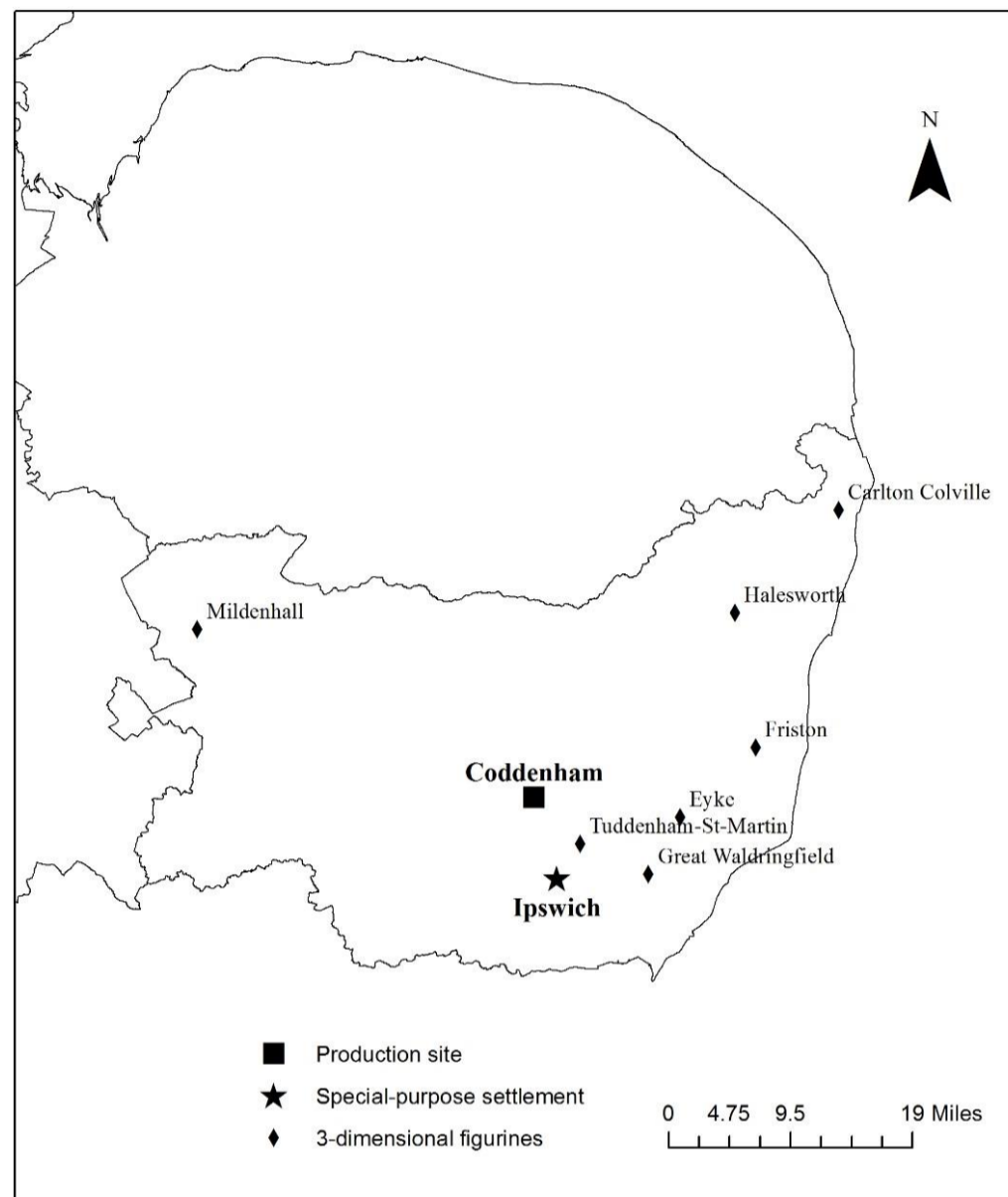


Fig. 4.3 Map showing the distribution of 3-dimensional figurines and the *wic* or special-purpose settlement at Ipswich and the production site at Coddenham

4.2 TRANSFORMING HUMAN FIGURES

These transforming figures are known as *Tiermenschen* or animal-men – figures that contain both human and animal bodily parts; Appendix 2, Table 3 outlines the extent of this motif within the regions and these images can be seen in Vol. 2, Fig. 2. Surprisingly only a small number of objects carry this type of motif: it was apparent on nine objects. Four full-bodied creatures with human heads, torsos, shoulders and animal limbs are portrayed upon a GSHB from Linton Heath (Cambridgeshire) (1948.1540). A vandyke from Holton-le-Moor (Lincolnshire) is represented with a human head and zoomorphic or geometric body. A mount from Loddon/ Mundham (Norfolk) carries a zoomorphic creature that has an anthropomorphic hand with five-digits. The plaque or matrix for the repoussé from Grimston carries a large anthropomorphic head that has zoomorphic and disarticulated body parts (HER 43198). An applied saucer brooch from Alwalton (Cambridgeshire) also carries a hybrid of a human head and hand and a zoomorphic body (HER CB15465) – this object can be seen in Vol. 2, Fig. 4.2: g). Animal-men are also carried on the lappets of two florid cruciform brooches from Icklingham (Suffolk) and Kenninghall (Norfolk) and on a cruciform brooch from Kenninghall (Norfolk) and Haslingfield (Cambridgeshire).

4.3 HUMAN FIGURES WEARING ANIMAL COSTUME

A single example is known: a die from Fen Drayton (CAM-5045A6) which shows a human figure in profile with a lupus guise or animal gestalt. Although the die is fairly worn we can argue that this is a representation of a human figure wearing a pelt for four reasons: first, the figure stands upright and is represented with human feet, legs, elbows and rounded shoulders. Second, the figure holds a spear and possibly a sword. Third, the gaping jaws of the head give the impression of a mask. Fourth, the chevron-patterned tunic terminates near the knee area and the tail appears to limply dangle from one side of the hem. This die may have been used to stamp this design onto other metallic or leather objects and garments.

4.4 BODILY GESTURE – HAND GESTICULATIONS

Although the variety of bodily hand gestures is quite limited in early Anglo-Saxon England, there are some variations and rare developments over time. In Appendix 2, Table 5 lists all the objects carrying representations with hand gestures and are pictured in Vol. 2, Figs. 4.1-4.2. Fig. 4.4 shows the distribution of these motifs, which reflects cemetery distribution and changes in burial practice – such as the emergence of high-status male barrow burials.

Bodily gestural expression

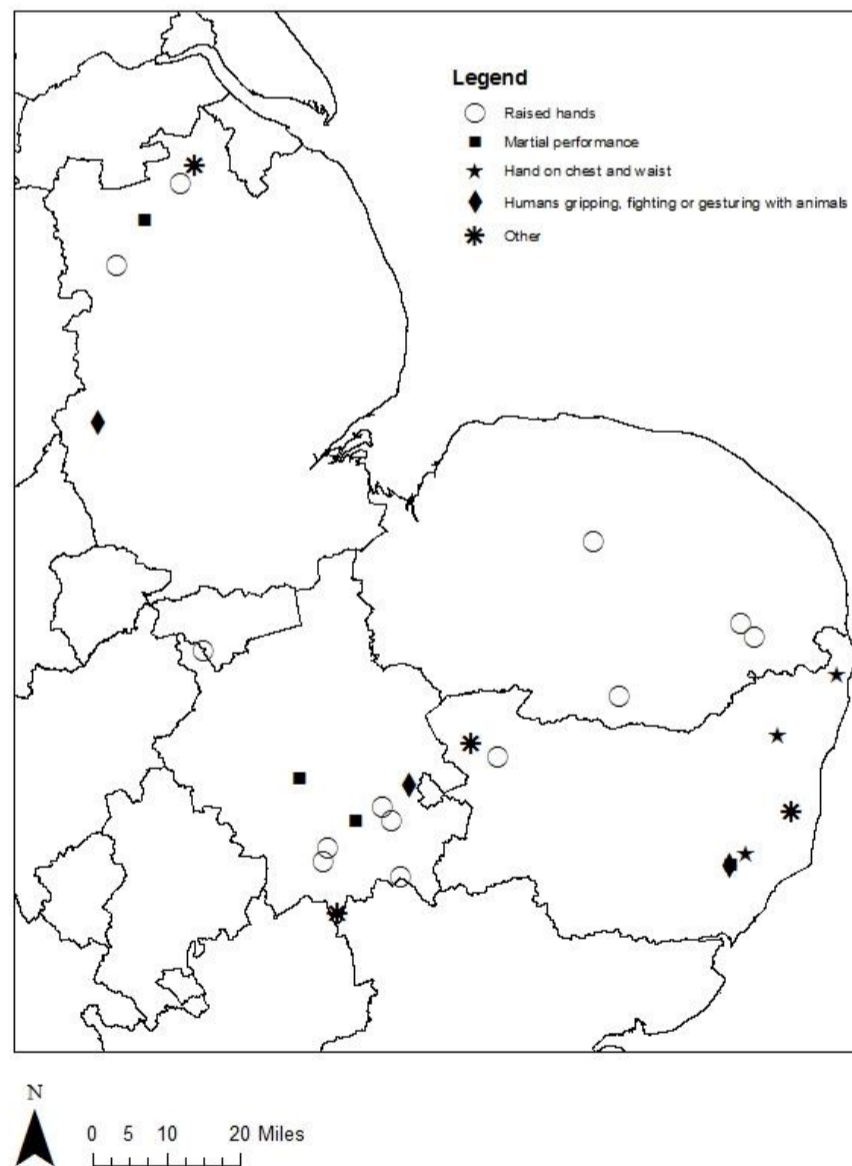


Fig. 4.4 Map showing the distribution of object carrying humans with bodily gestures

Raised Hand near the Face

Some of the motif themes cross-over. A cruciform brooch, for instance, from Haslingfield (Z21286) carries an animal-man that has a raised hand near the face. This type of gesture is also portrayed with human heads without zoomorphic bodies. A GSHB, for example, from Little Wilbraham (Cambridgeshire) carries several *en face* human heads with a raised hand near their cheeks (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.2c). The hand raised near the face is the most frequent gestural expression within the area under study, comprising of 12 pieces. They are pictured in Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1a-j and Fig. 4.2a-b. Several other objects carry this type of imagery, including mounts (e.g. Holton-le-Moor) and florid cruciform brooches from Icklingham and West Stow. On the footplate lappets there are two animal, human or hybrid figures in profile and both have a single human hand (as identified by the opposable thumb and fingers). The hands are raised to the faces; the fingers rest underneath the nose or a helmet nose-guard.

There are gestures that might represent an adaptation of the raised hand motif. Hands are also depicted slightly above the head: the small square-headed brooch from Snetterton (Norfolk) carries a human head with raised arms and a similar image is represented on the mount from Loddon/ Mundham with an anthropomorphic arm bent at the elbow and the hand (with opposable thumb) is raised behind the zoomorphic head. A square-headed brooch from Scampton (Lincolnshire) carries a half head and a full-face human head that are positioned with an expression of upward praise or an orans position (see Chapter 8 p.166). A GSHB from Linton Heath (1948.1558) carries human heads that raise one hand to the face and cover one half of the face. Another possible adaptation of the raised hand is represented upon the purse-lid from Mound One, Sutton Hoo. This object carries several plaques, one portrays a full-bodied human figure in-between two full-bodied lupine-like creatures. The human figure is portrayed with his arms bent at the elbow and raised to the shoulders, the legs are splayed so that the inside of the feet face the viewer. The majority of these motifs are found in cemeteries that cluster near the fenlands, reflecting the cemetery distribution in this region.

Weapon-bearing Figures and Martial Performance

This section has some overlap with the above section on full human bodies. The motifs discussed here are explicitly related to figures bearing weaponry, which have been considered to be ceremonial or dancing figures (see Chapter 2 p.37). The Sutton Hoo helmet, for example, carries two types of designs with figurative human imagery – the ‘dancing figures’ or ceremonial figures and the rider-and-fallen-warrior (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1h). The ceremonial figures’ knees are slightly bent and the feet are turned upwards; the duet lock their wrists as they hold their swords raised in the air; their other hands hold two spears with the point facing downwards. Two spears are crossed in-between the figures, their points directed towards the armpits of the figures. Parallel with the ‘dancing figures’ rendered on the helmet, a mount from Caenby (Lincolnshire) shows a figure brandishing spears (Vol. 2, Fig. 1i) (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 206) and a similar design is represented on a plaque/ mount from East Cambridgeshire, although the exact find spot has not been specified (Vol. 2, Fig. 1e-f) (PAS FAHG-8EAAA3). As noted above (p.66) a die stamp from Fen Drayton (CAM-5045A6) shows a human figure in profile with a lupine guise. This figure grips a spear and a sword, unlike the figures above that brandish their spears and swords, the wolf-human character appears in a less authoritative stance with straight legs, feet turned to the right and staring off to the right. The profile image of this individual contrasts with other full-bodied figures that are rendered *en face*, staring out at the viewer, gripping weaponry or animals with some vigour with knees slightly bent, feet facing to the left or outwards. Although this wolf-human is not running off into battle, the guise or transformation and the gripped weaponry could point towards a cultic enactment connected to a martial ideology.

On the second helmet plaque, the rider points his spear to the distance and apparently ignores or does not see the fallen warrior who stabs the horse with a sword (Vol. 2, Fig 4.1h). On the rump of the horse a miniature humanoid figure is portrayed

with one knee bent, the other flexed, holding with one hand the end of the rider's spear. The hands and head of the rider however, are out of proportion (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 196). The disproportionate hands may perhaps visually guide the viewer to follow the pictorial scene, but it is not unusual to find disproportionately sized body parts in this era. As described above (p.62) a workbox from Burwell (Cambridgeshire) carries a male figure stabbing a zoomorphic creature (Lethbridge 1931a, 53-57). Described as the earliest image of a 'dragon fight' (Ellis Davidson 1950, 180), this image contrasts with the rider-and-fallen-warrior motif from Sutton Hoo as the 'dragon' is the opponent. It is possible that the human figure portrayed on the purse-lid from Mound One is also fighting two creatures (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1g). This figure is situated in-between two lupine creatures, his hands are raised to the shoulders and the front limbs of the creatures are raised to the head of the human figure, perhaps locked in battle. The creatures' tails are wrapped around the human's legs; the hind legs are positioned behind the human legs and are not positioned in such an authoritative stance as the human figure. Arguably, this scene might represent a violent enactment or possibly another type of engagement that does not have malevolent connotations. The human figure does not bear a weapon and is not portrayed in a defensive gesture; rather his bent knees are reminiscent of the dancing, ceremonial figures on the Sutton Hoo helmet. The lupine-like creature/s are/is not portrayed in a threatening posture rather the two creatures could be interpreted as communicating (e.g. 'speaking' to) or 'performing' with the human figure. Finally, the chequered millefiori carried on the human and animal figures and the fact they share the same belt details, does not suggest a discord between the figures.

Similar to this motif, a male figure gripping serpentine creatures is rendered on a bucket mount from Loveden Hill (Lincolnshire) (Vol. 2, Fig. 1h). Kenneth R. Fennell, the excavator of this cemetery described this motif:

'The feet of the figure are pointing to the left, the elbows close the side, the lower arms extended at right angles the hand gripping the body of a snake which lies across the waist. The snake body extends upwards with a coil at shoulder level and ends at each side in a head with a bird like beak, biting at the human head. Two other snakes complete the main design, each being looped over the central snake body, the head lying by the man's feet' (Fennell 1964, 142)

This 'unusually naturalistic' depiction may represent biting beasts (Fennell 1964, 142-146) and a battle motif. Equally, however, the snakes could be interpreted as communicating or performing with the human figure too. Similar to the ceremonial dancers on the helmet and the man-between-two-animals motif on the purse-lid from Sutton Hoo, the male figure is represented with bent knees. What is more a) the human figure does not possess weaponry, b) the snake body extends or lies across the waist, it does not bind the figure, rather the two pairs of snakes are entwined c) the snake body is in the same position that a belt is usually found in and belts are frequently depicted on rare examples of full-bodied figures, this substitution might not relate to conflict.

Hand on Chest and Waist

Three of the figurines are portrayed with distinct postures; the figurines from Carlton Colville, Halesworth and Eyke (Suffolk) show a particular correspondence in terms of bodily gesture (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1, a, c and d). The Halesworth and Eyke female figurine's left upper-arm runs perpendicular down the upper-torso and bends at the elbow thus enabling the lower-arm to rest across the body and the hand to rest under the right breast. The right upper-arm runs down the side of the body and bends at the elbow, the upper-arm crosses the waist area and the hand rests on the pelvis. The hand is represented by several fingers and a slightly splayed, opposable thumb. The Carlton Colville male figurine is portrayed with the right arm bent at the elbow and positioned across the waist along the belt area and the left arm bent at the elbow and raised toward the beard, touching the chest

area. The legs are separated by a gap, but are joined at the foot and the hand is represented by three fingers and a thumb. This type of gestural expression is restricted to coastal, southern East Anglia.

Folded Arms and Hands on Hips

The Friston figurine is represented with its arms folded at the waist (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1b). A mount from Caistor (Lincolnshire) carries a full-bodied human form and is postured with its legs slightly parted and with its hands on hips and arms curled like a teacup-handle (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1f). These gestural expressions are unique within the region, implying a greater variety of gestural expressions in the known artistic repertoire.

Stroking or Pulling Beard

A scabbard mount from Great and Little Chishill (Cambridgeshire, PAS BH-A99B35) carries a figure with a raised hand near its face. The hand appears to grip onto a band, perhaps representing a limb or more likely facial hair (Fig. 7.5e). The glass figurine from Mildenhall may represent a male figure stroking or pulling his beard (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1e). This figurine has not been dated thus far and it parallels Viking Age metal figures from Scandinavia, but this object may potentially have a similar date to the other figurines as it is not dissimilar in form to the emerging artefactual repertoire of the period.

4.5 FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

There are only a very limited number of facial expressions discernible in the material, but there are numerous representations with open mouths, which are listed in Appendix 2, Table 6. These motifs are found distributed across the region, predominantly in East Anglia and Cambridgeshire (Fig. 4.5). Some of the examples have distinctly different mouths. The figurine from Halesworth (Suffolk), a GSHB from Linton Heath (Cambridgeshire) and the matrix from Grimston (Norfolk) appears as if roaring or screaming and even a tongue can be interpreted on the brooch example (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1c, Fig. 5.2a and Fig. 5.3a). The rounded mouths displayed on the GSHBs from Little Wilbraham (Cambridgeshire) and Lakenheath (Suffolk) give the impression of singing (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.2c & d, and Fig. 5.3g).

Other represented faces either do not sport a mouth or are represented with lips closed or slightly pursed. The Friston figurine, for example, is rendered with an ovoid face with two small round eyes, the brows and a straight horizontal line for a mouth. Similar to this, the mount from Aldborough carries a human face with closed mouth. Each face on the whetstone sceptre from Sutton Hoo is rendered with slightly pursed lips. A total of 32 objects carry this type of imagery and 27 of these date to the late fifth and sixth centuries. Only five are dated to the seventh century. This difference may relate to a change in burial tradition: image-carrying objects may no longer have been placed in graves, but it is important to note that the tradition of representing the human head with an open-mouthed facial expression continued, all be it infrequent, with depictions continuing in Style II and carried on high-status objects, including the vandykes of the Sutton Hoo bottle (Vol. 2, Fig. 5.3h)

Ectoplasmic Forms

Such forms have been identified by Hayo Vierck (1967) on brooches. In the East Anglian and fenland regions in particular, there are anthropomorphic heads that appear to exude triangular or bulbous forms from a bodily orifice, including the nose and mouth. The headplate, for example, of the florid cruciform brooch from Soham carries three human faces, two of which exude nasal ectoplasmic designs in contrast to the third which does not appear to be 'snorting' or 'exuding' any triangular form, but does have two strands positioned immediately below the nose (perhaps a drooping moustache) (Vol. 2, Fig. 6.1k-l). Many objects carry a human face with a crescent-shaped or axe-shaped form that displays a line or indentation that runs across the narrowest part of the lobe and appears to delineate a nose; as such the form below the delineated nose might represent a material substance exuding from the nose. Other anthropomorphic representations are portrayed with substances oozing out of

Facial gestures in early Anglo-Saxon England

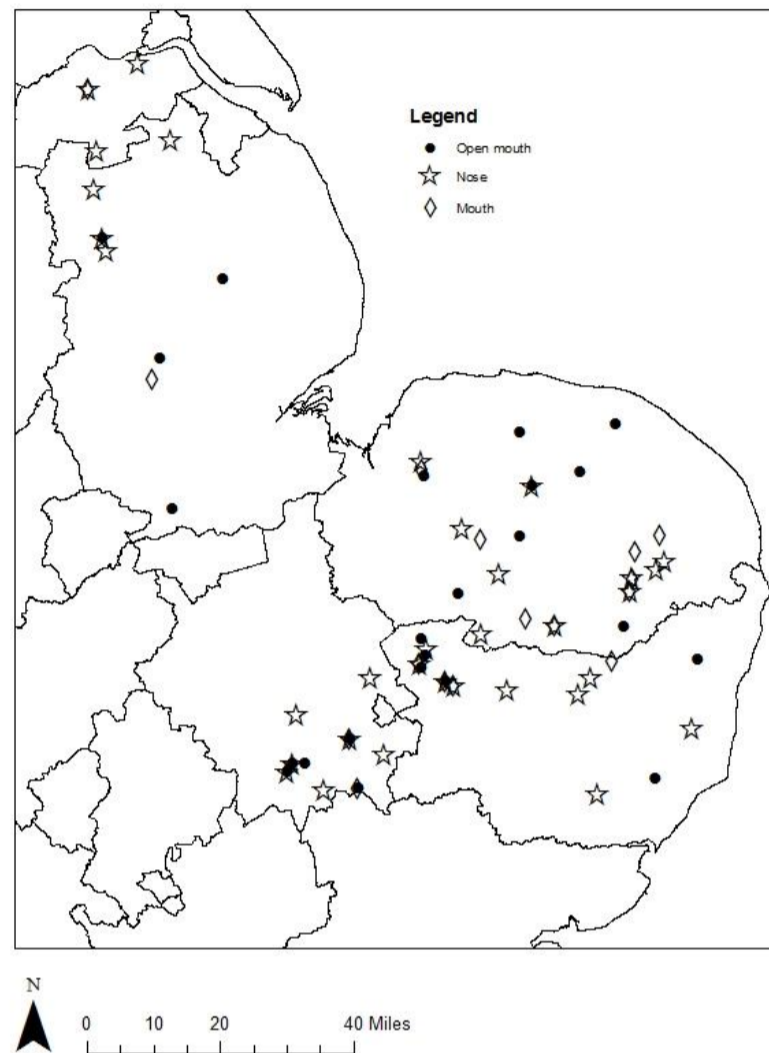


Fig. 4.5 Map showing the distribution of objects carrying humans with facial expressions.

an open mouth. In addition, some zoomorphic figures are portrayed with small triangular forms exuding from their open beaks (e.g. the florid cruciform brooch from Sleaford). Such shapes might be considered as representing a material or perhaps metaphysical substances that exude from the nasal or mouth orifices.

Many faces in the early Anglo-Saxon repertoire are not represented with a mouth and some do not have forms extending from the nose area, thus highlighting the distinctive nature of the designs that may represent exuding substances. A total of 67 objects carry ectoplasmic forms and the nasal motifs are predominant. 67% of these carry ectoplasmic forms that exude from the nose and these feature largely upon cruciform (40%) and florid cruciform brooches (28%) and GSHBs (15%). These designs are catalogued in Vol. 2, Fig. 6.1-7.2 and are listed in Appendix 2, Tables 7 and 8. The predominance of this motif is visually illustrated in Fig. 4.5 – nose designs are represented by the stars and the mouth design by the diamond. It is also worthwhile noting that there are more open-mouth motifs (32) than mouth exuding designs (21), which is visually notable in Fig. 4.5. Only 32% of the 67 objects carry the mouth motif, the majority of which are represented on brooch fragments (31%), florid cruciform brooches (27%) and GSHBs (18%). Notably, mouth motifs do not feature on cruciform brooches. These two types of motifs occur, though infrequently, on wrist-clasps, mounts, pendants and gusset plates. Ectoplasmic forms exuding from the nose are thus predominant upon cruciform, florid cruciform and GSHBs.

4.6 HUMAN HEADS

There is a preponderance of human heads within the early Anglo-Saxon repertoire. Many of these heads have been discussed above in terms of facial expressions and gestural motifs. This section identifies other designs within the regions which include the metamorphosis heads, horse-human heads upon florid cruciform brooches, heads that are positioned back-to-back and face-to-face and heads that appear to have a surrounding frame.

Heads that Metamorphose

Human heads that metamorphose are also known as double entendre, these are designs that transform into another if the object is turned 90 degrees (Leigh 1980, 356). This design is only found on 13 objects in this study, which are listed in Appendix 2, Table 9. These images are largely found in East Anglia and the fen edge (Fig. 4.6) and the images can be seen in Vol. 2, Fig. 8. These heads are simultaneously human and animal, for example, two bird heads in profile that give the impression of a frontal-faced human head. This interplay between animal and human imagery resonates with the concept of transformation or metamorphosis (Leigh 1984). Moreover, the interplay between profile and frontal-face imagery indicates a form of visual grammar or semantics (Cramp 2008, 8). Such designs are found on the headplate knobs of cruciform brooches that have horse-like finials and on florid cruciform brooches. Additionally, there are objects that carry figures that have both zoomorphic and anthropomorphic bodily components. The pendant from Snetterton (Norfolk), for example, carries a pair of zoomorphic creatures that are represented with a curled moustache or beak (PAS NMS-5E21B1). This curled form is awkwardly positioned on the characters' faces and does not seem to afford the two heads with an animal-like quality. This form may represent facial hair and gives the image an anthropomorphic quality. These heads are not figurative portrayals of the human form, but the addition of a moustache gives the impression of zoomorphic beings in a human guise, or an animal or human in transformation.

Florid Cruciform Imagery

Several florid cruciform brooches have human and animal heads rendered on the footplate, contrasting with the early cruciform brooch finials that carry horse-like heads. A total of 13 florid cruciform brooches are represented in this corpus with a horse and a human head (Vol. 2, Fig. 9; Appendix 2, Table 10) and these are largely found in East Anglia (Fig. 4.6). These designs retain the horse's bullet eyes, brows and muzzle, but a human head replaces the flaring nostrils of the horse (a feature apparent in an earlier form of this brooch type). In Appendix 2, Table 10 outlines the 13 objects that carry this type of imagery, six are

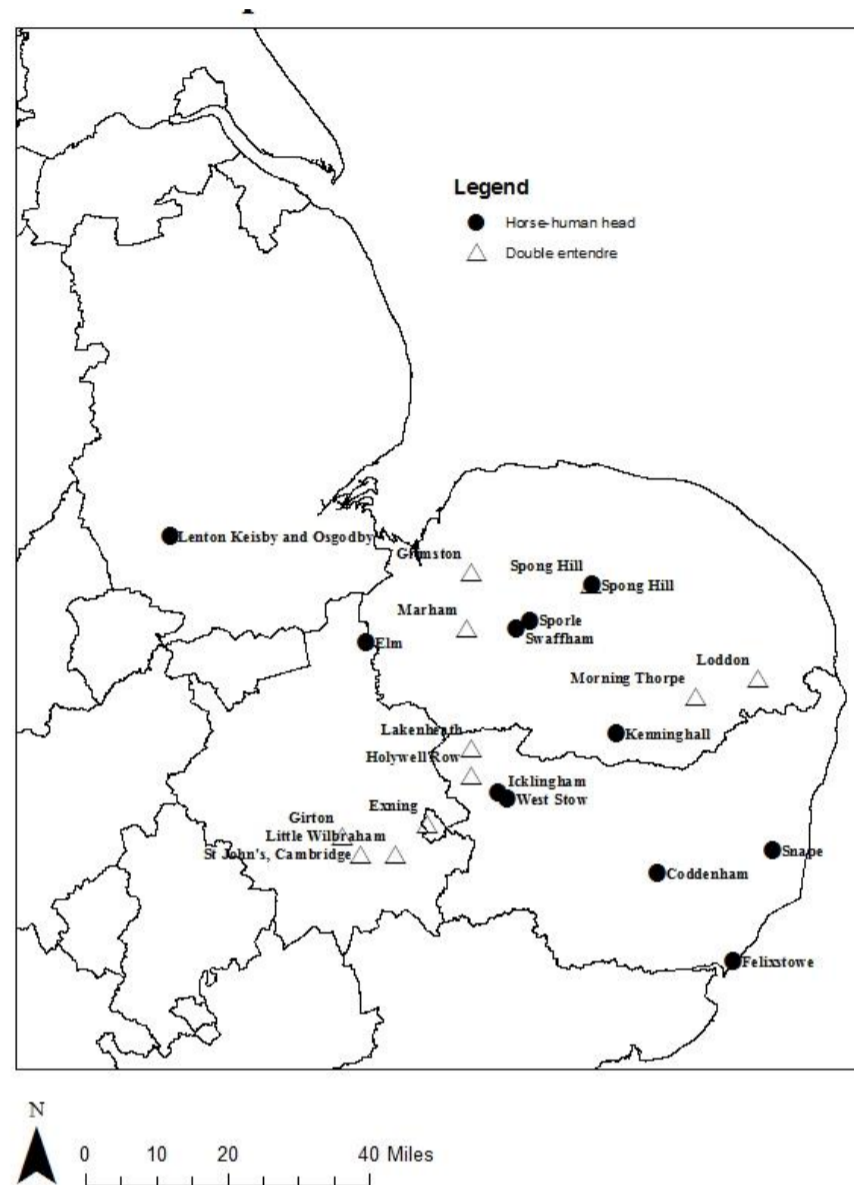


Fig. 4.6 Map showing the distribution of horse-human heads and double-entendre designs carried on brooches.

found in Suffolk, four are from Norfolk, one is from Lincolnshire and one is from Cambridgeshire. These are discussed below in terms of key themes that link and define certain pieces.

Addorsed (back-to-back), Affronté (face-to-face) and Face-to-Scalp Frontal-faced Heads

In Appendix 2, Table 11, a full list of objects carrying addorsed, affronté and face-to-scalp motifs are logged and images are presented in Vol. 2, Fig. 10. On a brooch from Barrington (Z21289) two human heads in profile make up a whole and frontal-faced human face on the finial and footplate side lobes (Vol. 2, Fig. 10g-h). Another brooch from Barrington (1909.321) carries two zoomorphic creatures; these creatures meet in the central panel of the headplate and form a human head (Vol. 2, Fig. 10f). This possible human head faces toward a larger and enclosed human head. An addorsed design has been portrayed in high relief on the GSHB from Linton Heath (Vol. 2, Fig. 10a-c). On one side of the relief is a human face with a round beard and on the ‘back’ of this head there is what could be described as a zoomorphic or anthropomorphic half-face. Many image-carrying objects have anthropomorphic representations, but may not have addorsed or affronted designs, but are connected to other motifs by structural components of the object. Such designs are connected by the footplate bar and frame. These designs are

often half-faces and the structural facets of the object appear to exit from or enter the nose and connect to the scalp of another human head. The brooch from Ely (1989.29) exemplifies such a design, the small half-face that is constituted by a prominent brow, eyes and triangular nose has two curved bars that extend from the nose area. The footplate bar that extends from the nose area connects to down-turned beaked heads; it continues along the footplate and meets a large frontal-faced anthropomorphic head.

Other objects that carry such imagery include the drinking horn from Lenton Keisby and Osgodby (Vol. 2, Fig. 10i) and the square-headed brooches from Scampton in Lincolnshire (Vol. 2, Fig. 10k). The decoration on a GSHB from Kenninghall (Norfolk) is constituted by a series of anthropomorphic faces that are rendered with whole and half-faces (Vol. 2, Fig. 10e). The human whole-faces are represented in an addorsed position on the footplate, one face is represented with a beard and the other is clean-shaven, making it similar in style to the heads on the whetstone sceptre from Mound One at Sutton Hoo. Above these whole-faces, two half-faces are portrayed face-to-scalp. The face nearer the bow has rounded brows that morph into a rectilinear nose, bulging eyes and two thin curvilinear cheeks. Heads were rendered in three key ways a) facing each other, b) in opposing directions and c) head to scalp. It is possible that these type of motifs also had a grammatical sense, similar to the *en face* and profile human head.

Facial details

Each face has slight variations in the facial features portrayed. For example some faces are wider or narrower than others. These could reflect the work of different artists, revealing different styles or techniques of the manufacturer or may result from the challenges of working different raw materials in to 2-D and 3-D forms. Some differences although subtle do hint however at intentional variations in human facial portrayal – attempts to render specific individual facial detail.

Scalp and Facial Hair

The identification of hair or headdress can be problematic, and is discussed further below. Curved lines above the brows on a face motif could represent a frontal view of either. Although these designs can sometimes be abstract, they do parallel similar facial features on the figurative human designs on Scandinavian objects. The curved lines above the brows found on the AS metalwork under discussion here could represent a similar stylised version of hair and/ or a diadem evident on the human figures depicted on bracteates.

In this corpus the earliest example of a human face with hair is found upon the fifth-century belt buckle from Great Moulton (Norfolk). The combed back hair and pointed beard of the human face upon this buckle relates to the late fifth- early sixth- century human heads that are carried on brooches. Some objects carry more than one human head and have varying types of facial and scalp hair – this was restricted to 6 GSHBs in four main cemeteries: Linton Heath, Little Wilbraham and Ruskington and one stray find from Harston (Table 6). These faces were found in varied positions on the object and no clear correlation was found. Facial hair might have been deployed on human images to define particular characters – mythical or legendary figures – or have been employed as a way of signalling aspects of human personhood or bodily identity (or personhoods), for example age and biological sex. It is entirely possible that different physical identities, statuses or even ethnicities were being characterised. The GSHB from Kenninghall, for example, has two full-faced humans and one has a triangular beard and the other appears clean shaven (Vol. 2, Fig. 10e). What is clear from this corpus is that some stylistic variation can be picked out from region to region.

The majority of moustaches from along the edge of the fens are portrayed with upturned, curled hair and facial hair such as brows, moustaches and beards – these are more frequently represented than scalp hair. These types of hair motifs are particularly evident at Barrington

Table 6 Table listing the objects carrying more than one human head with varying types of facial/ scalp hair.

Place	Description	Object type	Position on object	Reference	Figure number
Harston	Uprturned whiskers and beard	GSHB	Footplate finial	PAS (FAHG-7B3D73)	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (g)
Linton Heath	Rounded beard	GSHB	Footplate finial and headplate inner panel	Grave 9	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (k)
Linton Heath	Uprturned whiskers	GSHB	Headplate lobes	Grave 9	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (L)
Linton Heath	Horizontal moustache	GSHB	Below the bow on footplate	Grave 9	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (a)
Little Wilbraham	Uprturned whiskers	GSHB	Headplate frame	Grave 158	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (b)
Little Wilbraham	Downturned whiskers	GSHB	Headplate inner panel	Grave 158	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (c)
Little Wilbraham	Uprturned whiskers and bushy beard	GSHB	Footplate finial	1948.1319	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (e)
Little Wilbraham	Uprturned whiskers	GSHB	Footplate side lobes	1948.1319	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (e)
Little Wilbraham	Beard	GSHB	Headplate frame	1948.1319	Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1 (d)
Little Wilbraham	Beard and stubby whiskers	GSHB	Headplate frame and footplate lobe	1948.1376	Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1 (c)
Little Wilbraham	Beard and uprtuned whiskers	GSHB	Footplate finial	1948.1376	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (g)
Ruskington	Drooping moustache	GSHB	Footplate	Grave 5a	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (i)
Ruskington	Pointed beard	GSHB	Footplate	Grave 5a	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2 (j)

with six objects carrying such designs (Table 7). There is a mixed pool of hair motifs in north East Anglia, including drooping and uprtuned moustaches and beards, while in south East Anglia beards and droopy moustaches are more often portrayed (Fig. 4.7). The anthropomorphic head, for example, that is represented on the gusset plate from Mildenhall (Suffolk) is represented with thick lips or a bushy beard around the mouth (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.1h). A similar design can be found on the button brooch from Mildenhall. Compared to the other regions, the human face designs from Lincolnshire are more abstract (e.g. the cruciform brooches from Castledyke) and only a select series of objects carries figurative human heads with hair.

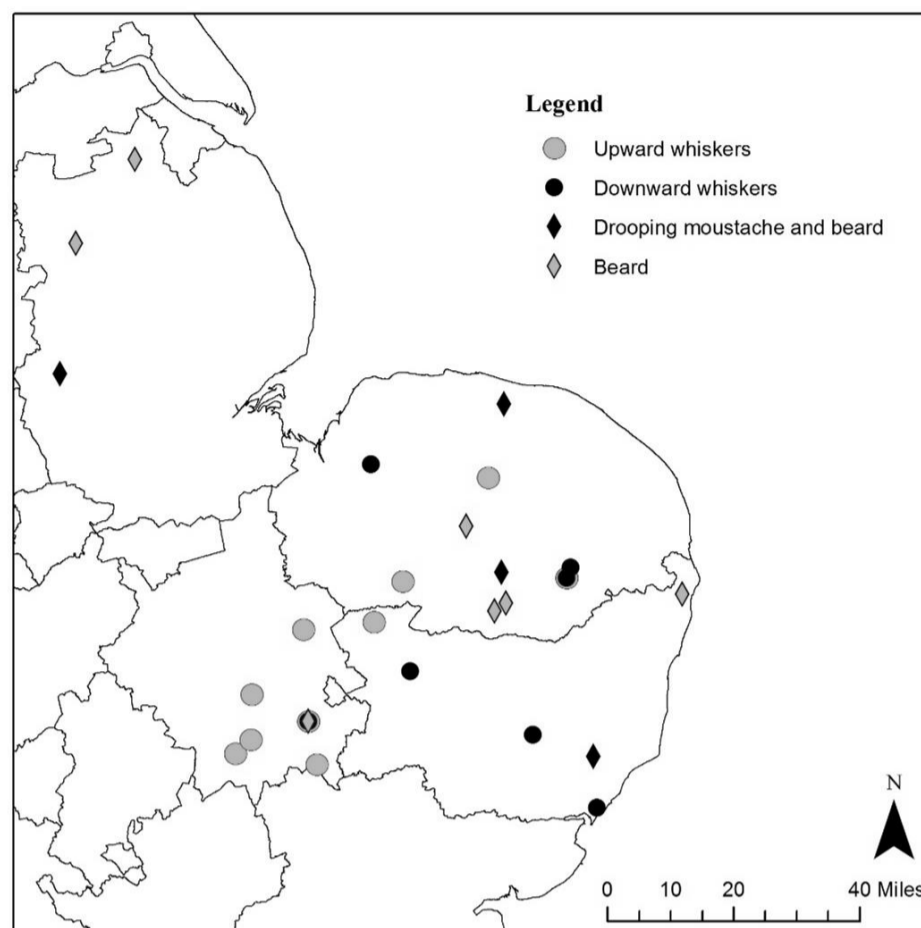


Fig. 4.7 Map showing the distribution of objects carrying human images with facial/ cranial hair

Table 7 List of objects carrying human hair motifs at the Barrington cemetery.

	DESIGN	OBJECT TYPE	LOCATION ON OBJECT		GRAVE/ ACC. NO.	FIGURE NO.
Barrington	Upturned whiskers	GSHB	Headplate knobs		AN1909.321	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (a)
Barrington	Upturned whiskers	ASB			AN1909.275(ii)	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (b)
Barrington	Upturned whiskers	GSHB	Footplate finial		Z21315	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (c)
Barrington	Upturned whiskers	GSHB	Footplate finial		Z21289	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (d)
Barrington	Upturned whiskers	ASB			Z 21295.4 (grave 75)	Vol. 2, Fig. 11.1 (e)

It is possible that the structural frame used around an object may also have been employed to give an impression of facial hair. For instance, on the GSHB from Bergh Apton the footplate bar has been adapted to represent a long beard belonging to a small anthropomorphic face. This beard is indicated by the small D-shaped mouth and stretches the entire length of the footplate. A similar design is portrayed below the bow on the GSHB from Morningthorpe. The small head has a long drooping moustache that extends to the bottom of the footplate and the footplate bar is probably intended to represent the beard.

A relationship between facial hair and beaked helmeted heads is also present. There are a series of objects that have downturned or upturned beaked heads that protrude from the human face and may represent moustaches, the extent of which is outlined by gilding. On the headplate, for example, of the square-headed brooch from Little Wilbraham (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2d), such beaked heads appear to extend from the moustache of a human head and a moustache is also constituted through zoomorphic limbs. The florid cruciform brooch from Exning (MAA 1892.99.1) carries four images of anthropomorphic heads that are flanked by zoomorphic beaked heads (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.5d-g). Beaked-headed bodies on the headplate give the impression of extending from the eye/ cheek location and are upturned with their open beaks positioned near the anthropomorphic eyes. This motif – of a beaked and human head – has been related to the ‘biting beasts’ design (Martin 2013). While this term is useful as a design category, it is unclear if these motifs were ever understood as biting. As suggested later on, such beasts might have been intended to portray whispering or speaking into the ear of the human head (see Chapter 6 for further discussion).

By the seventh century, the majority of male human faces embedded in the Style II repertoire are portrayed with beards and moustaches, such as the bottle and shield applique from Sutton Hoo (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.4g, m). A figurine from Carlton Colville is portrayed with a pointed beard and a long beard may be represented on the glass figurine from Mildenhall (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1e). The seventh-century figurines from Halesworth, Carlton Colville and Friston in Suffolk are not represented with scalp hair and it can be assumed that it is tucked away under a veil (Halesworth, see Vol. 2 Fig. 12.5c) or a cap (Carlton Colville and Friston, see Vol. 2 Fig. 12.3d-e); headdresses are discussed in more detail below (p.77). The seventh-century mounts from Palgrave (SF-171680) (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.5d), Sutton Hoo (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.4b) and possibly a harness mount from Little Snoring (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.3i) and carry human images with droopy moustaches and long beards that terminate with interlace-like pattern, suggesting that the beard has been plaited.

Although the eighth-century material is quite sparse, the mount from Carleton Rode hosts a large human face with grooved hair and a prominent chin. The face is badly corroded, but a short, drooping moustache can be made out and a curvilinear form that terminates with a wide edge surrounds the head (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.4a). A mount from Tallington from Lincolnshire has several vertical lines that run from the forehead to the back of the head, giving the impression of combed back hair (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.2m)

‘Biting Beasts’

Within the material a number of anthropomorphic heads are made up of animal body limbs (Vol. 2, Figs. 11e-11g). A FCB from Morningthorpe (grave 342), for example, has a large anthropomorphic head, this head is comprised of schematic eye, nose, brows and a pair of beaked heads extend from the head (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.5a). Occasionally, it is not clear if the represented animal bodies form part of the human face or are positioned as independent figures. Beaked heads are often rendered in close spatial relationship with human heads. The animal body extends from the lower part of the head and curves upward and the beak is positioned near the ear area. There are several image-carrying objects that have animal figures that extend from the human face and curve upwards toward the human face or curve downwards away from the facial facets. The florid cruciform brooch, for example, from Morningthorpe and a sword chape from Mildenhall have such extensional body representation (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.5a, c). The headplate knob of the brooch from Morningthorpe is made from a schematic anthropomorphic head with curled eyes and brows that appears to extend into an exaggerated nose. Two beaked heads flank the human head; their open beaks appear to engulf the eyes and brows of the head. The sword chape from Mildenhall, for example, carries a human face that is flanked by a pair of beaked heads. Representations of the animal body often extend from the lower part of the human head and curve upward with the beak positioned near the ear area. On a select number of objects the animal body extends from the lower half of the human head and curves downward with the beak positioned away from head. The florid cruciform brooch

from Exning carries three upturned beaked heads on the headplate knobs (Vol. 2, Fig. 11.5d-g). The two side lobes have a beaked head extending from the cheek area and there are two round forms located near the bottom beak. On the top knob this pattern is repeated, but the round form is positioned between the upper and lower parts of the beak. The postures that animal figures are portrayed to create human figures may have been used to embody a connection between the animal and human, perhaps representing bodily aspects such as facial hair. These designs seem to have been restricted to the southern part of East Anglia, signalling distinct ways in which the human form was portrayed (Fig. 4.8).

4.7 HEADDRESSES

The most common headdress in the late fifth to sixth century is the probable diadem, paralleled on bracteates that carry depictions of human heads. An un-stratified pendant from Suffolk (1909.410) carrying five characters has two anthropomorphic heads and both of these have different hair or headdresses (Chapter 6, Figure 6.5a – p.122). One has a band and plumage, the other has a pair of horizontal bands. A band and plumage is also represented on the GSHB from Linton Heath and an applied saucer brooch from Alwalton (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.4d-e). The ‘helmet-like’ motif is long-established in early Anglo-Saxon art and appears within the material under study here. The vandyke, for example, from Holton-le-Moor carries an animal-man that is portrayed with a headdress or helmet that has a thick nasal cover and at the back of the headgear there is a small curl (Vol. 2,

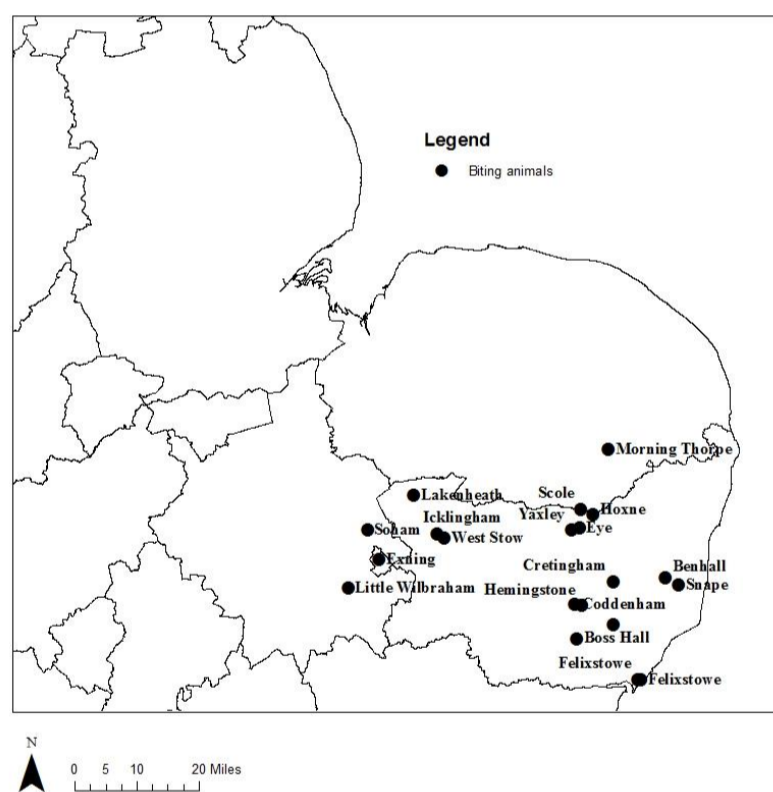


Fig. 4.8 Map showing the distribution of biting beasts/ animals.

Fig. 2c). The full human head on the square-headed brooch from Nettleton sports a rounded cap or helmet with a nose piece, this cap encloses the cheeks and tapers to a thin end.

There are, however, other types of headdress represented in the late fifth- to sixth- centuries. The human head rendered on the footplate of the Snetterton small square-headed brooch has been suggested to wear a headdress, but it does not resemble any other headdress in this corpus. The headgear that is constituted by three short vertical bands and two horizontal bands (Fig. 7.5a-b). The rarity of this type of headdress could imply the smith/ patron’s translation of 3-dimensions into 2-dimensions. Headwear is found in 3-dimensions. A mount from Aldborough (Norfolk), for example, carries 2 and 3-dimensional human

heads. The 2-dimensional human faces have rounded caps with three horizontal bands and the 3-dimensional human face has several horizontal lines running over the scalp that might represent hair or a headdress (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.3g). The eyes of the 3-dimensional head are emphasised by a banded outline that runs across the nose, perhaps indicating the figure is represented with a half-face mask (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.4c).

A series of objects carry anthropomorphic heads that have horns or possibly lupine ears (see Vol. 2, Fig. 12.1a-p). The wrist-clasps from Holywell Row, for example, have two human heads, but one has large curved brows and the adjacent head has pointed ears, brows or horns. Other objects that carry anthropomorphic figures with horns or pointed ears include the bridle fitting from Eriswell, a GSHB from Lakenheath, gusset-plates from Mildenhall and Playford and possibly an iron brooch from Icklingham. These 'lupine-style ears' could be references to lycanthropy (human transformation into wolf form) or a hybrid, human-wolf being. Notably, this type of headdress is predominantly found in the narrow corridor between the fenlands and the woods, continuing into the north east Norfolk zone, perhaps hinting at a restricted ideology or imagery, delimited to these zones (Fig. 4.9). It is possible that the biting beasts (discussed

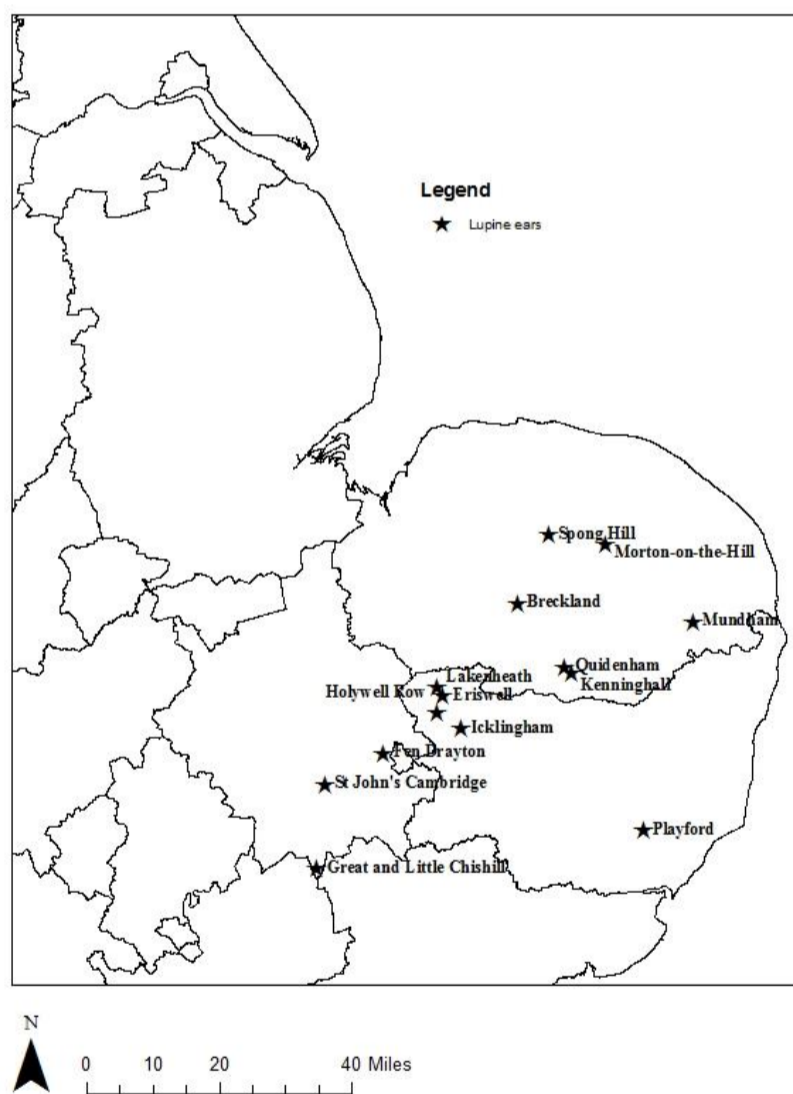


Fig. 4.9 Map showing the distribution of human images with possible lupine ears or headdress



Fig. 4.10 Map showing the distribution of rectangle shape above the brow

above) could also represent a form of bird-headdress, akin to the later depictions on seventh-century objects such as the Sutton Hoo helmet plaques, where figures wear discernible head gear with avian horned adornments. Brooches, for example, from Spilsby and Scampton, have well-defined double-bird motif that projects out above the band above the forehead. It is possible that a number of human head designs sport headdresses that are constituted through combinations of bands or squares and beaked heads. These styles of headdress may relate to other designs of double-bird headdresses, but on these items appear in a more formulaic, abstract rendering dictated by specific structural components of the object. The spatial connection between humanoid heads and beaked heads is schematic, but not unrealistic. The rectangular shapes above the brows on the Scampton example may represent a headdress that is similar in style to the square motif on the headdress of the figure on the plaque from Caenby (Vol. 2, Fig. 1i). These designs cluster in the northern and eastern zones in the region (Fig. 4.11). The brows or the bands above the brows on many of the objects sometimes have curled ends, giving the impression of hair or a headdress and could also represent a visual reference to curled beaks. The bands above the brows are a regular feature on human heads and may represent a headdress or cap, which is similar in style to the chairperson's hat from Spong Hill. A mount from Sheffield's

Hill carries a large human face that appears to have two birds sprouting from its head, which could also be interpreted as a bird-headdress.

By the seventh century the horned-headdress is portrayed upon full-bodied male figures and mounts in the form of heads (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.2a-h). The 'dancing warrior' plaque on the Sutton Hoo helmet portrays two anthropomorphic figures with a double-bird headdress. The human image on the Caenby plaque is also rendered with an upturned bird headdress. Four mounts from East Cambridgeshire (PAS FAHG-8EAAA3), Attleborough (NHER 2989), Saxlingham Nethergate (PAS NMS-F90626) and Reepham (NCM 2011.186) in Norfolk are represented with this style of headwear. The figurine from Tuddenham-St-Martin is portrayed with such curved horns. The figurine from Great Waldringfield has a low relief band c. 1.5 mm wide running from side to side and this may have originally held horns that were subsequently broken off and rubbed down. Of note is the difference in distribution of the sixth-century brooches carrying schematic design of the headdress and the seventh century motifs (Fig. 4.11). Predominantly, the schematic designs are located in the north and the figurative motifs are found in the south east. This segregation of motifs also reflects the object types carrying these images: brooches carry schematic designs in the north and mounts, plaques and figurines carry more figurative motifs in the south east.

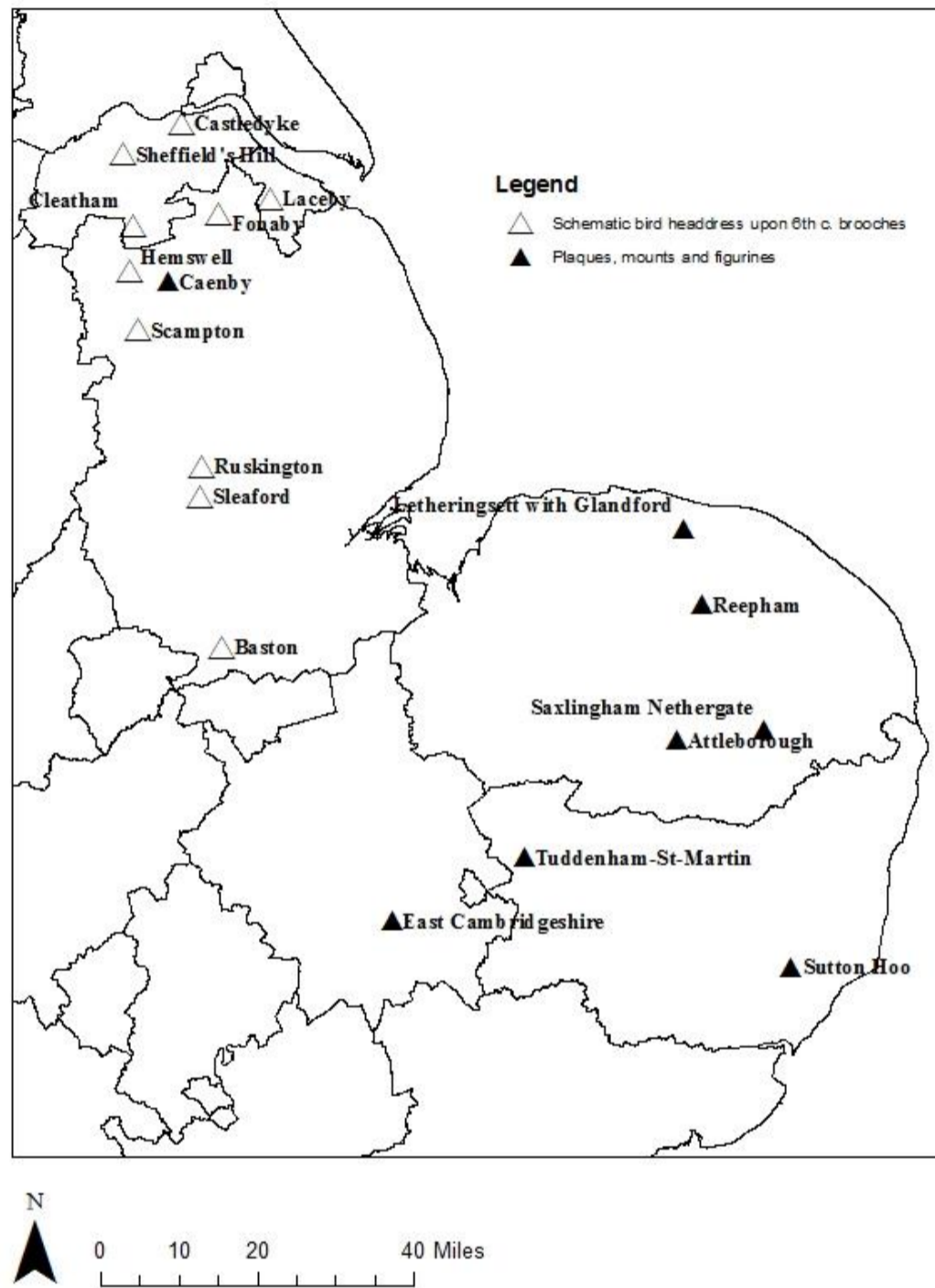


Fig. 4.11 Map showing the distribution of bird-headaddresses.

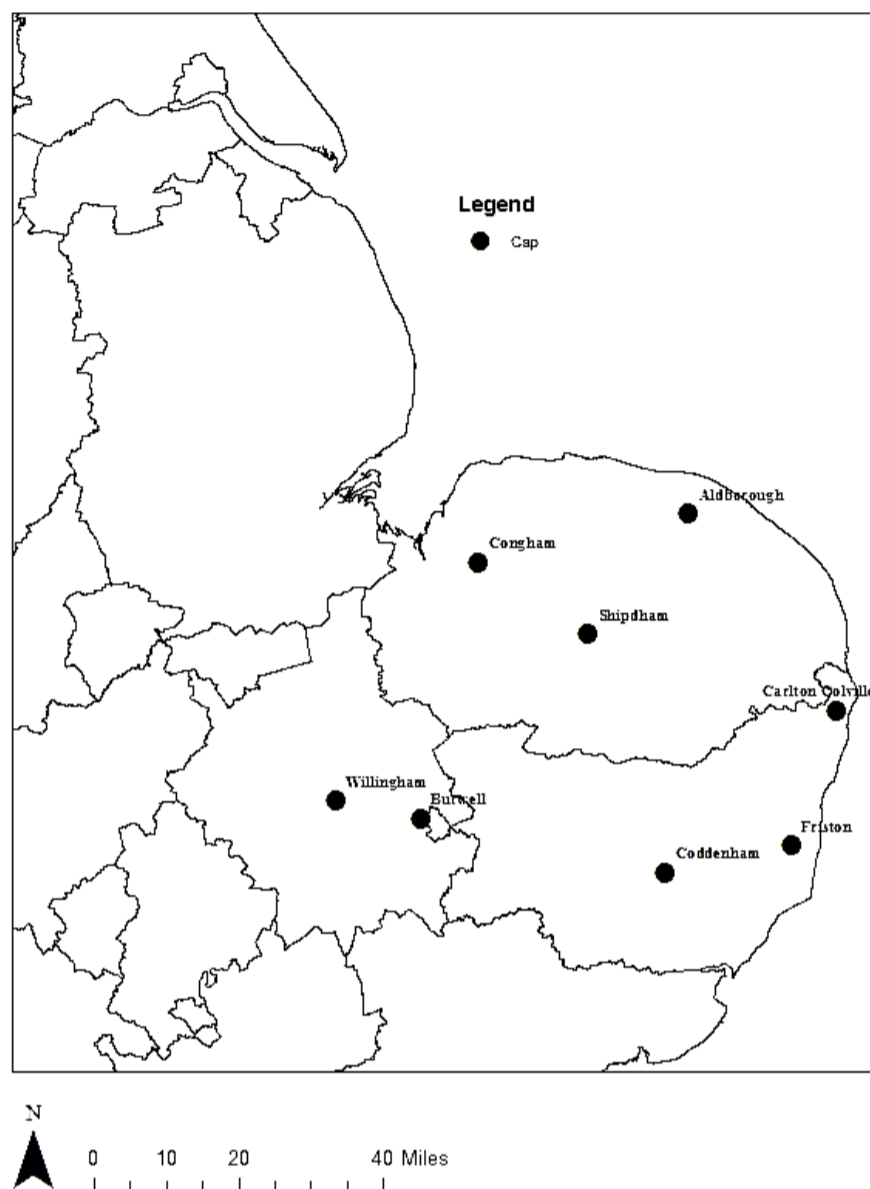


Fig. 4.12 Map showing the distribution of caps

The seventh century is not wholly characterised by horned or bird-headaddresses, however, although a surge can be detected in representations with a variety of headgear. The figurines from Carlton Colville and Friston (Suffolk) both are portrayed with oval caps that taper at the back (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.3a-g). Caps are found in East Anglia and along the fen edge (Fig. 4.12). Similar in design, the headwear represented upon a gold ear scoop from Coddanham also takes the oval-cap shape. The cap worn by the Friston figurine has two sets of three shallow perforations on the frontal part of the headwear and a line in the centre separates the punched circles. More unusual types of headwear include a mount from Shipdham in Norfolk (HER 36286) that forms a human head with an acorn-shaped cap and extending from this cap is a rectangle that contains red paste and a zoomorphic creature (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.4a). Along the brim of the cap are six concentric circular punch-marks and five have been punched along the centre of the cap in a T-shape; there are several half semicircles punched along the rectangular frame. A figurine from Halesworth is represented with a pleated, gold-coloured vail or possibly hair that flows from the head to the feet. Other similar garment-like headaddresses can be found upon two mounts from mid-Suffolk (PAS SF-50B996) and from Mound Seventeen at Sutton Hoo (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.4b). These headaddresses are constituted by a headpiece with several horizontal grooves and a curvilinear band is wrapped around the head, terminating with several horizontal grooves and an oval-shaped tip. Such

terminal forms may represent beaked-heads, which would indicate that the faces are represented with highly stylised and inverted version of the beaked/ horned headdress.

The helmet from Sutton Hoo carries figurative imagery with humans portrayed in garments and headwear. The handgrip from the Sutton Hoo shield portrays humanoid heads with niello bands under the eyes, rounded scalp or helmet and curled brows, perhaps emphasising a helmet or headdress similar to the Valsgärde helmet (Vol. 2, Fig.12.5a-b).

4.8 GARMENTS

Within the late fifth- to sixth century material there are a small number of depictions of humans wearing clothing and these are generally restricted to depictions of the shoulder/ arms. A pendant, for example, a stray find noted as deriving from ‘Suffolk’ (1909.410) carries five characters, one of which is an anthropomorphic head and it is represented with a double-padded shoulder. The figure on the vandyke from Holton le Moor has wrist-bands or heavy cuffs and wears a heavy outfit as represented by the thick, textured shoulder pads (Vol. 2, Fig. 2c). The human head on the small square-headed brooch from Snetterton has a pair of arms that emerge from a triple-strand shoulder and this might also represent the wrap-over garment (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1e). By the seventh century depictions of garments become more detailed. The dancing warriors on the Sutton Hoo helmet are adorned in garb that consists of richly ornamented bands. Other objects that carry similar designs include a plaque from Caenby and a mount from East Cambridgeshire. These are fragmented, but a banded-outfit can be identified. This wrap-over may have been worn by individuals in Anglo-Saxon England. A fragment of textile was found on the belt buckle from grave 126 at Castledyke cemetery in Lincolnshire that has been identified as a wrap-over coat (Walton Rogers 1998; Owen-Crocker 2010, 180-181). A similar caftan-like garment is portrayed on the seat rider plaque. The fallen warrior wears a similar garment, but the pattern differs from that rendered on the ‘dancing warriors’. The central and lower hem of the fallen warrior is patterned with horizontal bands and the body of the garment is chequered, but the belt and wrist-cuffs are similar in design to the dancing warriors. The man depicted in cloisonné on the purse-lid has been considered to be portrayed in a blacksmith’s apron with millefiori glass in a checkerboard pattern (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 513-514). The millefiori pattern matches the two exposed animal shoulders; the animals also wear belts and a necklace or collar. The mount dating to the seventh- to eighth- centuries from Carleton Rode carries an image of a human head that is surmounted on a crescent-shaped moulding, which might represent a garment or accessory.

The seventh-century figurines and mount from Caistor all display individual and new types of garments (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1a-c, f). The Halesworth figurine is represented with a pleated tube-shaped skirt and a long vale and the top half of the body is naked. The Carlton Colville figurine is represented with skin-tight trousers – made evident by the presence of the belt. The male genitalia that can be seen from a frontal perspective, however, may indicate the individual is naked, but dons a belt. The figurine sports over-the-knee shoes or boots. The figurine from Friston is represented in a shirt, suggested by the cuff-lines on the wrists; however, if the rounded marks are anatomical features (e.g. nipples) the figurine may be topless, wearing ornamental clasps or bands. The trousers are indicated by the thin horizontal line that runs around the midriff. A slight bulge may be taken to indicate the presence of male genitalia and the human sculpture is rendered with clog-like, semi-circular shoes. The mount from Caistor could be wearing long tunic that terminates near the groin.

4.9 MANIPULATED HUMAN IMAGERY

Split Representation

Within the early Anglo-Saxon artistic repertoire, there are known split representations. Split representation refers to a 3-dimensional object in a 2-dimensional space; a head, for example, is split apart creating two opposed profile faces (Gell 1998,

196). Siv Kristoffersen argued that there are very few “true” examples of split-representation in Migration Period Scandinavia (Kristoffersen 2000a). Arguably, the same could be suggested for early Anglo-Saxon England. David Leigh (1984) and more recently Toby Martin (2011) have suggested that most images were ‘split’ – i.e. two profile heads used to create a full-face. Martin has suggested that animal designs upon the side lobes (or lappets) of a brooch represent a full animal face if they are visualised as two halves of one image (Martin 2011). The florid cruciform brooch from Morningthorpe and a mount from Mautby (Norfolk) carry similar principles of design (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.1c-d, g-h). The brows of the large humanoid head on the brooch are rendered individually. The nose is represented by parallel lines that extend from the brows, giving the nose a split appearance. The belt mount from Mautby carries a pair of beaked heads and the two profile faces of these birds constitutes a frontal-faced human head. The headdress of the beaked heads are joined at one end thus making a humanoid nose, the eye of the two individual birds make up a pair of human eyes and their headdress becomes the brows.

Following the definition of split representation more closely, a brooch carries an image of two human heads that appear to be split apart. A GSHB from Linton Heath (1948.1540) is decorated with several human heads and there are two anthropomorphic figures on the footplate (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.1a). The faces of these two figures are joined by the contours of the object. If these figures are interpreted as a single figure that has been prised apart, the stretched skin (the lip and the nose or nose-guard of a helmet) is splayed as though the bar had moved with a downward stroke through the head. This split image is repeated on the opposite end of the bar, but it is not a direct copy or imitation. These anthropomorphic figures on the opposite end are not splayed in the same way, but their lips are pulled upwards as if the bar is threaded through the metal and tugs at the mouth causing the lips to widen. The design gives the impression that the middle bar has prised the anthropomorphic figure apart and the two halves remain attached by stretched skin. This central structural bar is discussed further below. Other objects carrying possible split-representation are visually catalogued in Vol. 2, Fig. 13.1a-h.

(Faux)Material, Texture and Technique

A number of objects are decorated in designs that are suggested here to represent skeuomorphic motifs - imagery imitating the design of another artefact type in another material (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.2). One example, identified by Leslie Webster (Webster 2012a, 15-17, fig. 11) is a “clasp” motif. This motif has a rectilinear shape and is often found near the join of two designs as though ‘clasping’ the designs together. This clasp is commonly found near the bodies of downturned beaked-headed animals upon brooches and can be found on the structural ribs of an object. A GSHB from West Stow Heath has these motifs on the structural central rib (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.2a). The clasps are located at the narrowest part of the terminal lobe ‘wrapped’ around the footplate terminal, giving the impression that the band is ‘squeezing’ the structure of the metallic brooch. This knotting or bound imagery is also represented upon objects that carry anthropomorphic designs. The footplate frame, for example, of a GSHB from Tuddenham (Kennett 1977, 4, pl. 3) is delineated by a rectilinear band (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.2b). Human heads are represented on each side lobes (or lappets) and immediately next to the heads there are clasp motifs; this motif is also present at the joining of the two zoomorphic creatures. Other examples include the GSHBs from Linton Heath (1948.1520) and Little Wilbraham (1948.1316) (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.2c-d). Similar to the clasp motif, a design upon the mount from Aldborough (Norfolk) imitates the technique of suspension (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.2e). This object has three human faces, one is 3-dimensional and the others are 2-dimensional. The 2-dimensional faces are both adorned with a headdress and the heads appear to be attached to each other by a loop-like device. This motif is rendered so that it gives the impression that it ‘tugs’ on the structure of the object – as if suspended. Another possible skeuomorphic design is a crescent shaped terminal lobe, which is carried upon several objects with and without human representation. One example of an object with human representation is the bridle fitting from Eriswell (grave 4116) that carries a possible horned humanoid head. The face does not have a mouth, but extending from below the nose

area is a stretched oval form that could be likened to the shape of the whetstone sceptre from Mound One at Sutton Hoo (Vol. 2, Fig. 13.2f). This oval structure terminates with a crescent form.

4.10 DISPLAY AND PRESENTATION OF IMAGERY

Layout and Structural Bars

From the material evidence it is apparent that the structural components of an object play a role in the interplay between human imagery and expression. Human heads are often represented in connection with the structural bar that runs down the centre of the footplate. The square-headed brooch from Kenninghall, for example, has one small anthropomorphic half-face. This face is positioned immediately below the bow, rendered with its triangular nose abutting the bow. The footplate bar appears to 'extend' from the brows or scalp of this face (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1a). A footplate of a florid cruciform brooch from Bergh Apton (Norfolk) has a structural frame that extends from the nasal area and forms a triangular frame that contains a design (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1b). This type of design might relate to the ectoplasmic forms discussed above.

A similar type of design is found on the square-headed brooches from Morningthorpe (grave 214a) and Bergh Apton (grave 64a), but the human heads are represented with their scalp near the bow and the bar extends from the nose area (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1c-d). On the small square-headed brooch from Snetterton the footplate bar is designed so that it stems from the bow. This bar reaches the human head, but is punctuated by three small bands and an additional two bands (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1e). There are heads that are connected by a structural component of the object and could be suggested as affronted and addorsed heads (see above discussion on addorsed and affronted designs).

Other objects that have structural aspects that connect animal and human images include the GSHB from Lakenheath and the gusset plates from Mildenhall and Playford (Suffolk) (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1f-g). All have human images that are connected to animal figures by the structural frame of the object. A GSHB from Lakenheath in Suffolk (Z 21357) carries a pair of boar heads, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic heads and these representations are connected by the footplate frame (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1h). Comparable to the Lakenheath brooch, the footplate frame of the brooch from St John's Cambridge connects four anthropomorphic heads (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1i). This structural design is also present on two GSHBs from Barrington (Z21315) and Ely (1989.29) (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1j-k). The structural rib expands across the footplate, joining the anthropomorphic elements.

In a similar way the gusset-plate from West Stow (Z20456) carries a humanoid head. Above the head are two addorsed zoomorphic figures that are separated by a structural bar that runs perpendicular down the centre of the object and terminates at the anthropomorphic head (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1c2). Below the head and limbs a pear-shaped form appears to exude from the disembodied limbs. The bar that separates the pair of zoomorphic figures is punctuated by the anthropomorphic head, appearing to weave below the head and out again immediately below the zoomorphic limbs, terminating in a bulbous pear-shaped form. The disjointed appearance of the limbs, head and zoomorphic figures suggests that this structural element may have served to give the visual impression of bound and interwoven images.

Panelling

In addition there are square and triangular frames or panels that contain 'chip-carved'-style images. A florid cruciform brooch from Bergh Apton (Norfolk) carries a square frame above the large anthropomorphic head on the finial (Vol. 2, Fig. 14.1b). Within this square frame is a design that could be human or animal. The headplate panel contains an anthropomorphic design that consists of an indefinite profile/ masked head, but it is rendered with a human opposable thumb and fingers. The use of panelling and frames can also be found on wrist-clasps including those from Breckland, Quidenham and Morningthorpe. Wrist-clasp panelling is illustrated and discussed below in Chapter 6 – Fig. 6.7, p.128. These wrist-clasps have a square panel or

frame in the centre, embellishing the clasping mechanism of the object. The structural frame of the Breckland wrist-clasp is noticeably more rectilinear when compared to the curvilinear frames on other wrist-clasps.

Frames

The GSHBs have the greatest surface space for ornamentation, thus these objects often carry complex imagery. Such objects from Baston, Nettleton, Welbourn and Ruskington all carry human and animal heads that are connected by structural bars. Florid cruciform brooches from Sleaford, Scampton, Worlabby and Spildby from Lincs all carry representations of human heads that are enclosed or framed by structural components of the object.

Representations of the human head that are contained by structural frames are also found on brooches and gusset-plates from the Norfolk material. The headplate inner panel on the GSHB from Kenninghall separates and contains three human half-faces. On the gusset-plate from Hillington, the central bar connects the anthropomorphic head with the two profile beaked head. A similar design is portrayed on a gusset plate from Morton-on-the-Hill, but the imagery is difficult to identify.

The frame of the object not only connects the human head to other designs, but there are other interplays between the head and frame. On the brooches from Haslingfield/ Harlton and Linton Heath (Cambridgeshire) the heads have been positioned so that the heads appear to rest on the frame or that the frame extends from the face. Anthropomorphic heads and other designs are sometimes enclosed within the headplate inner panel. On the GSHB from Baston in Lincolnshire the structural frames are rendered so that they seem to permeate the human head, separating the facial facets (Vol. 2, Fig. 5.1b). Other relationships between the structure and design are exemplified on the GSHBs from Lackford and Lakenheath (Suffolk). These two brooches carry similar imagery: a human head is rendered on the headplate, the facial elements of the head are divided by the structural components of the object and the mouth is separated from the nose by the inner panel frame. Other objects that carry this type of imagery include the wrist-clasps from Breckland and grave 153 at Morningthorpe (Norfolk) (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.1n and Fig. 7.2a-b – see also Chapter 6, Figs. 6.3, 6.7 p.120, 128.). The structural frame of these objects appears to extend from or incorporate an anthropomorphic face and it is apparent that the human head penetrates the frame.

Human heads represented on object types such as wrist-clasps are linked and separated from zoomorphic figures by the structural component of the object. The content inside the frame that is portrayed on the pair of wrist-clasps from Morningthorpe (Norfolk) consists of a pair of disarticulated, addorsed zoomorphic creatures. On the outside of the frame the zoomorphic creatures are less articulated and are affronted. The content on the outside of the frame has worn away, but a pair of affronted zoomorphic figures is represented in the inside of the frame on the wrist-clasp from Breckland.

Moreover, the human heads are framed and rendered on the catch-plate, the working mechanism of the object. The heads with pointed lupine-like ears are represented on the catch-plate component that links together the two halves of the object. The wrist-clasp from Breckland (Norfolk) has a human half-face in the centre of the object and the head is attached to the circular clasp by a small rectilinear form. This design is repeated on the wrist-clasp from Bawdeswell. The structural frames on the wrist-clasps from Breckland, Quidenham, Morningthorpe, North Lopham and Kenninghall (Norfolk) also contain the human head. The structural components of the object give organisation and flow to the varied designs and are thus integral to the 'reading' of the object. Structural aspects, such as panels, frames and clasps discussed above found on brooches and wrist-clasps could also relate to manufacturing techniques and the structural integrity of the object. In this sense, the designs and the architectural aspects of the object are likely to have some kind of synergy, which is discussed in Chapter 6.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified a number of ways in which the human imagery was used by different social groups on a variety of scales. Full-bodied imagery is rare, but when it is portrayed it is carried on high-status objects. These figures are rendered

battling or performing with animals or weaponry. Other full-bodied figures are represented without animal figures and without any kind of offensive or defensive equipment, but they have distinct postures. Full-bodied imagery, in particularly full-bodied figures in 3-dimensions are largely clustered along the East Anglian coast in close proximity to the 'special purpose site' (i.e. settlement and *wic*) at Ipswich and the 'production site' in its hinterland. One of the items carrying this type of imagery was found near the possible *wic* site at Norwich, connected by the navigable River Yare. The distribution of full-bodied imagery is striking and is discussed further below.

A significant point that has emerged is that there are very few "true" animal-men or *Tiermenschen* within the regions under study, a design that has characterised the Style I design category. Similarly, there are very few "true" portrayals of split-representation. It is clear that until the seventh-century there is a predominance of human heads within the anthropomorphic repertoire. These heads, however, are not homogeneous. Heads are rendered in variety of ways including: back to back, face to face, and face to scalp. Human heads were also deployed within a series of visual scenes that included a close interrelationship with animal figures and in some instances informed the structural layout of the object. The human head was associated with a pair of beaked heads and horse heads. The beaked heads sometimes appear to represent moustaches of human faces, while other beaked heads seem to just extend from the eye/ cheek location and are upturned with open beaks near the anthropomorphic eyes. This raises an important issues regarding the interrelationship between animal and human motifs, which is explored in Chapter 6.

This chapter identified regionalised and localised uses of human representation. The most common motif was the ectoplasmic design which was distributed throughout the region, with the nose form being the most frequent motif. In contrast, the human heads that are portrayed with lupine-like ears or horns seem to have been restricted to the narrow corridor between the fenlands and the woods, continuing into north east Norfolk. Parallel to this, the horse-human heads motifs are exclusively found in a similar region as the wolf-human head design and the raised hand motif is largely clustered around the fenlands. Figures wearing bird headdresses were distributed along this narrow corridor and into north east Norfolk, with the exception of items from Sutton Hoo and Caenby. These motifs reflect the cemetery distribution in this region. While the open mouth was used across the region, other facial aspects were more regionalised. The facial and scalp hair indicate that some attempt was made to render specific individual facial detail. The upturned moustaches are more often found along the fen edge and the drooping moustaches are largely portrayed in East Anglia, reflecting distinct ways of signalling aspects of human bodily identity (e.g. age and biological sex). Scalp hair is still portrayed in the seventh and eighth centuries, albeit less regularly as human representation is found less frequent. For some human designs of this era, however, scalp hair is hidden away underneath a new array of headdresses. New forms of garments are also portrayed in this era.

There are clearly key transformations in the portrayal of human representation art in the seventh century. These shifts include the development of gestural expressions, full-bodied imagery, 3-dimensional full-bodied humans, hair, headdress and garments. There is thus a need for the further exploration of three key themes: 1) the changing portrayal of human representation 2) the development of bodily detail – such as gesture, biological sex and garments and the social implications of such transformations. These key themes are explored in Chapters 6-8 and might provide a clearer insight to the use and role of human imagery in the early Anglo-Saxon world. The next chapter evaluates the archaeological context of human designs to examine the ways in which human representational art was used, by whom and for what purpose and how this might have changed over time.

CHAPTER 5

The Archaeological Context of Human Imagery in Eastern England

As Chapter 2 identified, cemeteries formed part of wider narrative pertaining to the developments of dynastic power and regional kingdom-organisation in the sixth and seventh centuries. Recent literature has focussed on the importance of why and who an object was made for, the object biography and how it ended up being deposited in a burial context. This chapter identifies how many objects carried human imagery and what types of archaeological contexts they were found in. It can be surmised that the frequency of human representation is dependent on varied factors including location (e.g. implications of geology and the bias of survival), the frequency of metalwork and the type of mortuary ritual (cremation or inhumation). Other information that might signal a connection between human representation and the user includes the positioning within the cemetery, grave assemblage, wear/ repair of the object, age and gender and the positioning of objects within the grave. Shifts in the usage of human imagery (e.g. the types of objects that carried these motifs and the types of graves these objects are found in) could signal the change in message, meaning and role of human representation in an era of dramatic social transformations. The usage and deployment of these objects are intensely examined in Chapters 6-8.

5.1 CEMETERY TYPE

Overall, objects carrying human images derive from inhumation graves and predominantly from mixed rite cemeteries. A total of 32 graves in inhumation cemeteries and 55 graves in mixed rite cemeteries included objects carrying human imagery.

- 8 finds came from cremations in mixed rite cemeteries
- 44 finds came from inhumations in mixed rite cemeteries,
- 34 finds came from inhumation cemeteries and
- 1 find from a cremation cemetery

Objects that came from inhumation graves from inhumation-only cemeteries are predominantly from Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and to a lesser extent from Norfolk (Fig. 5.1).

The frequency of objects from cremation graves in the Lincolnshire and Norfolk is not wholly unexpected as these two areas are characterised by large mixed rite cemeteries in which cremation is the predominate rite. The low frequency of finds from cremation graves is likely due to the poor survival of metalwork during the cremation process. No finds were from inhumation-only cemeteries in Lincolnshire and only a minority of finds were from inhumation-only cemeteries in Norfolk. Although the Suffolk region has no finds from cremation graves in mixed rite cemeteries, it sports the only find from a cremation cemetery in this study.

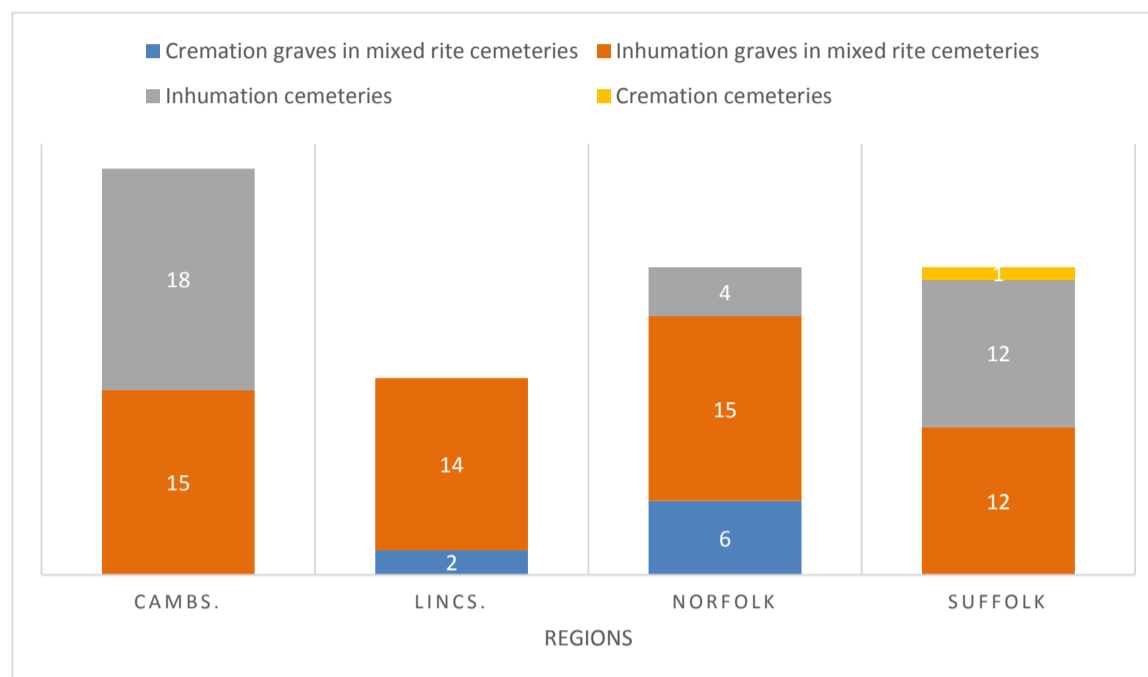


Fig. 5.1 Graph illustrating the type of cemeteries that contain graves with human representation

5.2 LOCATION

One has to recognise that our knowledge of cemetery distribution is open to a number of biases. Antiquarian digging has focused especially on visible monuments and therefore on open uplands and down land. The deep ploughing in the fenlands for potato crops has had a dramatic impact on cemetery discovery in the east of England. Industrial developments – railways and more recently road building schemes – also have an impact on the frequency of sites and the patterns of discovery. The siting of cemeteries will also have been influenced by the location of settlements and in turn these settlements will have developed in relation to access to resources as well as routes and communications (Brookes 2007; Semple 2008). However, a general analysis of finds from graves carrying human imagery, compared against the general distribution of cemetery sites is still valuable in terms of showing up the distribution pattern of communities burying their dead with items carrying these kinds of designs (Fig. 5.2).

Fig. 5.4 schematically illustrates the geology of the region in relation to cemeteries with and without human representation. Five zones are circled: A = chalk B = heavy clay lands C = limestones, D = sand, sandstone and gravel lands and E = dense woodland. The other areas are made up of chalky, glacial drift and the coast of East Anglia is constituted by alluvium and gravel. There is some relationship between these varied terrains and the cemeteries. The narrow corridor of zone A corresponds with a series of cemeteries, both with and without human representation, signalling minimal impact of this geology on metalwork. A similar pattern is recognised in zone C. Although there are few cemeteries located in zone B, there are find spots of early Anglo-Saxon ornamented dress fittings (Norfolk HER MNF38496) which indicates a good survival rate for metal objects. The fen area is indicated by the grey outline. There are few cemeteries here. The marsh or waterlogged geology is likely to have resulted in a poor survival rate. Brooches, however, are found at Wisbech (HER 04012) located at the fen edge, but no metal objects were retrieved from an inhumation cemetery at Whittlesey in the fen, the seven skeletons were found each with a pot near their skulls (HER 02921). This could imply a bias of survival: images might only derive from cemeteries where metalwork survives/ survives well. It is equally possible that there is a connection between the types of terrain and burial practice, communities and social groups inhabiting these zones may not have deposited metal items as part of their mortuary ritual.

Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have recently been argued on the basis of documentary sources and place-names to largely lie in land that would have been open rather than wooded (Roberts and Wrathmell 2003, 75). The majority of cemeteries in the East Anglia and Cambridgeshire regions with image-carrying objects are located in just such a landscape: in a corridor between the fenlands and dense forest cover (zone E represents woodland in Fig. 5.3). Predominantly, the cemeteries containing human representation cluster along the fen edge and the escarpment (i.e. a long, steep slope) in north-west Suffolk and north-west and south Cambridgeshire (Fig. 5.3). Many other burial grounds without such image-carrying objects are also located in this area and along the escarpment in the northern part of the region. If compared to the overall distribution of known early medieval cemeteries (Fig. 5.2 and Fig. 5.4), interesting regional variations can be detected. In Lincolnshire, cemeteries with image-carrying objects are clustered around key navigable rivers, including the rivers Witham and Trent and the river Humber. The cemeteries in north Norfolk are generally located near the marsh or fenlands, some are positioned near rivers such as Brunel Way, which overlooks the river Ouse and others are located near Roman sites, such as Caistor-by-Norwich and Spong Hill. Cemeteries in Cambridgeshire are also positioned near prehistoric remains. The cemetery at Alwalton is located near a Roman ditch, Barrington is situated near an Iron Age ditch as is Oakington which is positioned near a prehistoric ditch. In the Suffolk region cemeteries are positioned near interconnecting rivers as well as prehistoric earthworks. The burial grounds at Bury-St-Edmunds and Westgarth Gardens are located next to the River Lark and the River Linnet; Exning, Icklingham, Mitchell's Hill, Tuddenham and Warren Hill are near the River Lark; Holywell Row is close to the river Little Ouse; Sutton Hoo is located near the Deben estuary; and Snape is positioned close to the river Alde and the Alde estuary. The cemeteries at Snape and Sutton Hoo are also located near Bronze Age barrows.

In recent literature on cemeteries in Ipswich (Suffolk), Scull suggested that the Buttermarket cemetery was distinctly different from other neighbouring burial grounds because of its positioning near the river Orwell and a settlement and trading port or *wic* (Scull et al. 2009). He argued that the Buttermarket cemetery reflected a single, high-status household based on the grave assemblage, which was established at the same time as the settlement (Scull et al. 2009, 301, 315). Other cemeteries, positioned away from the *wic* like Boss Hall are suggested to reflect a 'small community consisting of a few households' (Scull et al. 2009, 127). The settlement and port at Ipswich has been termed a 'special purpose site' – functioning as a context to develop 'inter-regional exchange' which was 'controlled by elites' and probably functioned under 'royal oversight' (Scull et al. 2009, 316). Scull proposed that the burials at the Buttermarket cemetery displayed 'social distinction within and between households and lineages or families' which seems to 'fit well with the model of the special purpose site' (Scull et al. 2009, 302). Equally, other cemeteries positioned nearby key water routes or other notable topographic or artificial features could also reflect a group of distinct kin or social group.

Notably, the Sutton Hoo burial ground contains large quantities of human representation, in particular Mound One. This cemetery is located near the tidal river Deben and is suggested to have social and political ties with the 'special purpose site' at Ipswich and the 'productive' site at Coddham (Newman 2003; Carver 2005, 498; Scull 2013, 47-9). Of significance is the seventh-century gold earscoop (or a 'cosmetic spatula') with a handle rendered in the form of a 3-dimensional human head was found at the 'productive' site at Coddham (Newman 2003, 104-105). Newman has suggested that a funerary interpretation for this site is unlikely due to the workshop waste and high number of coins, but a 'wealthy' cemetery is located nearby overlooking the main site which includes a bed burial and furnished barrows (Newman 2003, 106). The distribution of the seventh-century 3-dimensional figurines within the wider *wic* hinterland has been noted by Pestell to be of particular importance in regards to 'Anglo-Saxon settlements' (Pestell *forthcoming*). As identified in Chapter 4, full-bodied and three-dimensional human imagery is more often found near the coast in East Anglia and Lincolnshire in the seventh century (Figs. 4.2-4.3 – pp.64-65). The production of a new repertoire of human imagery and its deployment in early Anglo-Saxon England and their distribution along the eastern seaboard would suggest some kind of response to the development of the *wic* – a site

facilitating inter-regional communication and exchange. Cemeteries with human representation were largely positioned nearby rivers and the fens, locations that could be seen and overlook (or 'watch' over) interconnecting water-routes and resources. As discussed above in Chapter 4, representational art enhanced the visual spectacle of the funeral, creating a memorable scene. These graves may have played a role in the wider drama of the cemetery and between cemeteries. In this way, it is possible that the deposition of objects carrying human representation operated to create social distinction within the cemetery and between cemeteries.

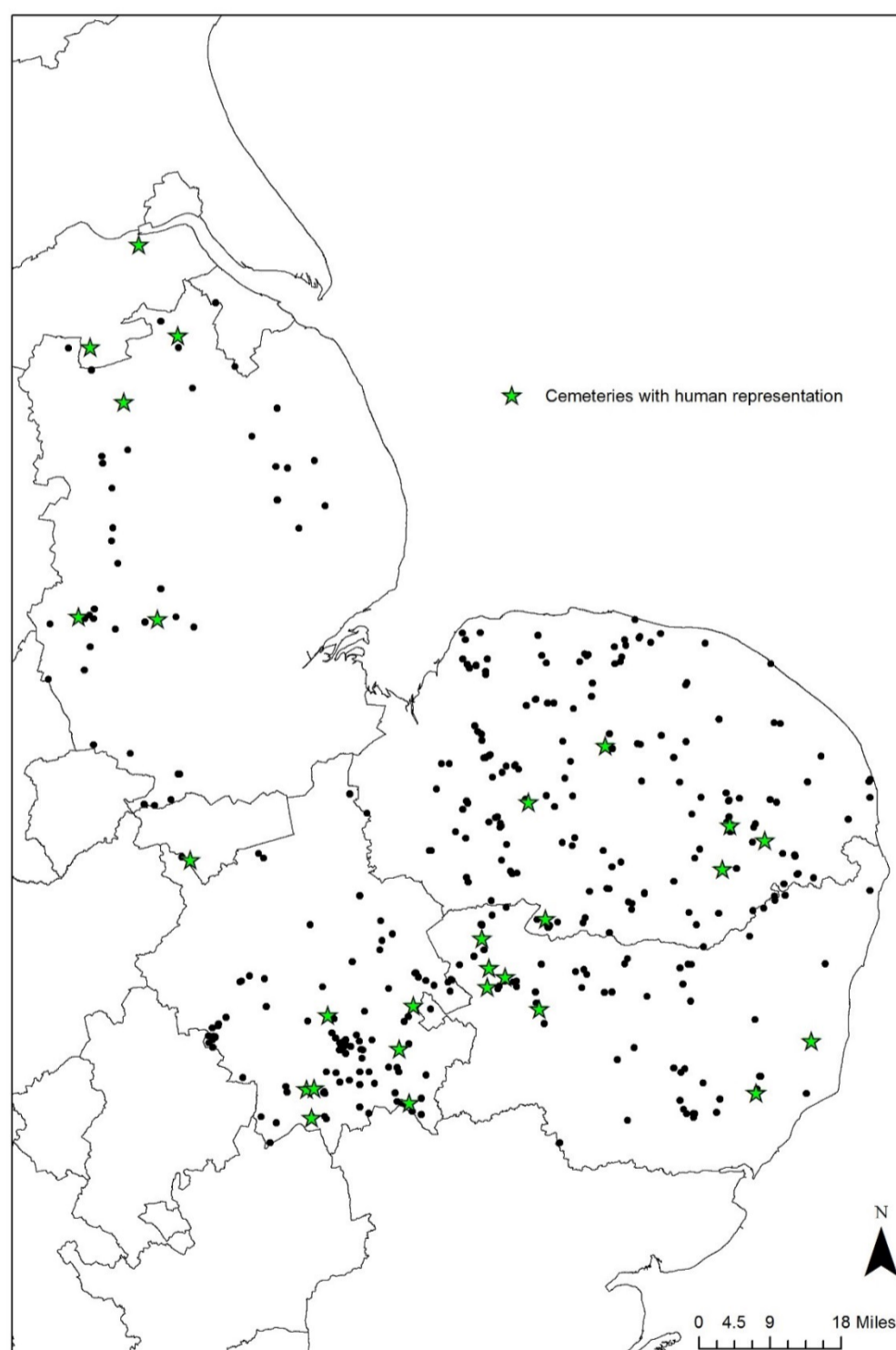


Fig. 5.2 Map illustrating all cemeteries in the region (black dots) and those with human representation (green stars).

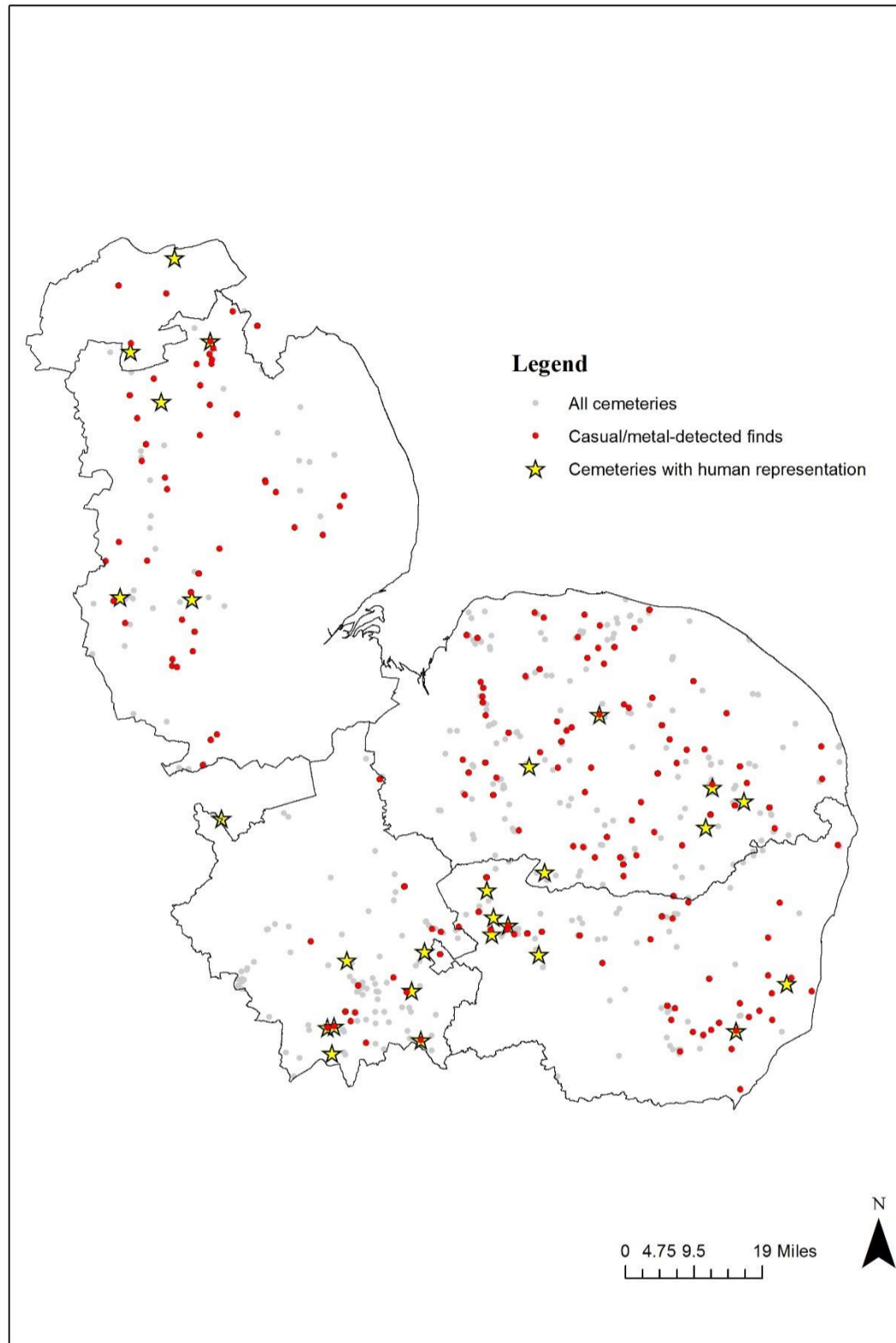


Fig. 5.3 Map showing the distribution of cemeteries with and without human representation and their connection with the terrain. Black line = escarpment, grey form = proposed extent of the fen, black dots = all cemeteries, circles = zones with specific terrain: A = chalk B = heavy clay lands C = limestones, D = sand, sandstone and gravel lands and E = dense woodland (interpretation after Rippon 2000, fig. 23; Roberts and Wrathmell 2003, fig. 2.1).

5.3 FREQUENCY OF METALWORK IN CEMETERIES

In four regions under discussion, metalwork was deposited in mortuary contexts fairly frequently, but animal and human representational art was a much rarer phenomenon (Fig. 5.5). The majority of objects positioned on, or with, the body did not carry animal or human imagery. Of 397 recorded graves in Cambridgeshire¹³ only 18 contained objects that carried purely zoomorphic imagery and 13 hosted objects carrying anthropomorphic imagery. In Suffolk of 1053 recorded graves, only 10 contained objects with human representation and 12 zoomorphic images. The Norfolk dataset comprises 3509 recorded graves, but only 13 contained objects decorated with human imagery, but in contrast a much larger number of graves contained items with animal imagery (53). In Lincolnshire of 1783 recorded graves, 5 objects carried human representations and 14 carried animal images. Overall, therefore, of the 6742 graves recorded for these regions, only 41 contained items carrying anthropomorphic imagery.

- 65% of the graves in the cemeteries contained objects carrying zoomorphic imagery
- 6% of graves in the cemeteries contained objects carrying anthropomorphic imagery
- 27% of graves in the cemeteries contained objects carrying zoomorphic and anthropomorphic imagery

The strong presence of zoomorphic images shows that a larger number of individuals were buried with zoomorphic forms, while the number of objects bearing either human and animal figures or anthropomorphic images were restricted to a few (Fig. 5.6). Not all the dead individuals were interred at once, however. Many of these cemeteries were in use from the late fifth to the sixth and seventh centuries. These frequencies of representational art could relate to developments in imagery over time. The development of human images and the shifting relationships between animal and human imagery is explored in the next chapter.

One might consider that the high frequency of metallic objects would statistically equate to a higher probability of finding objects bearing human imagery. Spong Hill and Morningthorpe cemeteries, for instance, demonstrate very high numbers of metal objects (Fig. 5.7). The Spong Hill cemetery also has the most graves containing objects carrying only anthropomorphic images and these are all decorated objects from four cremation graves (1288a, 2867, 34/ 3582 and 1823). The high frequency of metalwork from this cemetery is perhaps due to the process of cremation, leaving large quantities of metal fragments. Also, this cemetery is one of the largest cemetery sites in the region under study (Fig. 5.8). The cemetery at Morningthorpe contains a large quantity of metalwork too which again corresponds with the high frequency of inhumation graves at this site. Holywell Row has fewer metal objects compared to other cemeteries *and* with fewer graves containing objects with representational art (Fig. 5.7 and Fig. 5.8).

¹³ Numbers are to the best of my knowledge as of 2013

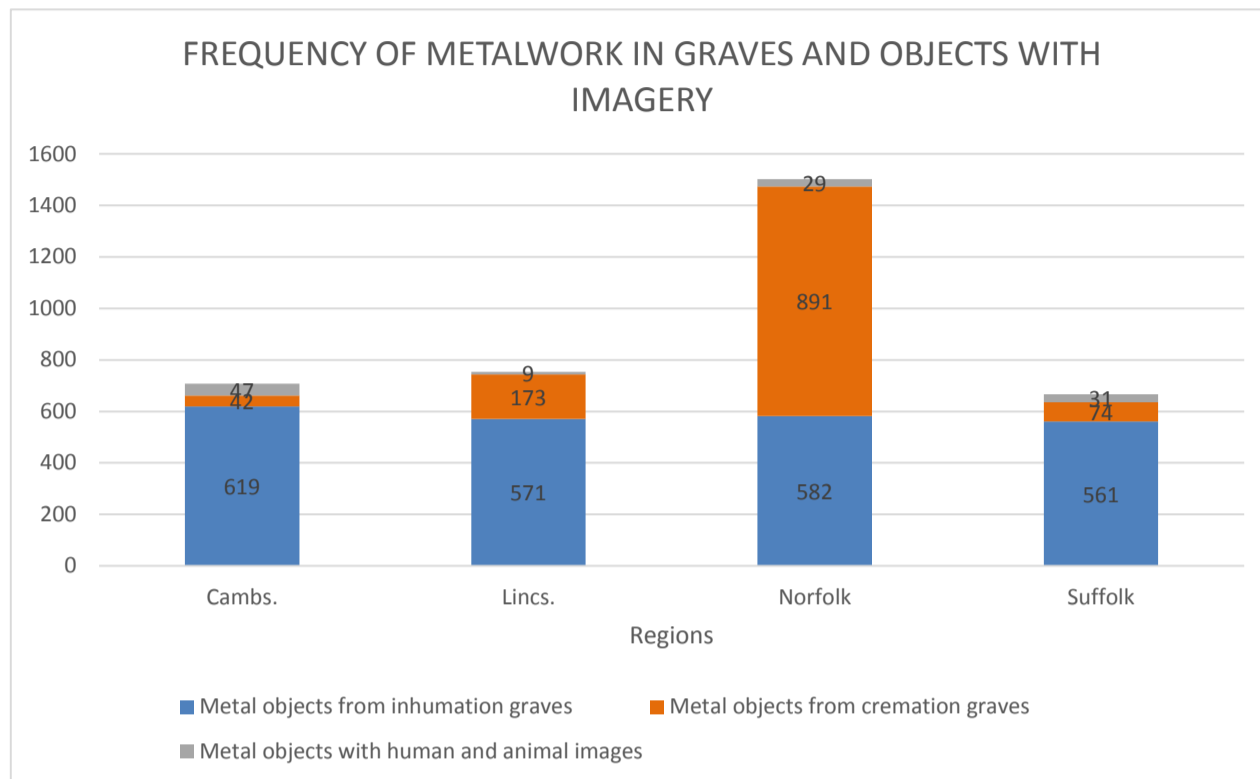


Fig. 5.5 Graph showing the frequency of metalwork deposited in graves and the total no. of objects carrying human and animal images from all graves.

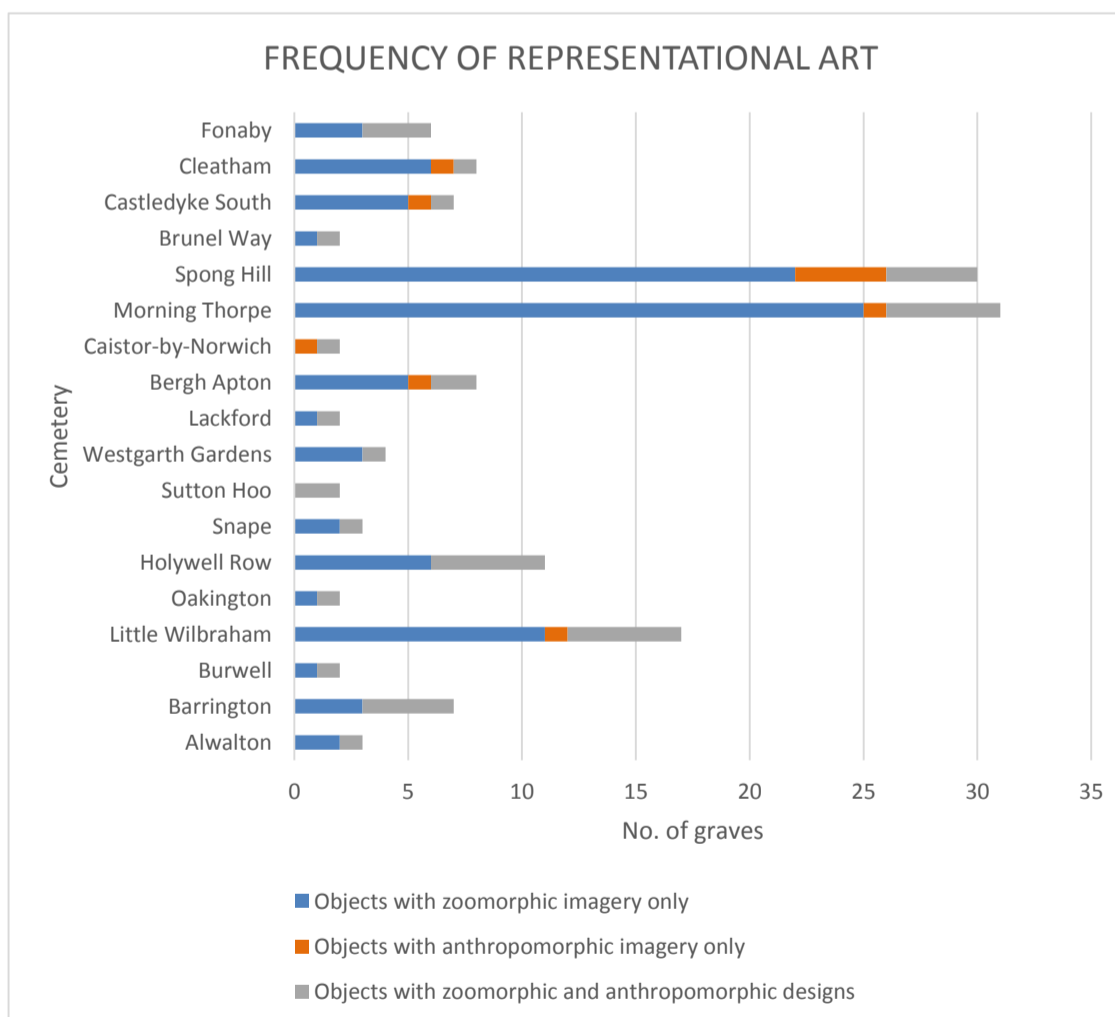


Fig. 5.6 Graph showing the frequency of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic motifs.

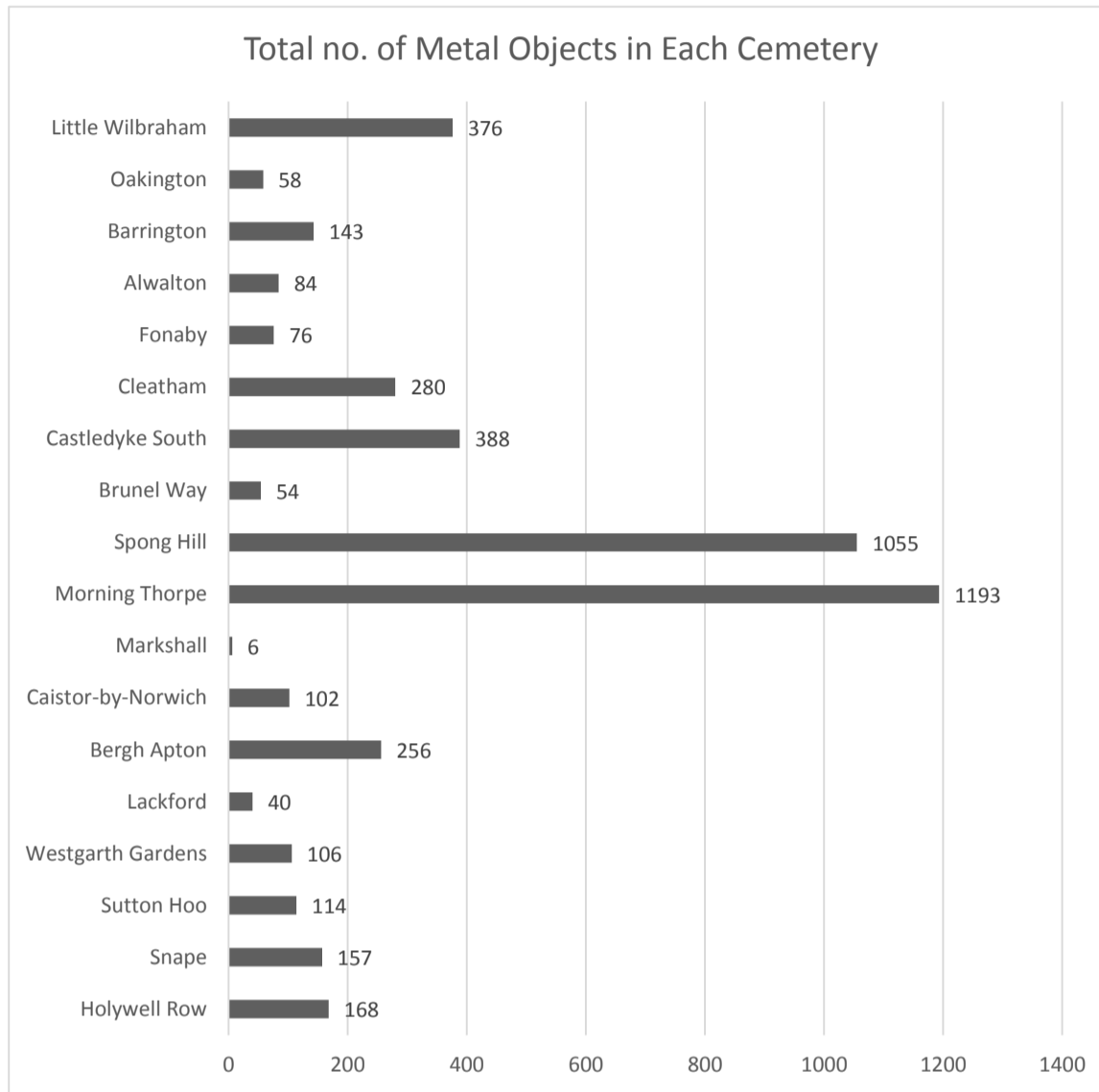


Fig. 5.7 Graph showing the frequency of metallic objects from the cemeteries containing human representation.

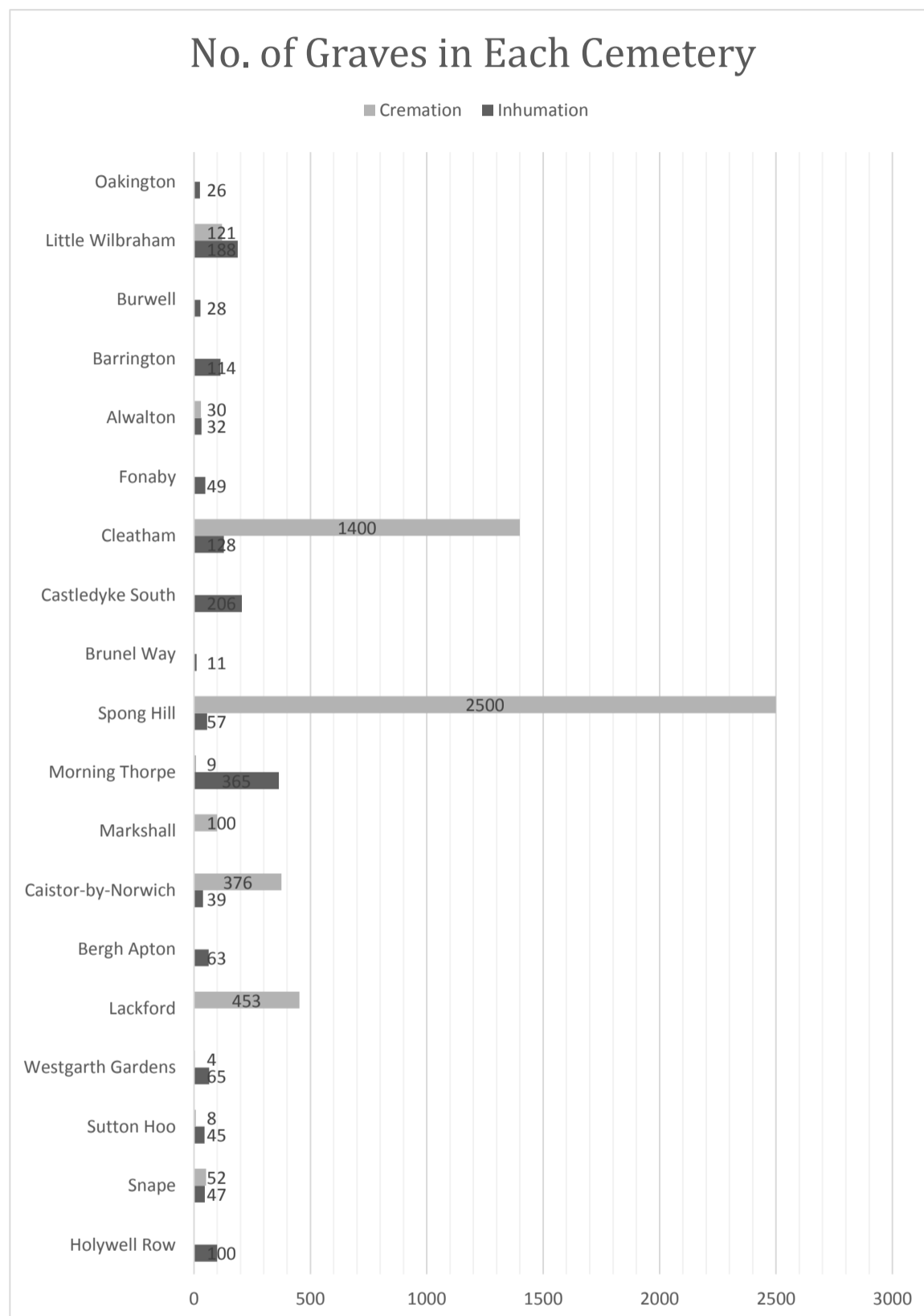


Fig. 5.8 Graph showing the number of graves per cemetery.

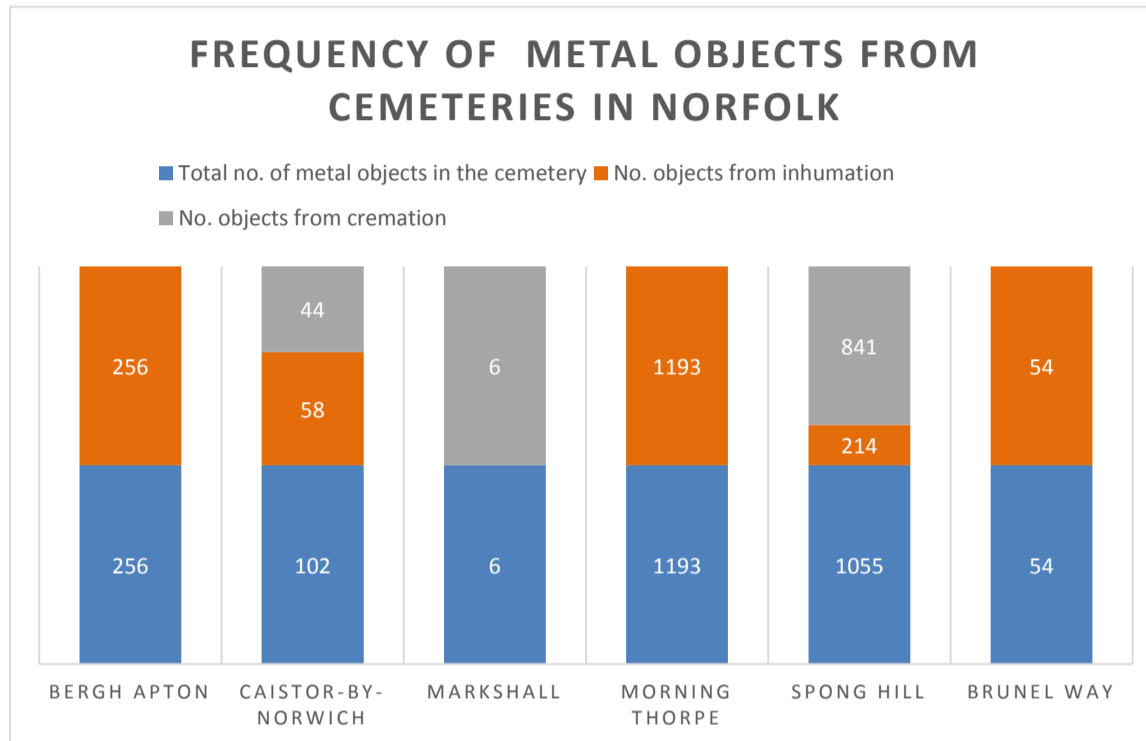


Fig. 5.9 Graph showing the frequency of metal objects from cemeteries with human representation in Norfolk.

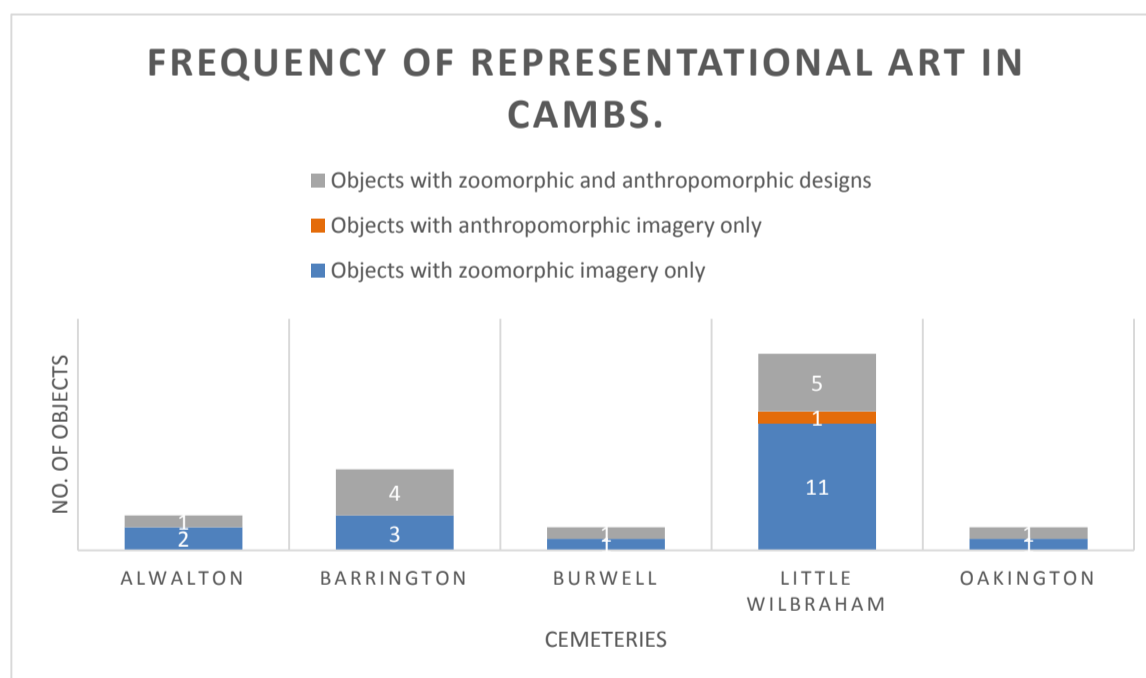


Fig. 5.10 Graph showing the frequency of objects carrying human and animal representation in Cambridgeshire.

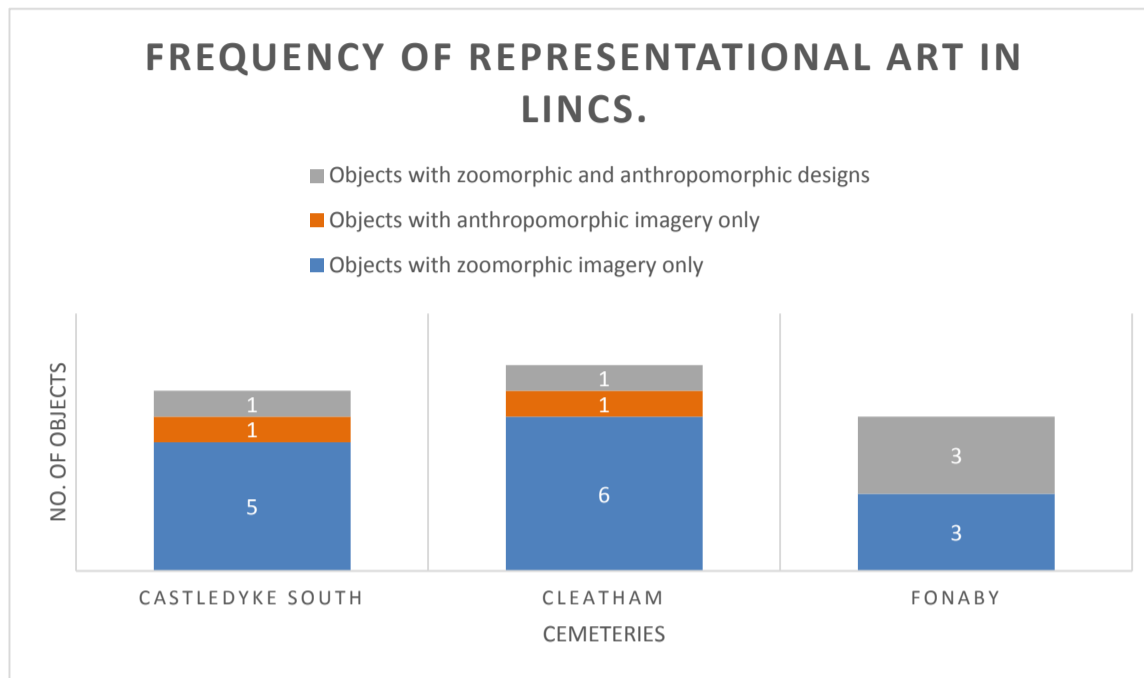


Fig. 5.11 Graph showing the frequency of objects carrying human and animal representation in Lincolnshire.

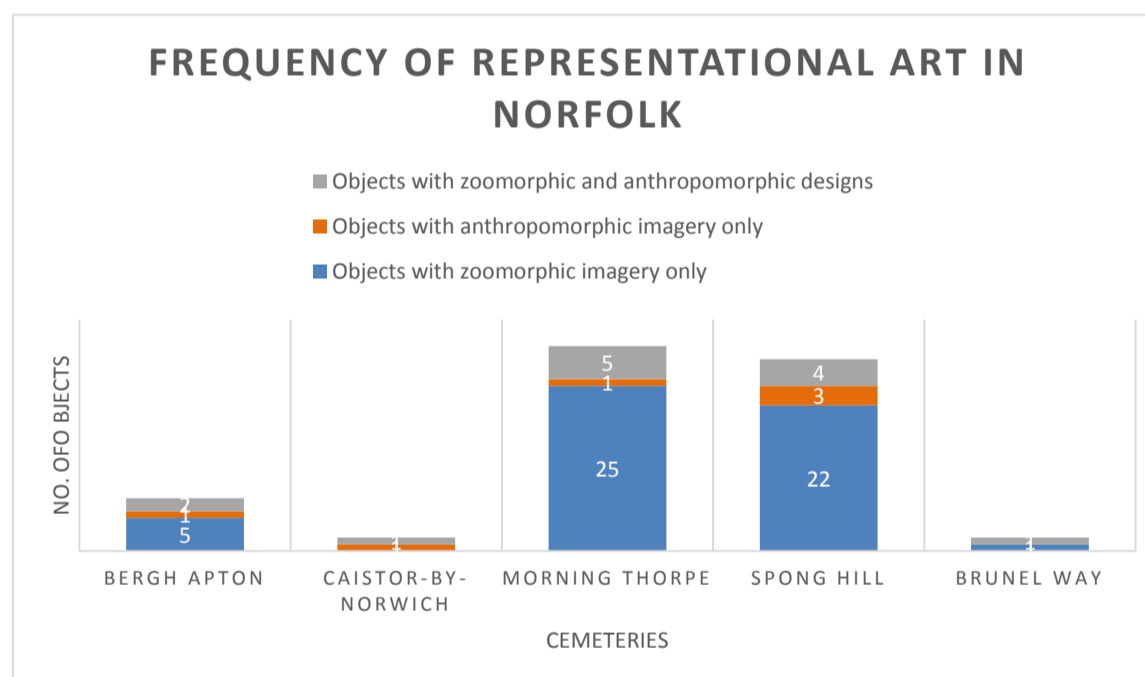


Fig. 5.12 Graph showing the frequency of objects carrying human and animal representation in Norfolk.

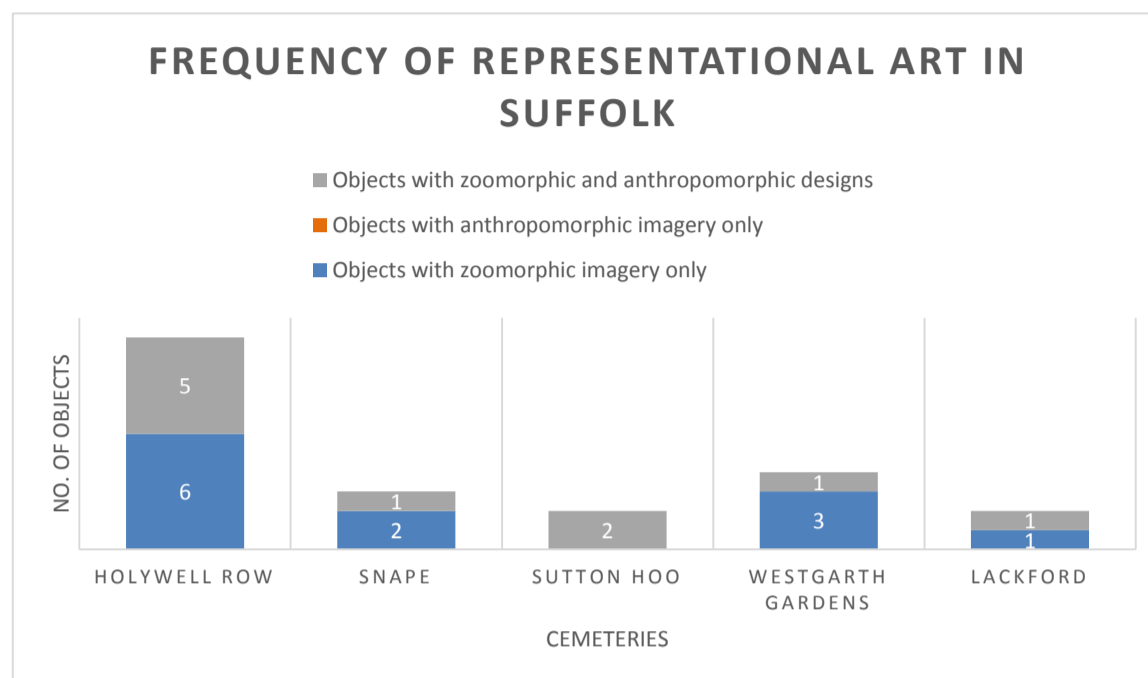


Fig. 5.13 Graph showing the frequency of objects carrying human and animal representation in Suffolk.

5.4 FREQUENCY OF GRAVES CONTAINING OBJECTS WITH HUMAN REPRESENTATION

There is some variation in the frequency of graves that contain objects carrying human imagery per cemetery (Fig. 5.6). Some cemeteries have more animal and human imagery than others. Little Wilbraham, for instance, has more objects carrying human imagery than cemeteries at Alwalton, Barrington, Burwell and Oakington (Fig. 5.10) This could be due to various reasons: the size of the cemetery, issues of preservation (the number of cremations versus inhumation) and the history of archaeological activity at the site (antiquarian excavations, disturbances, extent of the cemetery). Little Wilbraham contained 188 inhumations and c. 121 cremations, while Alwalton comprised of 30 cremations and 32 inhumations (Fig. 5.8). Even so, there is still a low frequency of graves containing such image-carrying objects at the large cemeteries like Morningthorpe which included c. 365 inhumations and only 25 graves with zoomorphic imagery and one containing a human-only image. Five graves included both types of representation.

5.5 FREQUENCY OF OBJECT TYPES CARRYING HUMAN REPRESENTATION

The two predominant object types that carry human representation are brooches and wrist-clasps (Figs. 5.14-5.16). Two types of brooches carry the majority of images – cruciform (64 items) and GSHBs (65 items). Brooch fragments were also found (83), which could have been part of a florid or cruciform brooch. The majority of these fragments are casual or metal-detected finds, the possible circumstances of loss has been explored above (pp.52-55). Florid cruciform brooches (32), wrist-clasps (23) and mounts (22) constitute the second largest group of object types that carry human images. The rarer object types in this region that are rendered with the human form include button brooches, bucket mounts, belts, a helmet, a purse, harness mounts, ear scoop, drinking horns and die stamps, among others. The rarity of some of these objects has a regional explanation, button brooches, for instance, are more often found south of the Thames (e.g. Suzuki 2008). Objects such as the helmet and drinking horns are extremely rare in early Anglo-Saxon England and are generally found in distinct mortuary contexts, i.e. high-status, male barrow burials. Other object types – such as the ear scoop, purse and buckets – are often found in mortuary contexts, but the rarity of human imagery rendered on these items in this region indicates a distinct relationship between certain object types and human representational art in this time period.

There is some regional variation in the types of object that carried human imagery. In Lincolnshire and Suffolk cruciform brooches predominantly carry such motifs (Figure 5.14) and in Cambridgeshire GSHBs largely carry human designs (Fig. 5.15). In the Norfolk region the high frequency of cruciform brooches is broadly level with florid cruciform brooches, GSHBs, wrist-clasps and mounts (Figs. 5.14-5.16). Similar to Norfolk, Suffolk demonstrates a high frequency of GSHBs, cruciform brooches and florid cruciform brooches that carry human representation. Overall, dress fittings (i.e. 161 brooches and 23 wrist-clasps) seem to have especially carried human imagery; few other items that decorate the body such as pendants (6 finds) carry this type of imagery.

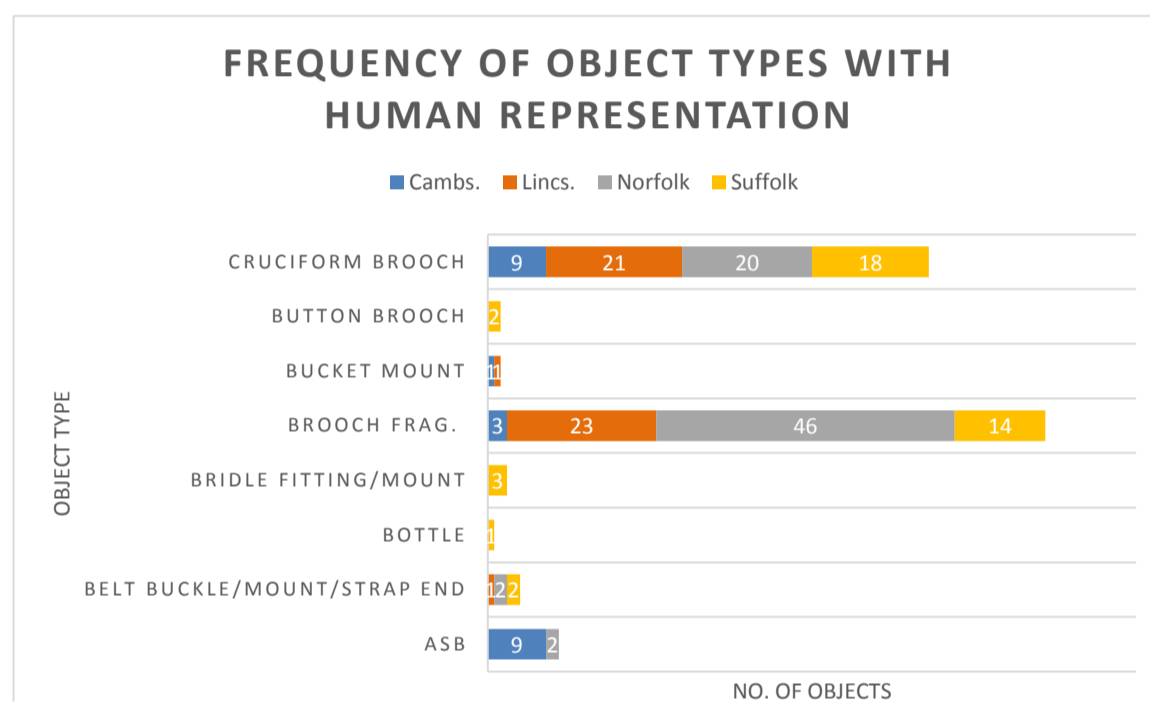


Figure 5.14 Graph showing the frequency of object types from the regions (part 1 of 3).

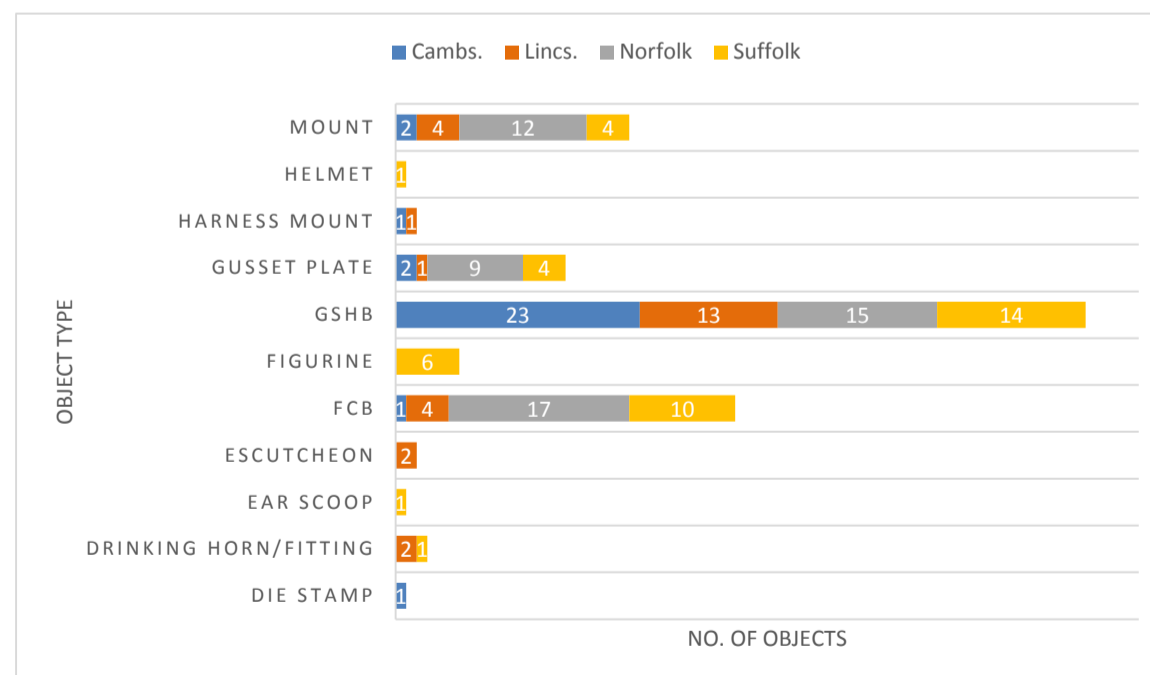


Fig. 5.15 Graph showing the frequency of object types from the regions (part 2 of 3).

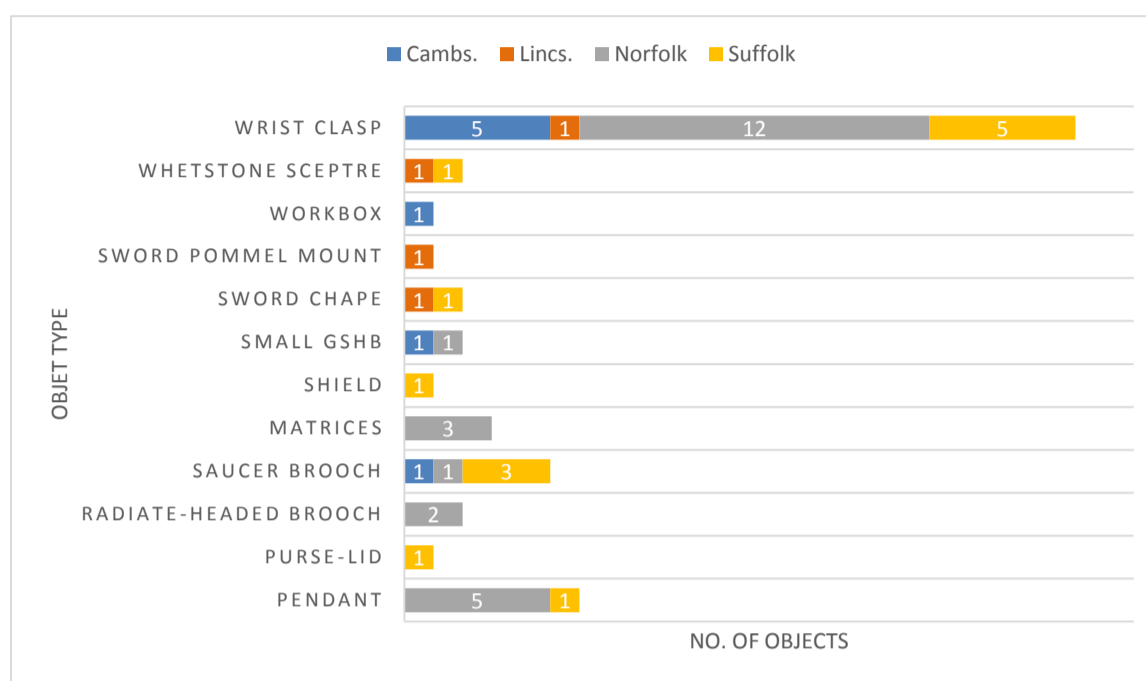


Fig. 5.16 Graph showing the frequency of object types from the regions (part 3 of 3).

5.6 POSITION WITHIN THE CEMETERY

The positioning of graves that contain objects with human imagery is not particularly unusual. Some are situated near prehistoric features e.g. Grave 1358 Alwalton Area B, but this is similar to many graves that contain no image-bearing objects - 1358, for instance, forms part of a small collection of burials that focus on a Roman ditch (Gibson 2007, 244). Another example is Grave 93 in the cemetery at Barrington A which is aligned with an Iron Age ditch (Malim et al. 1998, 80-81, 129, 150). However, some observations on relationships between object, image and position can be suggested. At Castledyke in Lincolnshire for example, the two graves containing brooches that carry anthropomorphic imagery are positioned at opposing ends of the excavated area in separate 'group' plots (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 2.1). This could suggest that only one individual with this type of image-bearing object was present in any given group plot. The high frequency of female adults aged c. 35-45 years old (see below p.110) buried with image-carrying objects with human imagery could infer a special female role, signalled by the use of human imagery on their funerary costume.

At Bergh Apton (Norfolk) the same distribution pattern is evident (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 2.3) Graves 37 and 64 are positioned within the broad cluster of graves and grave 17 is positioned south of this cluster within a smaller grouping. Again the pattern might imply that individual female graves with human imagery are distributed between groups – with no more than one individual carrying this type of imagery in any group plot. It is of interest that all of these three graves are aligned upon a possible prehistoric or Romano-British ditch (feature 23). Other examples of clear spatial associations includes the female inhumation grave 16 from Snape in Suffolk. This individual was positioned near graves 10 and 18 close to the pyre area and a ring ditch grave (Filmer-Sankey and Pestell 2001).

Graves containing objects ornamented with human imagery are not grouped together, but are distributed across the cemetery, indicating these individuals were not displayed in one zone, but embedded within a nexus of graves that contain varied frequencies of grave goods. Although it has been noted that clusters of graves are suggested to represent social or kin-based mortuary plots (Sayer 2010) in some cases it is not possible to interpret the extent of these plots. It is worthwhile noting it is possible that not all social groups included female individuals with such decorated dress fittings. Arguably, the low frequency of these image-carrying objects reflects the wealth of individuals or their social groups and this could imply that the three graves containing these objects represent the wealthiest individuals within the community. Signals of wealth are difficult to interpret as the social value of metallic objects might vary from region to region and organic materials that have not survived

e.g. textiles, leatherworking and woodwork could have displayed wealth and status. DNA and genealogical material for kin groups are not accessible and the extents of family plots are not clearly delineated by markers or earth boundaries. The small clusters of graves and the positioning of graves so that they align with certain topographic features, Roman or prehistoric monuments implies that groups or individuals managed and choreographed each grave to operate emotive, social and political spheres of influence. Coming back to the image-carrying objects, the rarity of such items in these cemeteries and the distribution of these types of graves may well reflect an individual who had a special status in life. Equally, it is possible that these graves represent a staged burial i.e. a mythological figure or ancestor created through the staging of objects in the grave and around the body and the positioning of the grave in the cemetery.

At the Morningthorpe cemetery there are two distinct distribution patterns for graves containing human imagery which stand in marked contrast to each other (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 2.4). The first group is defined by a grave with flamboyant brooches and this forms part of a tight cluster of consecutive multiple burials,¹⁴ as exemplified by grave 16 which contained a florid cruciform brooch with human imagery and was positioned on top of graves 27 and 47. Grave 342 contains a florid cruciform brooch and cuts grave 345, forming one of a string of graves (graves 346 and 351) and is densely surrounded by other burials. Grave 353 has a pair of wrist-clasps and a florid cruciform brooch that carries human imagery; this grave is cut by grave 352 and is located in a tight cluster near grave 342. Grave 214, which contained a GSHB, intercuts or is intercut by grave 361 which is interposed by another grave, forming a nexus of associated graves. The second group of graves contain brooches without flamboyant designs and wrist clasps and these are not located within intense clusters of intercutting graves. These burials distinctly contrast with the remaining graves that contain human representation (graves 153, 208, 209 and 370). These graves are not within tight clusters nor are they spatially associated with other internments. What is striking is that the object type within these four graves is different – these are cruciform brooches without the flamboyant floriated designs and a pair of wrist-clasps. It seems the flamboyant brooches might reflect a high-status female individual buried within a family or social group plots or at least the display of a ‘special’ and high-status female.

A similar pattern is evident at the Linton Heath cemetery. A female individual (skeleton 28) was buried with a GSHB carrying human imagery and was the first of three interments, which was followed by two double-graves (skeletons 26 and 27 and 24 and 25). The presence of a ‘small iron axe’ in the first double-grave might imply one of the individuals was male, but the other items such as a bone pendant, iron knife and iron buckle are not distinctly gendered objects. The second double burial seems more likely to have been a male and a female by the presence of a ‘large iron spear and part of a cruciform brooch’ (Neville 1852, 15). Neville reports, however, that the spear and brooch fragment were positioned above skeleton 24 – which he describes as being male. It is possible that this interment was disturbed, but this double-grave was the final interments that was buried ‘3 feet below the surface’ (Neville 1852, 15). The skeletons in the final interment (24 and 25) were reported by Neville as being ‘contiguous and interlaced’ (Neville 1852, 15). It seems doubtful that the individuals interred in the double-burials represent real-life relationships such as husband and wife; it is unlikely that they would have died simultaneously. Perhaps these burials also represent staged burials underpinning an emotive, social or political concept that was associated with the founder female buried with the ornate GSHBs.

Individual corpses interred with image-carrying objects were also buried in double-graves. Grave 143 at Sleaford, for instance, is a double-burial. One of the corpses was deposited with a florid cruciform brooch bearing human imagery; the other objects found in the grave indicate the interment of two female individuals or a female and male individual with no surviving grave goods (Thomas 1887, 398). Female individuals bearing image-carrying objects seem to have been given a distinctive burial in this cemetery, an individual interred with a florid cruciform brooch was buried in a ‘very large cist or cairn of unhewn

¹⁴ A consecutive multiple burial is defined as when a grave is re-opened after the first burial to allow for a second or third interment (Stoodley 2002, 103-121)

stone' (grave 50 Thomas 1887, 391). Both of these florid cruciform brooches from grave 143 and 50 carry flamboyant anthropomorphic designs and show evidence of breakage and repair in antiquity, implying these items were well-used and maintained – as opposed to being recycled. Another example of a double-burial includes grave 29 at Barrington A, buried in a shallow scoop in the chalk, the bodies laid side-by-side (Malim et al. 1998). Evidence suggests that these high-status or 'special' female individuals were sometimes buried with younger individuals. Grave 17 at Brunel Way, Thetford contains a mature/ older female adult buried with a cruciform brooch bearing human imagery and an older juvenile (latter part of 5-12 years). Of significance for grave 17 is the flint packing that seems to outline a coffin. Only one other grave has a similar grave lining – grave 13 (Appendix 3, Grave Plan Fig. 3c) (Penn and Andrews 2000, 439). The interment of these female individuals with other individuals seems to have been socially accepted at these cemeteries. Female individuals buried with highly ornamented dress fittings in these burial grounds had strong associations with multiple burials (contemporary and consecutive) and are often marked by distinct mortuary rituals – cists burials or a flint linings.

Graves with objects that used anthropomorphic imagery seem to have acted as foci and this is not restricted to female graves or male graves. A bridle fitting on the jowl of a horse at Eriswell (Suffolk) carries an anthropomorphic design: a humanoid head with pointed/ lupine ears (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 1.2 and Grave Plan Fig. 5). This man-and-horse burial (grave 4116) is not set among other male burials in the cemetery, but is surrounded by a high proportion of child graves (SCCAS 2004, 244-250). The horse was probably sacrificed for burial as it has cranial damage and damage to the central harness piece that suggests the animal was 'pole-axed, which would have only stunned it' presumably prior to burial (Caruth and Anderson 1999, 248). Part of this grave was empty, suggesting that organics may have been originally laid in it which have not been preserved. A more macabre interpretation suggests that the empty part of the grave was for the horse's blood to spill into (Caruth and Anderson 1999, 248). Similar to this type of grave, Mound Seventeen at Sutton Hoo also contained a male individual and horse, the bridle fittings also carried human imagery (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 1.6) (Evans 2005, 201-243). Mound Seventeen has been ascribed to AD 600-620 (Carver and Fern 2005, 310), which is later in date than the Eriswell grave that is placed in the second quarter of the sixth century (Plunkett 2005, 52). Mound Seventeen is positioned beside Mound 18, a cremation in a bronze bowl (Carver 1992b, 369), and these are described as the 'early founders of an independent aristocratic burial ground' at Sutton Hoo (Carver 1993, 80).

Human imagery occurs it appears, in burials where the surrounding funerary context implies the grave provided a focus of activity after the individual or indeed horse had been interred. This suggests these were graves of special individuals – remembered long enough for the graves to act as markers for additional activity. Human imagery can thus tentatively be associated with the graves of individuals who may have held special roles in life or were invested with special roles and meaning at death leading to the inclusion of human imagery in the funerary dress or assemblage. One also senses that the elaborate nature of some of these graves implies funerals of some complexity. The use of human-decorated items in these assemblages might tie in with this – the images being especially visual. Performative burials, created as theatrical displays, to enhance the memory of the event and the individual in the generations to follow, might it seems, have frequently involved human-image-carrying objects.

5.7 ASSEMBLAGE

Figs. 5.17-24 present the grave assemblages and a full list of grave goods can be found in Appendix 3, Tables 1-4. The numbers rendered on each bar in the graph represents the total number of the described object type, collections of beads are numbered as 1 as the high frequency of beads would make the graph difficult to determine. Fig. 5.17 for instance, displays grave goods from graves containing objects bearing human representation at Barrington. Applied saucer brooches were found in two of these graves: 29 and 75. The majority of graves with image-carrying objects were deposited with other objects, largely with a

'rich' assemblage (by comparison to the composition of the cemetery). Some object types were more often deposited within these graves, but there is variation between each cemetery. Fig. 5.17 presents the grave assemblages of graves containing human representation from Barrington. There is a high variation of object types in graves containing image-bearing objects at Barrington, but these graves more often include beads and iron knives. At Linton Heath the two most frequently found object types across all the graves containing image-carrying objects are beads and GSHBs – which were found in all 4 of the graves (Fig. 5.18). At Spong Hill applied saucer brooches and beads reoccur in grave assemblages that contain image-carrying objects (Figure 5.19). A clear pattern can be seen in the grave assemblages at Little Wilbraham. Cruciform brooches, beads and GSHBs frequently occur, but other items in the assemblage vary (Fig. 5.20). The 8 graves at Morningthorpe seem to have a stronger 'tradition' or repertoire of object types in an assemblage containing image-carrying objects. At least half of the graves contain beads, cruciform brooches, finger rings, iron knives, girdle hangers, small-long brooches and wrist-clasps. Other objects in the assemblage vary, including objects such as buckles, ceramic pots and florid cruciform and annular brooches (Fig. 21). At Bergh Apton the most commonly found object types across the three graves containing human representation include annular brooches and beads (Fig. 5.22). At Holywell Row, out of the 8 graves that contained image-carrying objects, 6 graves included wrist-clasps and 5 included cruciform brooches and beads. Half of the graves also contained iron knives and buckles. The other items in these graves varied (Fig. 5.23). Other cemeteries containing image-bearing objects showed great variation in the grave assemblages (Fig. 5.24). Only 5 out of the 18 graves contain beads, 4 graves contain GSHBs and three include wrist-clasps.

Brooches and beads seem to have been principal elements for graves containing image-carrying objects. The deposition of these items is likely to associate with the biological age or personhood, as well as status of the deceased. Largely, the objects carrying human imagery are brooches – which are generally found in mature female adult graves aged 35-45. Although Morningthorpe cemetery seems to have a strong repertoire of object types or a 'tradition' of burying certain object types with these individuals, the variation across the cemeteries implies that the deposition of these items does not necessarily reflect the age or personhood of the deceased. Rather, these items could have been gifts from the mourners, commemorating the dead through personal tokens. Grave 21 at Linton Heath, for instance, contains bones of a small animal that were placed by the left hand of the deceased (

Fig. 5.18 and Appendix 3, Assemblage, Table 1). Some individuals, however, were buried with an extraordinary display of grave goods, including objects made with silver such as grave 11 at Barrington. This individual was buried with beads, a GSHB, an iron knife, saucer brooches and a silver bracelet. Another example is grave 11 at Eriswell, Holywell Row. This contained a gold braid, silver bracelets, a silver finger ring and silver pendants, a strike-a-light and a weaving batten (Fig. 5.23). Two spiral elastic silver finger-rings were deposited in Grave 28 at Little Wilbraham (Appendix 3, Table 1) and similar to this grave 61 at Westgarth Gardens also contained a silver ring/ band (Appendix 3, Assemblage, Table 4).

The deposition of silver and gold items represents a remarkable investment in the burial of these individuals. The opulent display in burial 28 at Little Wilbraham could have been intentionally choreographed. Burial 28 was the first interment of three burials, which was followed by two double-burials as discussed above. The investment in this first or 'foundation' burial may have been an intentional exhibition of opulence, commemorating the deceased and playing a fundamental role in memory creation and the creation of an ancestor. In this way, it can be suggested that the mourners choreographed a powerful sense of place, which was later exploited by real or perceived 'descendants' of the founding individual. A similar example is evident at grave 11 at Eriswell. Lethbridge suggested this grave could have been for a child (Lethbridge 1931b, 1, 5, 8-9), which contrasts with the general convention of great-square headed brooches being associated with mature female adults. The deposition and display of a rich array of objects in this grave was not related to personhood or biological age, implying a similar staging of objects as Little Wilbraham for an emotive, social or political intention.

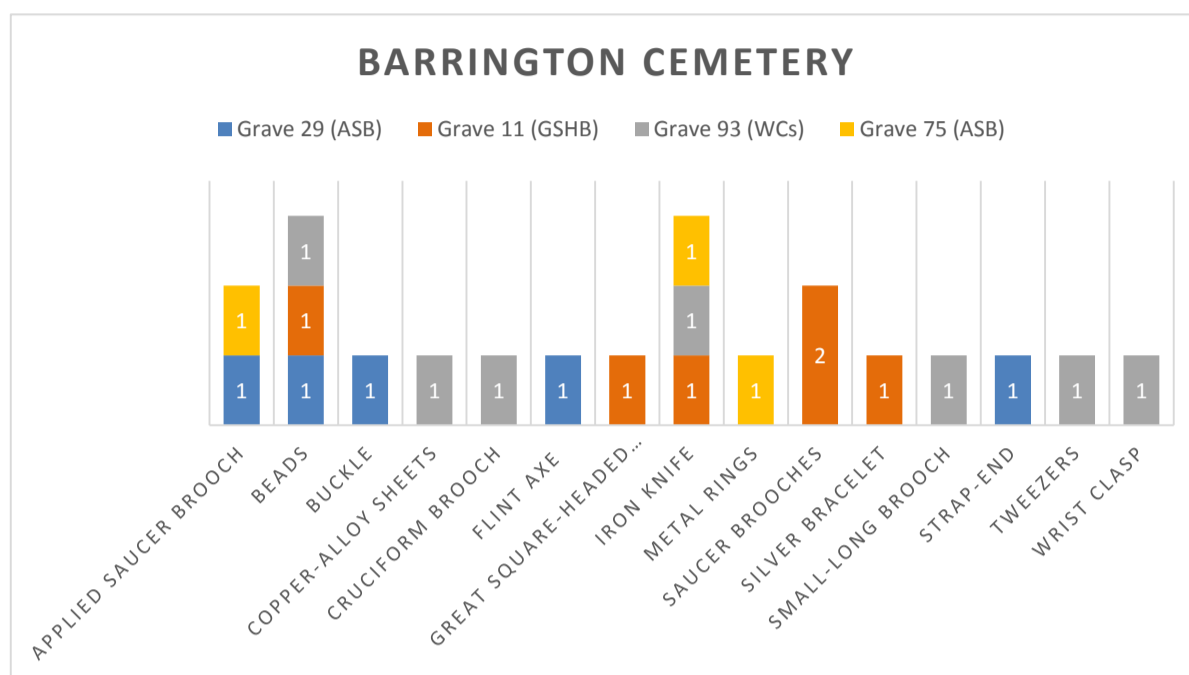


Fig. 5.17 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Barrington. ASB = applied saucer brooch, GSHB = great square-headed brooch and WC = wrist-clasp. The objects in brackets e.g. (ASB) after the grave number represent the object that carries human imagery in that burial.

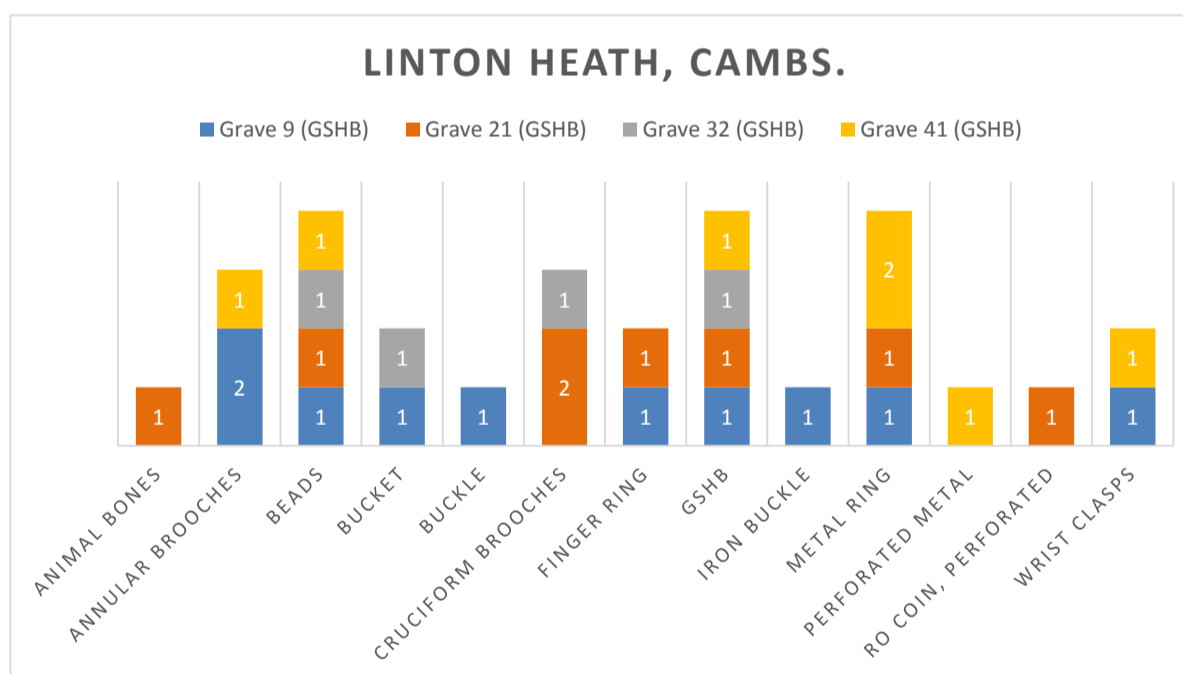


Fig. 5.18 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Linton Heath.

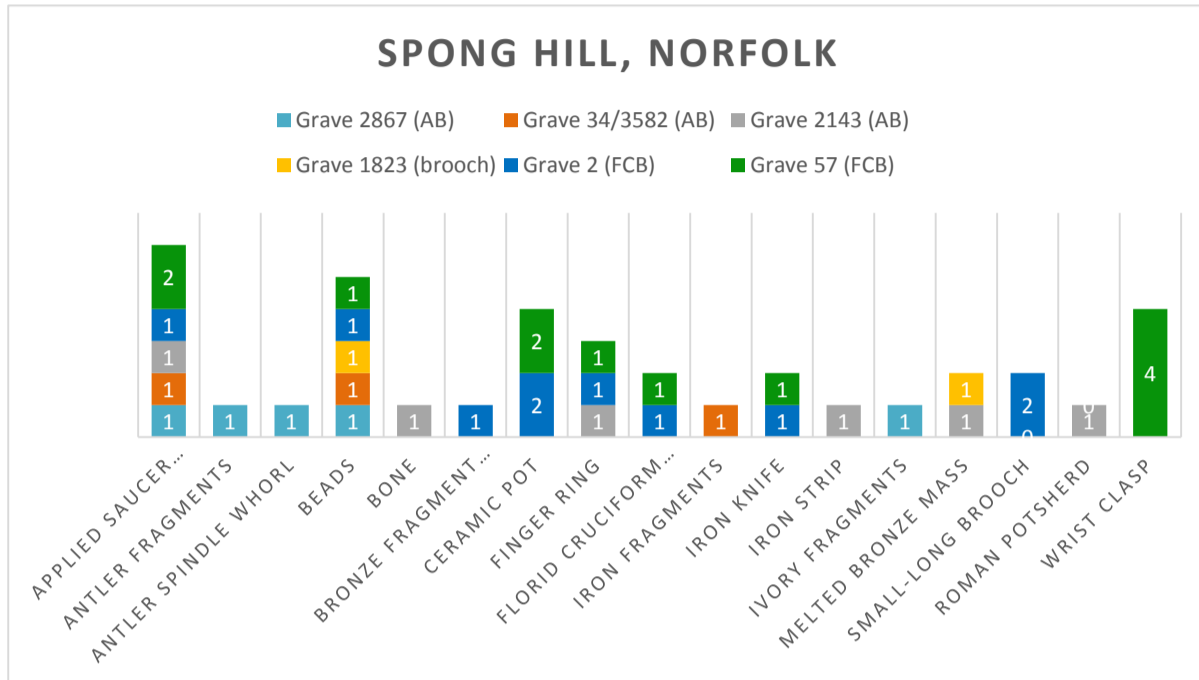


Figure 5.19 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Spong Hill.

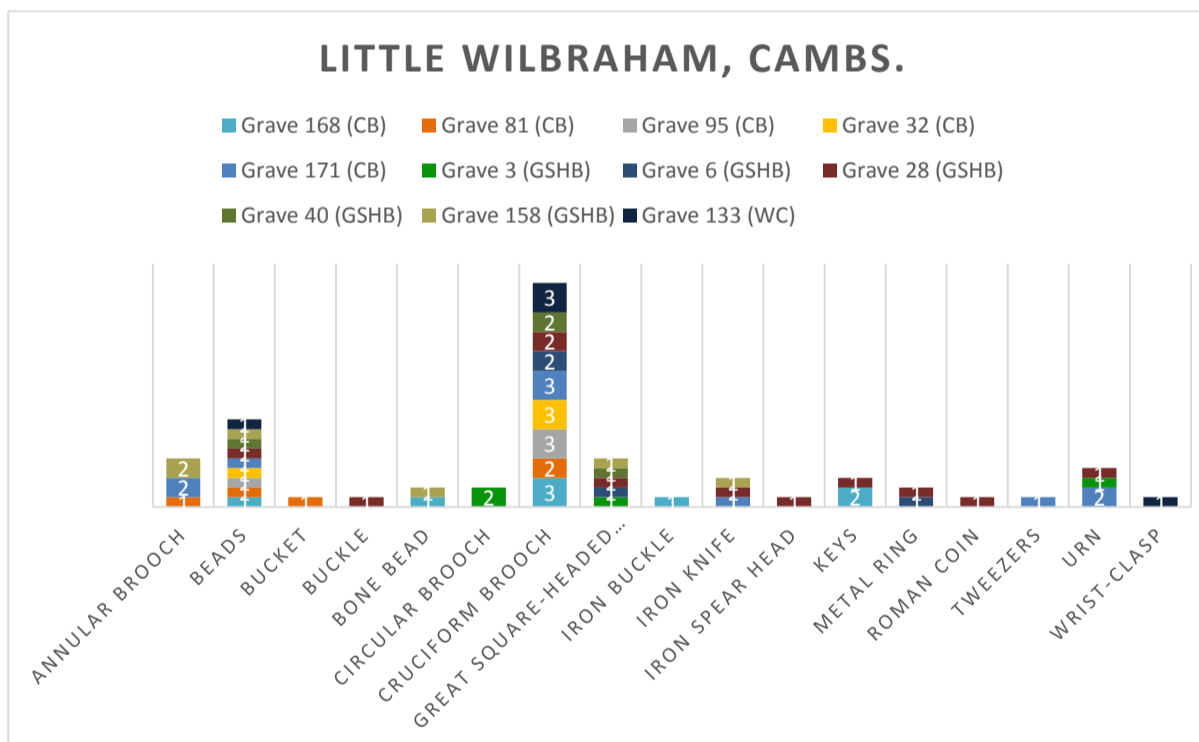


Fig. 5.20 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Little Wilbraham.

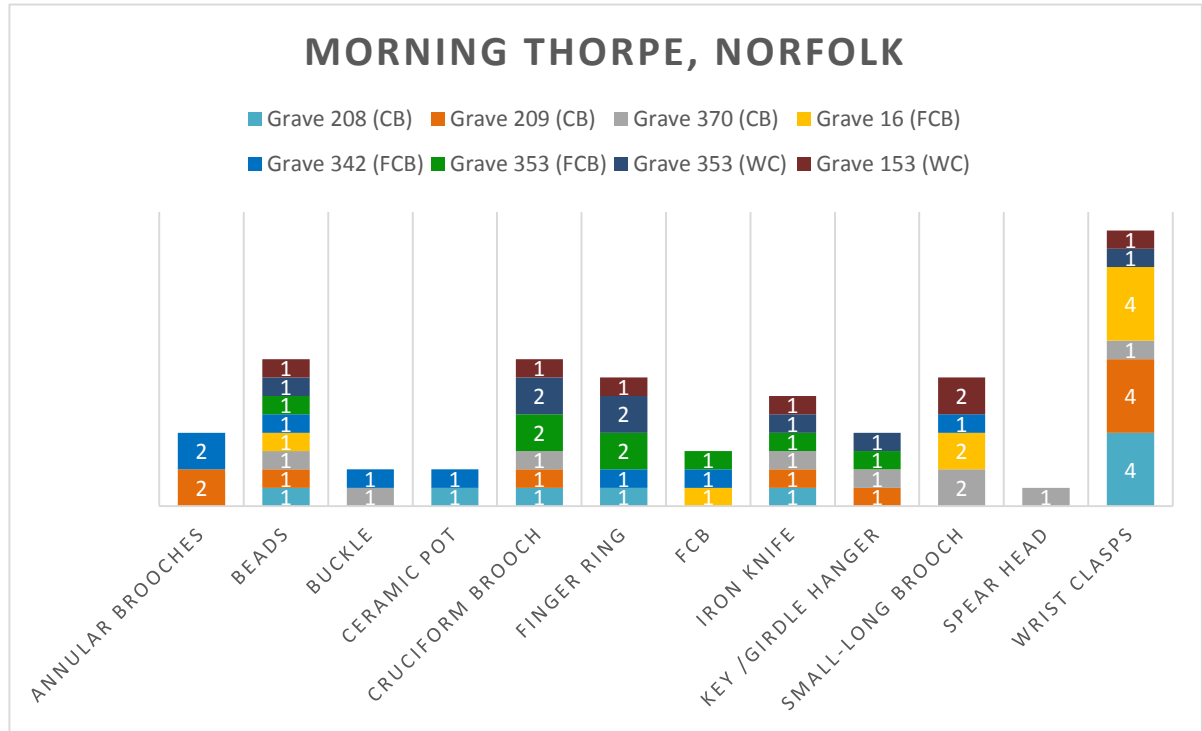


Figure 5.21 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Morning Thorpe, Norfolk. FCB = florid cruciform brooch.

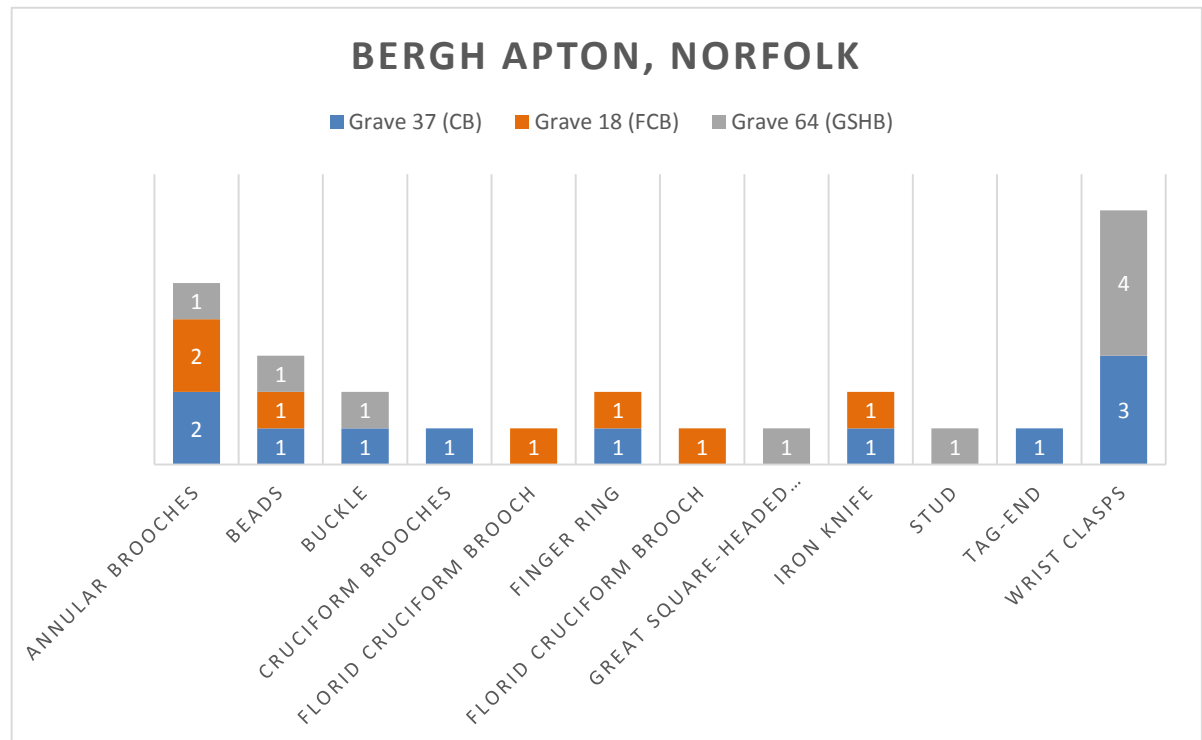


Fig. 5.22 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Bergh Apton, Norfolk.

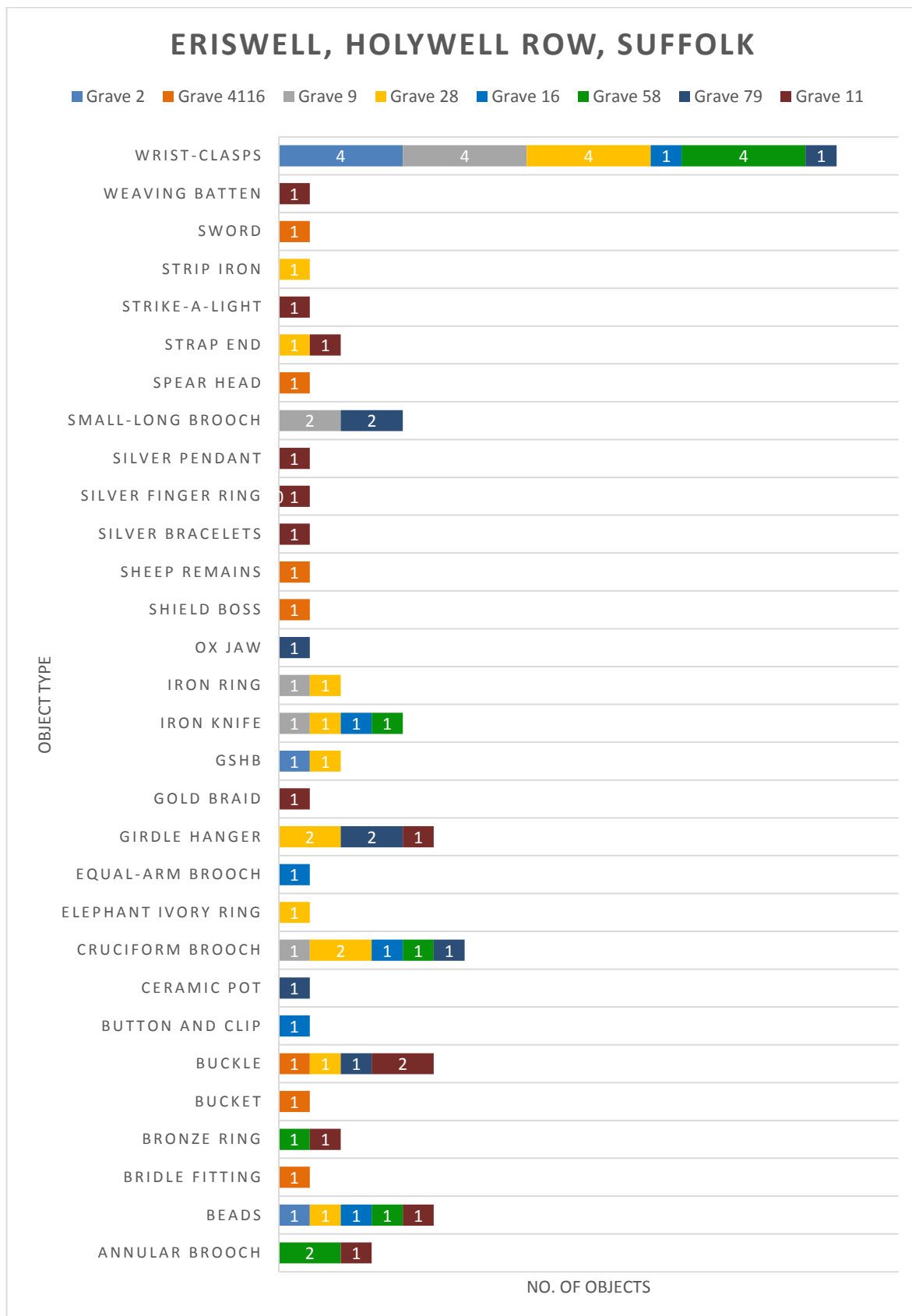


Fig. 5.23 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at Eriswell, Holywell Row. GSHB = great square-headed brooch.

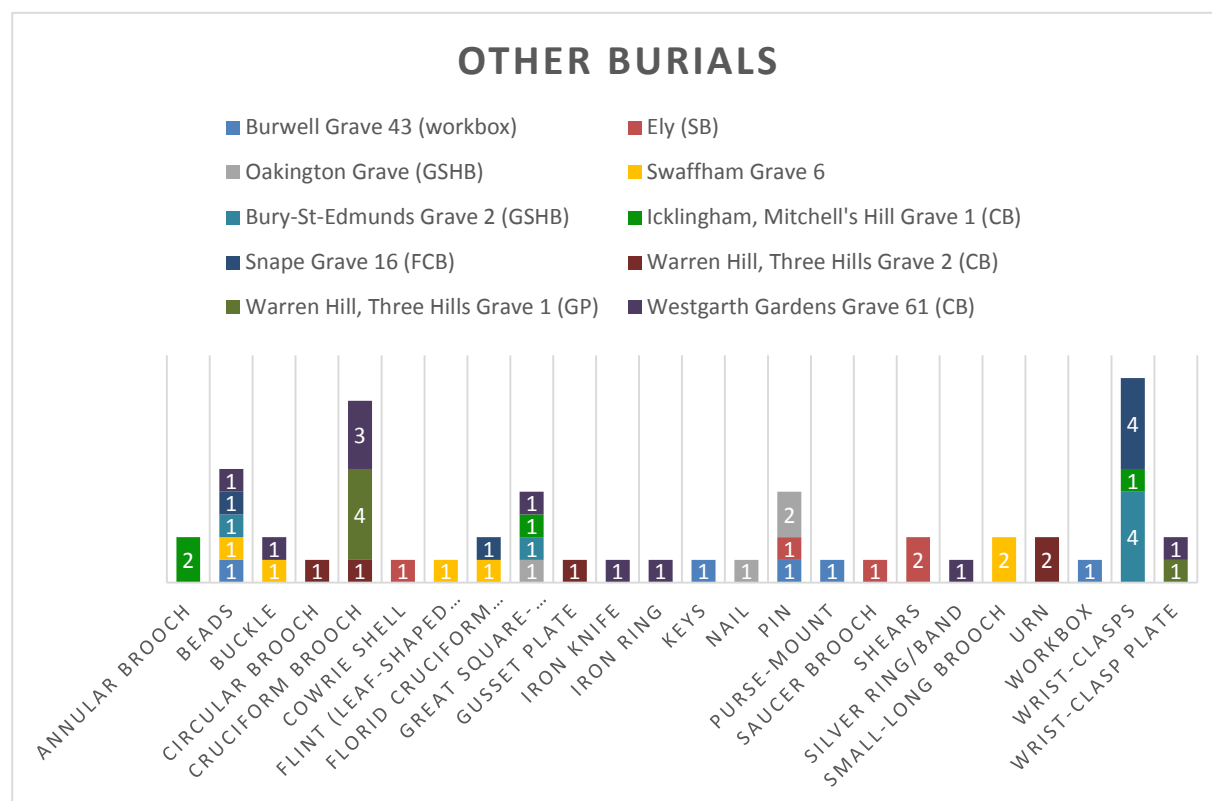


Fig. 5.24 Graph showing grave assemblages from graves with human imagery at all other relevant cemeteries.

5.8 WEAR/ REPAIR – AND CARE?

Despite the ‘rich’ grave furnishings or mortuary architecture, 18 image-carrying objects show signs of wear and repair – fully listed in Appendix 1.3. A clear example is a cruciform brooch from grave 50 at Sleaford cemetery. This object was repaired in antiquity. Below the bow area there is a rivet and metallic form that served to reattach the two halves and one lappet has been broken. Of significance for this grave, however, is that it is a stone lined ‘cist’ burial (Thomas 1887, 391). A florid cruciform brooch from grave 6 at Swaffham displays evidence of extensive repair. The side arms had been replaced and clumsily riveted on and the catch-plate was mended with a copper-alloy sheet (Hills and Wade-Martins 1976, 42). This object was buried in grave 6 with small-long brooches, a necklace of 4 glass and 7 amber beads strung between the small-long brooches, a small iron knife and a flint (leaf-shaped worked flake). Despite the much worn condition of the florid cruciform brooch, it seems to have been acceptable for burial. The worn condition of the object might relate to other broken objects interred in this cemetery. Hills and Wade-Martin report that weapons from male graves could have been intentionally broken before deposition in the grave (Hills and Wade-Martins 1976, 42) suggesting that the object was consciously put out of commission. Parallel to this, the florid cruciform brooch may have been in such a worn state that it could no longer function as a dress fitting and was taken out of circulation by its deposition in the grave. Brooches deposited in graves are often found in a similar condition, implying they remained of some symbolic value for the mortuary ritual. It cannot be determined if the brooches were repaired immediately before interring the body or several years before death, but there seems to be a shared symbolic symbiosis between a worn object taken out of commission and the death of an individual. The worn and broken GSHB is not likely to have belonged to the child in grave 11 at Holywell Row and its presence in this ostentatious mortuary display perhaps implies that the object was included in order to communicate a message or meaning.

In some instances human representations seem to have been recycled and it was not always done with the greatest of care. The bucket mount from Loveden Hill carries a male human figure that grips serpentine creatures. Fennell noted that the mount was probably an antique when buried and it is likely to have been used more than once – a nail had been ‘driven through

the human face of the motif' to fix it to the bucket (Fennell 1964, 138). This suggests that the image was not necessarily revered: supernatural repercussions of driving a nail through its face were not perceived, but it seems the display of a human motif was a significant 'aesthetic'.

5.9 AGE AND GENDER

Stoodley recognised that 'gender exerted a considerable influence on the construction of the lifecycle' stressing that age and gender cannot be examined separately (Stoodley 2000, 461). He recognised a connection between 'age-related variations in the assemblages' of dress fasteners/ jewellery for females and weaponry for males – emphasising that these two categories displayed 'gender-specific symbolism' (Stoodley 1999, 2000, 461). In this study 83 graves containing human representation were identified as female and 4 were identified as male graves. These graves were identified through well-preserved skeletons (when applicable) and gender-specific objects i.e. weapons indicating a male grave and fasteners/ jewellery indicating a female grave. No male graves containing human representation were recovered in Norfolk or Cambridgeshire (perhaps due to the biases of mortuary practice, see below p.111). Many cemetery reports only give general terms of 'adult' or 'adolescent' and do not provide a definition of what they mean by their use of the nomenclature. Only one male grave has been ascribed an age: a 'young adult' from Mound Seventeen at Sutton Hoo. Of the 17 female graves that have been ascribed an age: 6 are aged 35-45 years, 2 are mature adults, 6 are adults and 3 are adolescents or children

The majority of the deceased that were buried with objects carrying human imagery are adult and mature adult, with the exception of one burial containing an unsexed 'child' from grave 11 at Eriswell, Holywell Row (Suffolk); an eleven year old female from grave 22, Oakington (Cambridgeshire) and an 'adolescent' unsexed from grave 46, Cleatham (Lincolnshire). Crawford has argued that the 'culturally-constructed transitional date from childhood to adulthood' can be ascribed to '10 to 12 years of age, when some boys received weapon sets and some girls were buried with brooch sets and chatelaines' (Crawford 2007, 82). Stoodley also identified that the first 'key stage in the female lifecycle was reached at about 10-12 years' – which seems to relate to puberty and the ability to produce children (Stoodley 2000, 465). He recognised, however, that if grave goods relate to 'reproductive ability' then female graves would no longer be furnished by the time of menopause, which occurs 'sometime in the 40s and 50s' – but he found this was not so (Stoodley 2000, 465). Further, some individuals as young as 1-7 years old were buried with dress fasteners, jewellery and weaponry (Stoodley 2000, 460, Table 5). Any possible connections between image-carrying objects and the transition from childhood to adulthood cannot be clearly determined in this study as the number of adolescent graves containing such objects is minimal in this region. What is clear is that the majority of graves represent adult or mature individuals, paralleling Stoodley's findings that individuals buried with brooches, jewellery and weaponry were generally aged 20-40 years old (Stoodley 2000, Table 5). The minor number of adolescent/ child graves with opulent mortuary displays perhaps signifies a staged emulation of individuals buried with image-carrying objects within a 'rich' assemblage.

Changes over Time

In the sixth century, 83 female individuals were buried with image-carrying objects and out of the 17 dated female graves 82% are mature adults. Male graves with human image-carrying objects in the sixth century are rare – only 1 grave includes an image-carrying object (4116 at Eriswell). By the seventh century, however, predominantly male graves contain such image-carrying objects, with the exception of a female grave at Burwell containing a workbox carrying human figures. Mound Seventeen contains a 'young male' based on the skeletal remains, dated to AD 600-620 (Carver 1998b, 84; Carver and Fern 2005, 310). At some point around AD 615-635 Mound One is constructed, which is considered to be a male burial based on the grave assemblage (Carver and Fern 2005, 310). The barrow at Caenby is also considered as male burial based on the object

types and has been dated to c. AD 600 (Jarvis 1850, 36-44; Bruce-Mitford 1978, 206; Leahy 2007a, 95). The shift in the types of contexts human imagery is found in reflects the usage of Style I to Style II. Style I is largely carried on female accessories and Style II is predominantly carried on objects from high-status male barrow burials (Høilund Nielsen 1999; Dickinson 2009).

Issues with the Data

There are some possible issues with the data, including:

- The identification of biological sex

The biological sex of the individual was often based on grave assemblage, which is acceptable for this type of study as its main focus is objects deposited in burials and it is well recognised that key objects are gender-specific.

- The absence of male graves in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire

The lack of male graves from Norfolk is perhaps due to the dominant cremation rite in this region; it is possible that male graves may have contained objects carrying human imagery that simply have not survived the cremation process. Despite the hundreds of cremation graves at Spong Hill there was not one grave containing human representation that hinted at being a male grave, whereas 6 graves demonstrated female-specific objects carrying human imagery. No male graves containing human representation were recovered from Cambridgeshire. It seems the display of human imagery was restricted to male inhumation and horse graves in the sixth century, which continued into the early seventh century at Sutton Hoo.

- Discrepancies in terminology used in cemetery reports

There is some discrepancy in the terminology used to describe age in each of the cemetery reports – Fig. 5.25 illustrates the frequency that age-related terms were used in each cemetery report. This includes information from cemetery reports dating to from the late nineteenth century to the current era – discrepancies in the use of nomenclature are to be expected. General age

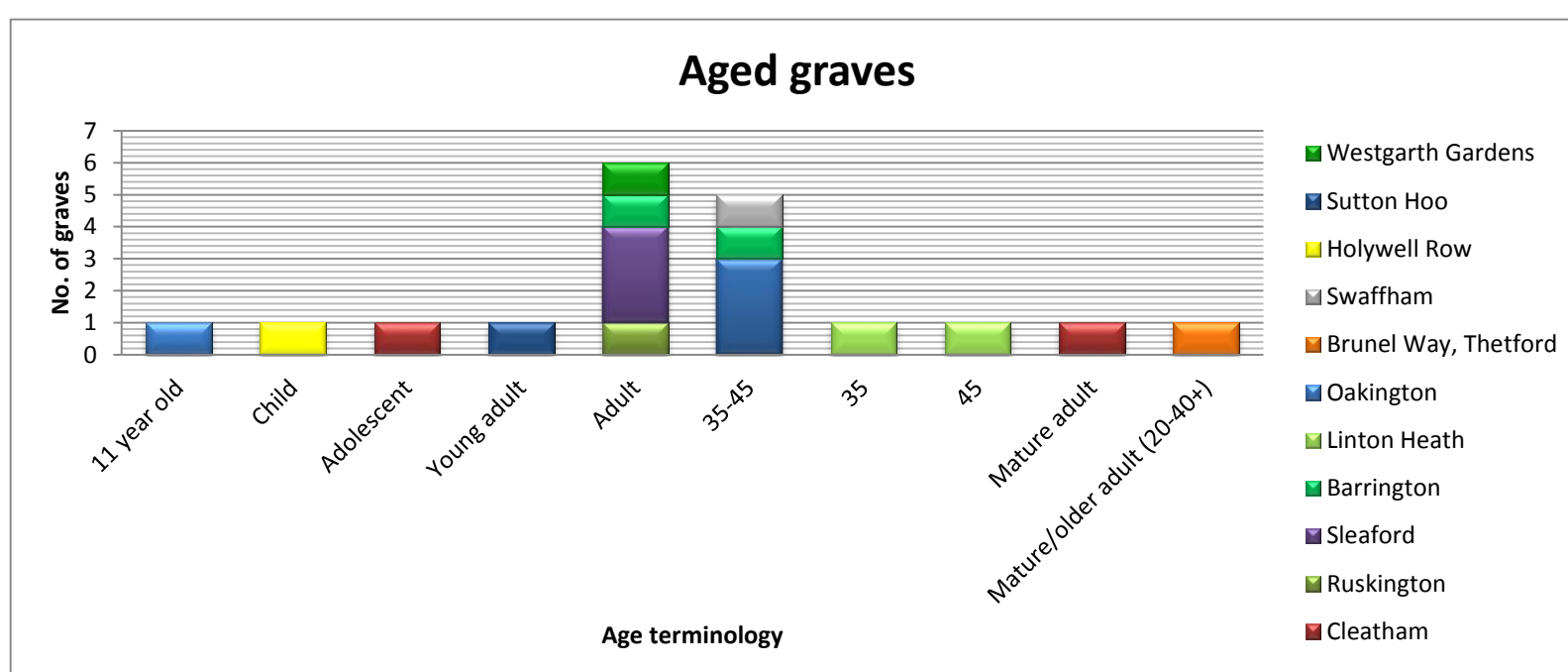


Fig. 5.25 Graph showing the frequency of age-related terminology

groups, however, can be suggested – including adolescent, adult and mature adult.

- Limited number of aged skeletons

Only 17 female graves were ascribed an age, which presents problems for identifying patterns across the regions and in terms of exploring the relationships between user, object and archaeological context. Despite the low frequency of sexed skeletons, the sample includes cemeteries from all regions in this study and thus provides an opportunity to review broader patterns. Despite these issues, human imagery is far more frequently found with female adults of a certain age and these graves are special in terms of grave assemblages and mortuary architecture.

Summary

There are key overarching trends:

- Increasing use of imagery on high-status items
- Diminishing occurrence of items in female graves

In the sixth century, 83 female individuals and 1 male individual were buried with image-carrying objects, many in particularly ‘rich’ assemblages or with special mortuary architecture and positioning in the cemetery. Furnished male and female inhumations were at their peak until the mid-sixth centuries (Bayliss et al. 2013, 477). By the seventh century, high-status male barrow burials were filled with ornate objects, including objects carrying human imagery. Only 1 female grave in the region in this time period contains human representation. The shift in the types of contexts in which human imagery is found, reflects the changing usage of Style I to Style II. Style I is largely carried on female accessories and the subsequent Style II is predominantly carried on objects from high-status male barrow burials (Høilund Nielsen 1999; Dickinson 2009). Although female furnished inhumation graves peak again in the 660s (Bayliss et al. 2013, 479), objects containing human representation in the region seem to have come to an end with the cessation of Style I, with the exception of the Burwell grave. Male and female furnished inhumation burials were abandoned by c. AD 660-670 (Bayliss et al. 2013, 464, 479). The end of the time frame under study (AD 750) is an artificial end resulting from depositional changes, but one that is used here by necessity.

5.10 OBJECTS WITHIN THE GRAVE

This section examines the positioning of objects on the body or within the grave (grave plans, where available, are presented in Appendix 3, Grave Plans, Figs. 1-6). Although the literature on burial has clearly identified that post-depositional body movement can affect the location and distribution of finds in a grave (Knüsel et al. 1996; Duda 2009) there is value, given the rarity of items from graves with imagery, in examining the context and position of items within the grave. Although funerary fashion varies considerably across regions and over time, there are general patterns in how items are found in the grave which usually relate to the way in which the deceased was dressed and adorned before the grave was closed.

Brooches in eastern England are largely found in pairs, with the exception being GSHBs. They are usually near the chest areas with other brooches and beads and are assumed to have been used to fasten garments and perhaps coverings around the corpse (Lucy 2000, 83-84). In this study, cruciform brooches were positioned or attached to the clothes or covering of the corpse at different angles: either with the footplate upwards (nearest to head), downwards (nearest to feet), or straight across and slantwise on the chest. Brooches that were positioned with the footplate looking upwards probably represent a peplos dress, while the downward looking footplate possibly represents a mantle-dress or cloak (Walton Rogers 2007, 153). Martin’s study

of cruciform brooches in Anglian England recognised that these objects were worn in largely three ways: as ‘pairs as *peplos* fasteners’, ‘singly as a cloak fastener’ and ‘in pairs as dual cloak fasteners’ (2011, 278).

In this corpus, the majority of GSHBs that carried human representation were found on the chest area, in line with previous literature on this object type (Hines 1997a, 283). The majority of florid cruciform, cruciform and GSHBs with human representation did not constitute one part of a pair and are often positioned in-between brooch pairs and beads. There are some exceptions, for example grave 41 at Linton Heath contains a GSHB positioned at the collar bone area with 64 beads and two pieces of perforated bronze and a single annular brooch is positioned on the left hip (Neville 1854, 105). Other exceptions include a pair of florid cruciform brooches in grave 2 at Spong Hill; both of these brooches carry human imagery (Appendix 3, Grave Plan, Fig. 3b). This individual, however, also had a pair of small-long brooches positioned on the chest area. Martin has suggested that single or pairs of cruciform/ florid cruciform brooches (that are positioned with pairs of brooches) represent a cloak that was fastened by cruciform/ florid cruciform brooches, which was ‘worn over the top of a *peplos* fastened by a pair of brooches on the shoulder’ (2011, 266). It is possible that the two pieces of ‘perforated bronze’ as noted by Neville in grave 41 at Linton Heath could have been pseudo-annular brooches that fastened a *peplos*-type garment.

In a number of cases, brooches with human imagery are placed in non-typical locations. An applied saucer brooch was recovered in a position between the legs and partly beneath the hips with four ivory, iron and copper-alloy rings and a knife, while another applied saucer brooch was found by the shoulder in grave 75 at Barrington (Cambridgeshire). This may imply the brooch was pinned to or concealed within a bag or pocket or perhaps deposited before the body. A GSHB from grave 32 at Linton Heath (Cambridgeshire) was found lying at the feet of the corpse. It is not likely that this grave was disturbed as other objects appear in typical positions (e.g. cruciform brooch near the head and 35 beads around the collar bone). The GSHB from grave 64 at Bergh Apton (Norfolk) is also positioned near the feet of a corpse. Grave 353 at Morningthorpe (Norfolk) has a burnt brooch fragment that carries an anthropomorphic face. This fragment and another 9 burnt fragments were found ‘below the surface of the grave’ (Green et al. 1987a, 132) and could indicate a ritualised scattering of burnt metalwork, or disturbance of older funerary activity (e.g. cremation).

The bridle fittings carrying human imagery from grave 4116 at Eriswell (Suffolk) were positioned on the horse's head. In Mound Seventeen, Sutton Hoo, the ‘human’ decorated bridle was not positioned on the horse (which was inhumed in an adjacent grave), but on the grave ledge with the rest of the bridle fittings. If there was a coffin present in the grave in Mound 1, the purse might have been positioned on top of the coffin with the sword, belt fitting, helmet, silver dishes and spoons. The helmet is suggested to have been positioned on top of the coffin above the head area. To a large extent the way in which such objects were placed implies they were positioned for visual effect, the use and display of human imagery may have been part of this spectacle.

It seems that human images were meant to be seen, forming part of the display of high status fittings and fixtures; this is paralleled by human images that were displayed on the outer garment (the cloak) of female individuals, making the object a highly visible part of the mortuary costume. In female graves, however, there is a greater specificity to their use. These items could have been pinned to or concealed within a bag or pocket (Hines 1997a, 286) or deposited before the body, positioned near the feet, and brooch fragments could even represent a ritualised scattering of burnt metalwork. These objects were not displayed as part of a costume ensemble or ‘in place as a dress-fastener’ (Hines 1997a, 286), but still played a role in mortuary ritual. These brooches were deliberately disassociated with the chest area, here the lower bodily areas are emphasised – including the feet and the legs/ hip. Perhaps the ornate brooches were placed in the grave by mourners as gifts or tokens in commemoration of the deceased. It is equally possible the unusual deposition reflects a GSHB that was attached to or placed on a cloak, which was folded and positioned on the lower half of the body. In this interpretation, the corpse may have been draped with dress accessories and garments at the graveside. A clear example of this process is evident in grave 75 at Barrington,

which contains a pair of applied saucer brooches. One brooch was concealed beneath the corpse, perhaps in a bag and positioned with a collection of other items. The other was positioned on the shoulder. Might a single applied saucer brooch have fastened a garment or could this item have been superficially positioned to give the impression of fastening garments? Whatever the interpretation, this provides excellent evidence of choice and design on the part of the mourners in the positioning of objects in the grave and on the body.

5.11 CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that this type of imagery is rare when compared to the broad quantity of metallic finds and grave goods in these regions. The majority of late fifth- to sixth-century objects that carry human representational art are brooches, mounts and wrist-clasps. In the seventh century, objects carrying human representational art included a new range of objects – such as an ear-scoop from Coddenham, the workbox from Burwell and the helmet from Sutton Hoo. It is clear that decorated objects bearing human representation, alongside other grave goods, were used within mortuary displays to perhaps reflect the status and role of individuals. Predominantly, female adults aged c. 35-45 were buried with such image-carrying objects, frequently buried with richer grave assemblages. It can be suggested that these individuals were of significant or special status to the mourners – signalled by heavy investment in the graves and repeated use of the plots after these individuals had been interred. This can be used to suggest that human imagery, given its rarity, was significant and its deployment was restricted to a limited number of special individuals. In some instances adolescents were commemorated in a similar way, suggesting that the display of items in the grave was not always related to biological age. Female graves containing human representation were often distributed between groups, no more than one individual per group plot were buried with these objects. There is evidence to suggest that in some cases the individuals that were interred with ornate anthropomorphic imagery were positioned in association with other graves, perhaps signalling their high-status or connections to a social or kin group. In one instance the anthropomorphic imagery can be argued to enhance the mortuary display and perhaps was intended to contribute to the memory-making activity of the funerary performance. Only three cemeteries demonstrated male graves that contained human image-carrying objects: a sixth-century male barrow burial at Loveden Hill, a sixth-century male inhumation and horse burial at Eriswell and three seventh century barrow burials at Caenby and Sutton Hoo. The horse and man buried at Eriswell, continued to have an important presence within this community cemetery after their interment: their graves are surrounded by later infant interments. Similar to this, Mound Seventeen was an early ‘founder’ grave at the Sutton Hoo burial ground.

Human representation is predominantly carried on female dress fasteners (brooches and wrist-clasps). These objects bearing human images were largely positioned (or used) on the outer garment i.e. the cloak, forming a key part of the visual spectacle of the funerary costume and mortuary scene. This is also reflected in Mound One at Sutton Hoo in which the human image-carrying objects were positioned around the body. Dress fasteners were sometimes placed in unusual spots in the grave, which could represent tokens or gifts from the mourners to commemorate the deceased or even folded cloaks placed on the body.

CHAPTER 6

Object, Art and the Human Body

In the literature review, I suggested that the study of material culture requires the problematizing of bodily surfaces and boundaries and one way of exploring this might be to examine the role an object played within social performances (see Chapter 2 pp.41-43). This approach is relevant here. The majority of human and animal representations are carried upon two feminine object types: brooches and wrist-clasps. It has been acknowledged that the use of brooches broadly correlates with age and some kind of biologically defined, female personhood (Stoodley 1999). The significance of this object type and the interrelationship between object, art and the individual has to date received limited attention. This approach has implications for the function of an object, the use of human imagery and the status and role of the maker, patron and/ or user within the community. Here I investigate the symbolic role and agency of art and human representation in the sixth century and explore in what manner the human body is portrayed and what kind of societal context such imagery has. This chapter explores how human designs are manipulated through structural and skeuomorphic motifs and investigate why such visual expressions were manufactured. I examine the interrelationship between the designs, the display of images and the object function and inferences drawn on how these three aspects might relate to the role of the user through close examination of the objects. Comparative material is used here including: poetry and prose describing the inter-media connections between metalworking technologies and weaving and historical sources that describe the role of powerful women as weavers in this time period. In this way the connection between art, practice and performance is explained.

6.1 BODY IMAGERY AND PRODUCTION

John Hines suggests that communities or individuals probably had the technology to reproduce identical brooches, but pairs of the GSHBs remain rare in early Anglo-Saxon England, a situation mirrored for relief brooches in Scandinavia (Hines 1997a, 207). In his corpus Hines noted that some of these brooches could not be placed easily within one typological group or another, describing these objects as 'individualistic' (Hines 1997a, 201). Even in some brooch groups there are very few objects: Group V, for example, contains only three (Hines 1997a, 58). GSHBs carry a far greater degree of variability of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic designs compared to other brooch types (e.g. cruciform, annular and button brooches) and these objects rarely appear in mortuary contexts in pairs. Hines' study of the distribution revealed that some groups share similar motifs, but there is no discernible pattern in the distribution of these motifs (Hines 1997a). The individualism or distinctiveness of the designs is relevant here perhaps, reinforcing the idea that these objects were produced as individual creations, the highly elaborate and intricate designs chosen by the user, patron or maker to signal specific concepts and ideas.

Labels such as 'carriers' or 'bearers' (Martin 2011) notably removes any notion that female individuals were social performers within society, rather it implies that they were passive and without authority over the designs ornamented upon their accessories or over the dress fittings and jewellery they wore. The design variations also indicate that images were not developed as a common 'badge' or 'insignia' (Højlund Nielsen 1997, 1999; Pesch 2007, 382-3), but were perhaps devised and manufactured with the individual in mind.

In the past two decades, there has been a call for an exploration of the purpose and meaning of the 'hermeneutic decoration' of early Anglo-Saxon art (Webster 2003, 15) and one means of this is to examine the connection between the

representational designs and their positioning upon the object. This sub-section examines the interrelationship between human faces and the object. Often these faces are located in close association with the object's structural frame, giving the impression that the frames and faces act as a unified concept and design. One example of this can be clearly seen on a GSHB from Lakenheath. This object carries a human head and a frame runs through the face and intentionally separates the mouth (Figure 6.3g, p.120). The structural elements of the object design thus seem to have played a key role in the display and presentation of human images upon objects since the emergence of Style I in early Anglo-Saxon England (Webster 2003, 15). This observation is by no means novel. Since the mid-twentieth century, the structural aspects of an object have been consistently recognised as important design elements (Leeds 1949, 14; Leigh 1980, 403; Hines 1997a, 44; Webster 2012a, 15-17). Webster, for example, identified that the animal and human images upon early Anglo-Saxon objects were 'compartmentalized': a phenomenon that was quite 'different from anything in comparable late Roman or contemporary Celtic personal equipment' (Webster 2003, 14). The framing devices have been considered to facilitate the 'control and articulation' of complex imagery (Webster 2003, 14) and are thus recognised as important facets in the reading of the designs, but are themselves also 'an image of boundaries set and defined, a visual statement of order in the cosmos' (Webster 2003, 14).

Ribs and Frames

Largely, GSHBs carry prominent structural frames and associated human faces. The structural bar of eight of the GSHBs examined in this study appears to imitate the shape of a needle (Figs. 6.1-6.2). One end is oval in shape and the other is a narrow rectilinear form. Taking the GSHB from Little Wilbraham (grave 3) as an example in Fig. 6.1c, the middle bar or 'needle' runs from the headplate to the footplate and is punctuated by several heads, appearing to exit and enter the heads. This motif is also reflected in seven other examples (Figs. 6.1-6.2). It is possible that this design is an intentional skeuomorphic motif. Human heads are also connected by the ribs and enclosed and penetrated by the structural frames (Figure 6.3c, d, f, g, i). As can be seen in Figure 6.3a, b and e there are similar motifs portrayed upon wrist-clasps and gusset plates, although it is rare to find such prominent structural frames on wrist-clasps (Hines 1993, 4-66 wrist-clasp Class A-B). Hines particularly noted that the clasps from grave 153 at Morningthorpe are unique (Hines 1993, 73). Similar wrist-clasps have since been reported to the PAS, but even so this type of clasp remains quite rare (e.g. Breckland, Norfolk PAS: LVPL-F15235). What connects this clasp with other wrist-clasps and objects is the Style I decoration and how the motifs are positioned on the object. Human heads are positioned so that the heads appear to punctuate the structural rib of the clasp, a design also carried on GSHBs.

If we interpret the rib as creating margins and bounded space (Kristoffersen 2012) the positioning of the human head emphasises the interconnections via the ribs between animal figures and the human head. On two clasps from Morningthorpe (Norfolk) the human head is ensnared by the structural rib; the head is not fully within or outside the enclosed frame. Figure 6.4a illustrates this ensnarement and the way in which the mouth appears to exude a triangular form and Figure 6.4b illustrates the impression that the moustache might also represent the beaks of two zoomorphic creatures. These beaked creatures might also be read as having human profile heads, the exuded shape appears to form part of the profile head, see Figure 6.4c. Another pair of helmeted, zoomorphic creatures are rendered along the outside of the frame. These heads might represent anthropomorphic brows, eyes and nose-guard or headdress; while the beaks might also represent drooping moustaches. Figure 6.4d illustrates the beaks which are not sinuously attached to the face – there is a small gap between the beaks/ moustaches and the nose-guard. These images thus act as double entendre – the image is open to two interpretations.

The heads, for example, upon the headplate inner panel of the GSHBs that are penetrated by the frame might represent moustaches (Figure 6.3f-i). Bars and facial hair are clearly portrayed on some brooches, for example Fig. 6.1a illustrates the footplate bar of the GSHB from Barrington (Z21289) that seems to penetrate a human face and expands to form a beard of another head. Moustaches, however, are often clearly rendered in curled, upturned or downward styles (see Vol. 2, Figs. 11.1-

11.4) and the rectilinear frames are standard structural aspects of the GSHB (Hines 1997a, 5 fig. 1). It seems more likely that these frames segment the face, separating the mouth from the rest of the face. Analogous to these segmented faces are human images that give the appearance of having been split. Fig. 6.2b illustrates the detail of two human faces that appear to be stretched and prised apart by the footplate bar (or the skeuomorphic needle motif) on a GSHB from Linton Heath (grave 21).

Clasps

There are other skeuomorphic designs that might relate to fastening technologies, including clasping. The clasp motif was recently discussed by Leslie Webster. Webster identified that the silver-gilt square-headed brooch from Chessell Down (Isle of Wight) carried several human heads that were ‘clasped by a horizontal bar below it’ (Webster 2012a, 15-17, fig. 1). These clasp-like motifs are not restricted to brooches from the Isle of Wight, but were also rendered upon a collection of brooches in eastern England. Often, the clasp motif appears to fasten a human head with a pair of raptor heads, groups of figures (e.g. a pendant from Suffolk) and pairs of animal heads, see Figure 6.5a. These clasp-like designs also feature on brooches without human imagery; the clasps in these examples appear to bind the needle-like motif (e.g. the GSHB from West Stow, CUMAA 1909.420). Figure 6.5a-h illustrates the way in which this design and its positioning at the narrowest part of the footplate bar gives the impression that these horizontal bands squeeze the structural frame of this brooch. Webster recognised that the animal and human heads give the impression that they are ‘yoked together in downward- or upward-curving configurations’ and she later identified that these heads were ‘clasped by a horizontal bar’ (Webster 2003, 15, 2012a, 15-17). Leeds, Leigh, Hines and Webster all identified shapes that may imitate a ‘tie-bar’, ‘tie-bands’ or a ‘clasp’ and that appear near human faces and animals (Leeds 1949, 14; Leigh 1980, 402-403; Hines 1997a, 44; Webster 2012a, 15-17). Although this design is also carried upon Scandinavian brooches (for example

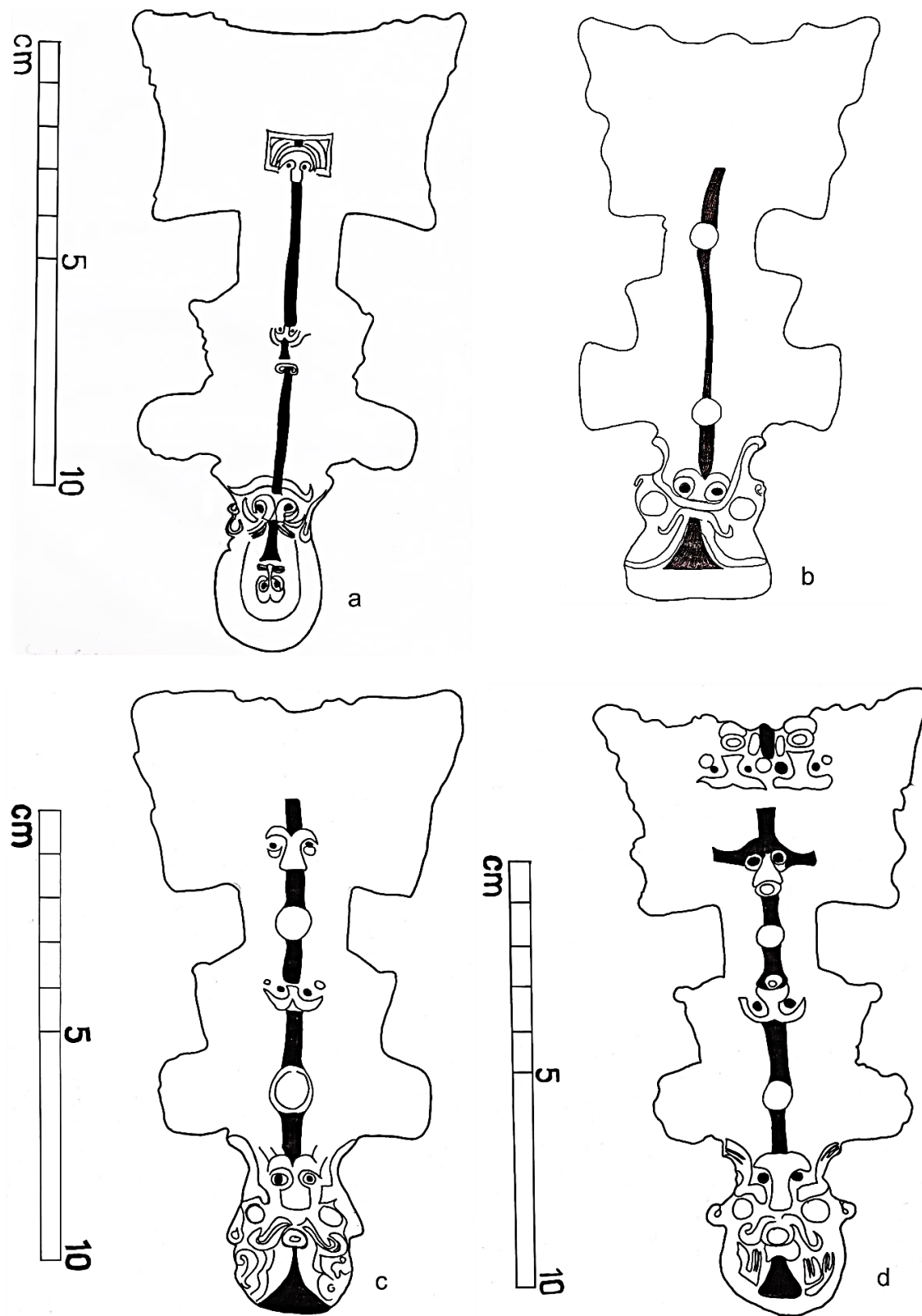


Fig. 6.1 GSHBs with needle-like imagery (a) Barrington, Cambridgeshire (Z21289) (b) Harston, Cambridgeshire (PAS FAHG-7B3D73) (c) Little Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire (Grave 3, 1948.1319) (d) Little Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire (Grave 40). Drawings by author.

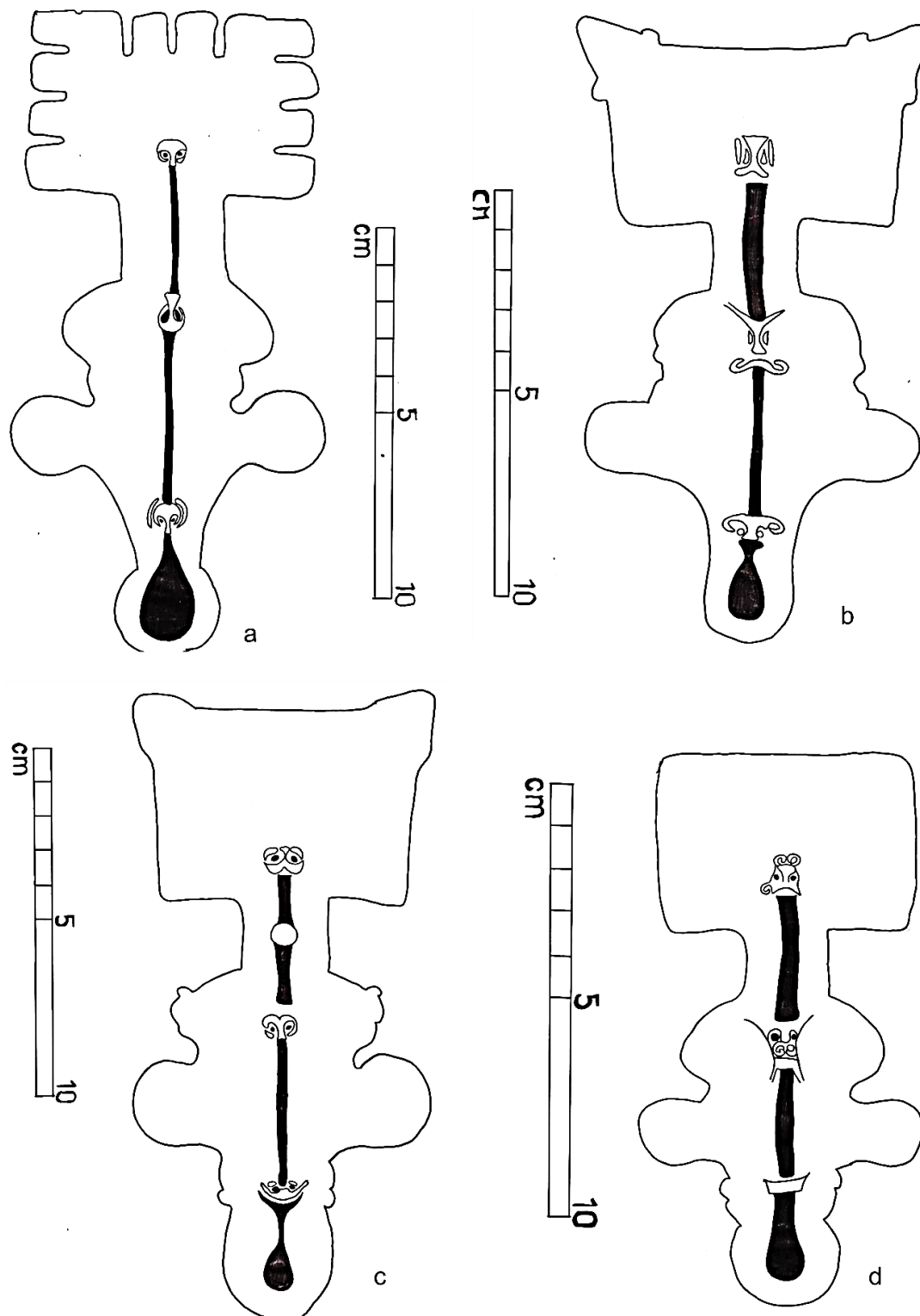


Fig. 6.2 GSHBs with needle-like imagery (a) Haslingfield/ Harlton Cambridgeshire (1914.125) (b) Linton Heath, Cambridgeshire (Grave 21) (c) Linton Heath, Cambridgeshire (Grave 32) (d) Little Wilbraham, Cambridgeshire (Grave 158). Drawings by author.



Figure 6.3 Human heads connected by the ribs and enclosed and penetrated by the structural frames of an object (a-b) Wrist-clasp from Morning Thorpe (grave 153) above are DandE, below are Gi and Gii (c) GSHB from Linton Heath (grave 21) (d) Haslingfield/ Harlton (1914.125) (e) Wrist-clasp from North Lopham (NHER 30359) (f) GSHB from Baston, Lincolnshire (g) GSHB from Lakenheath (h) GSHB from Lackford (Urn 50) (i) GSHB from Oakington (Taylor, Duhig and Hines 1998, 87).

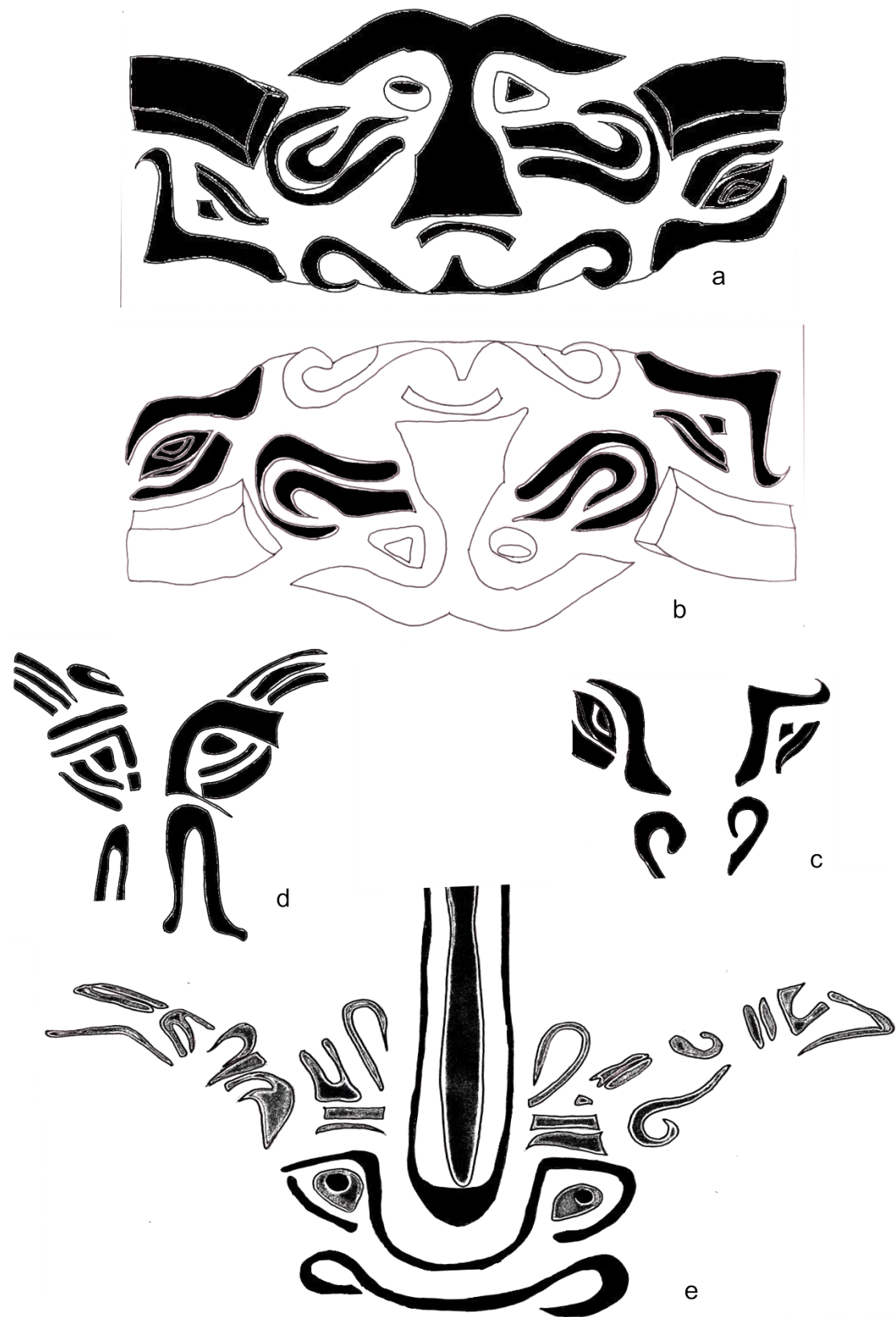


Figure 6.4 Double entendre and split-representation carried on objects from Morning Thorpe and Linton Heath (a-d) Detail of a wrist-clasp Gi-ii from grave 154, Morning Thorpe (Norfolk) (e) detail of a great square-headed brooch from grave 21, Linton Heath (Cambridgeshire). Drawings by author, not to scale.

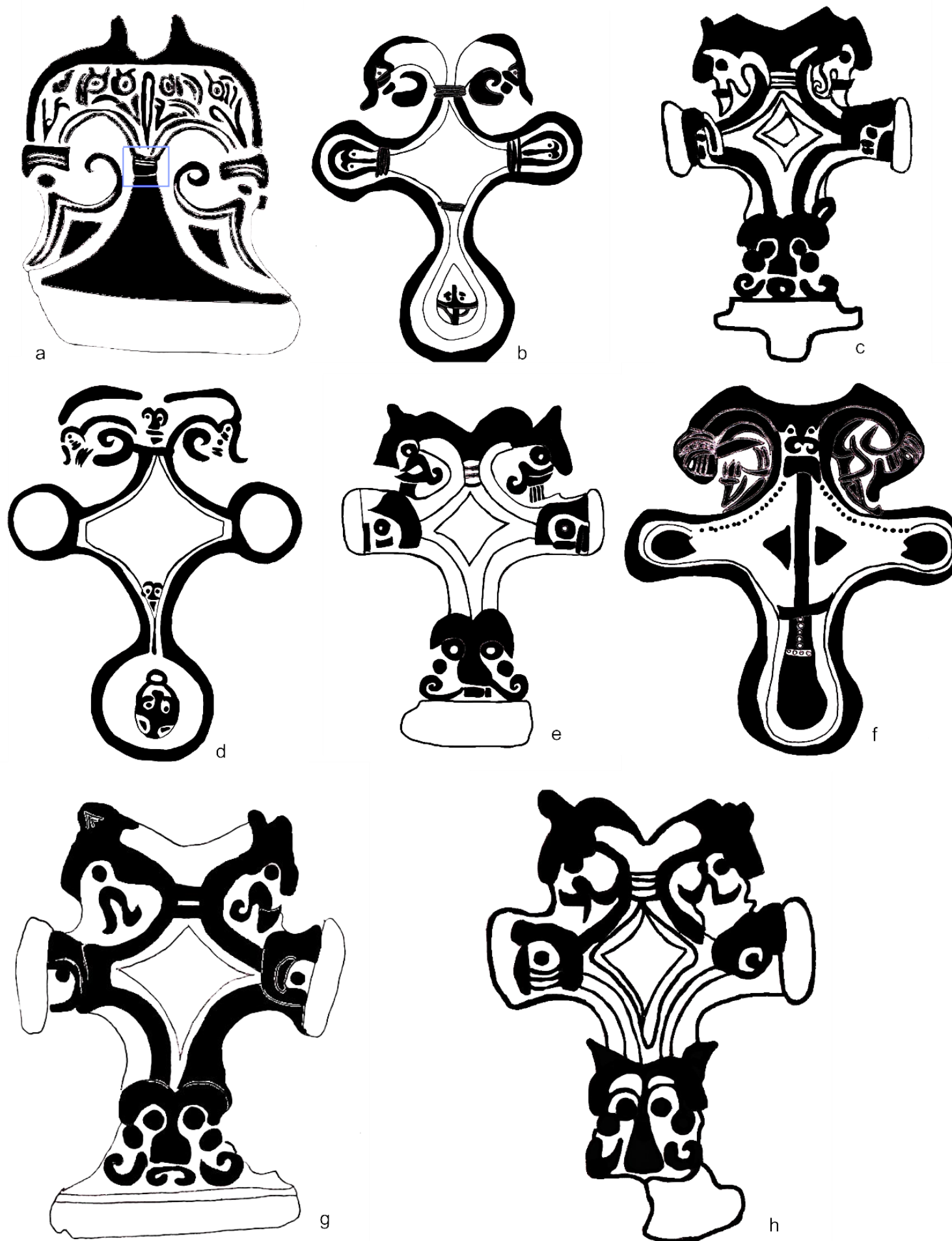


Figure 6.5 Clasp-like designs (a) Pendant from Suffolk (1909.410) (b) GSHB from Tuddenham (c) GSHB from Lakenheath (Z21357, 1899.86) (d) GSHB from Linton Heath (Grave 9, 1948.1520) (e) GSHB from Linton Heath (Grave 41, 1948.1569) (f) GSHB from Little Wilbraham (Grave158, 1938.1316) (g) GSHB from Barrington (Grave 11, Z21315) (h) GSHB from St John's, Cambridge. Drawings by author, not to scale.

the relief brooch from Jaeren, Rogaland B3045) it appears to have no antecedent. These designs appear to tether the motifs, which like the suggested needle imagery, link to the idea of pinning the human faces onto the object, but also tie into ideas of textile manufacture, weaving and even perhaps taxidermy. Although rarer, similar or related motifs are present in this corpus. Fig. 6.6a-c illustrates a probable sword mount from Aldborough (Norfolk) that carries a human head. Fig. 6.6c is a schematic illustration of the head that is surrounded by a frame and a small bar on the top of its head appears to 'tug' on the structure of the object. This motif is extremely rare, as is this object type in early Anglo-Saxon England. This design could also be a skeuomorph of a technique such as suspension or pinning. A comparable design might be found on the figurine from Carlton Colville (Suffolk) that has a loop for suspension (Fig. 6.6d). Similar to the design on the mount from Aldborough, a GSHB from Barrington (Cambridgeshire, Z21289) carries a comparable motif of a structural bar positioned above a human head that appears to tug on the headplate inner panel (Fig. 6.6e-f).

In the seventh century, Style I was superseded by Style II (Dickinson 2009, 1), but structural frames were still used to give order to Style II: the Sutton Hoo buckle, for example, carries 'patrolling border animals' (Webster 2003, 16). Frames and the structuring of the visual message of imagery continued in Christian art (Webster 2012, 17). The use of faces with issuing shapes ceased in the seventh century, at the same time that cruciform and GSHBs disappeared from circulation. Human faces are, however, embedded within Style II designs. Human heads, for example, form the clips along the rim of drinking horns from Sutton Hoo (Evans 2008, 65). Clasps or clips are also portrayed in the form of anthropomorphic faces along the shield board. (Fig. 6.6g-h) illustrates these heads and the heads in the form of drinking horn clips. These designs could be associated with the depiction of human heads presented upon brooches as if fixed or suspended. The portrayal of human heads represented in close association with structural aspects of the object remained important too. In Mound One, Sutton Hoo, a series of anthropomorphic heads was used to decorate the shield boss, which is ornamented with writhing Style II zoomorphic interlaces that extend from the anthropomorphic heads. Objects carrying this type of anthropomorphic decoration are extremely rare, to date appearing only in the Mound One assemblage.

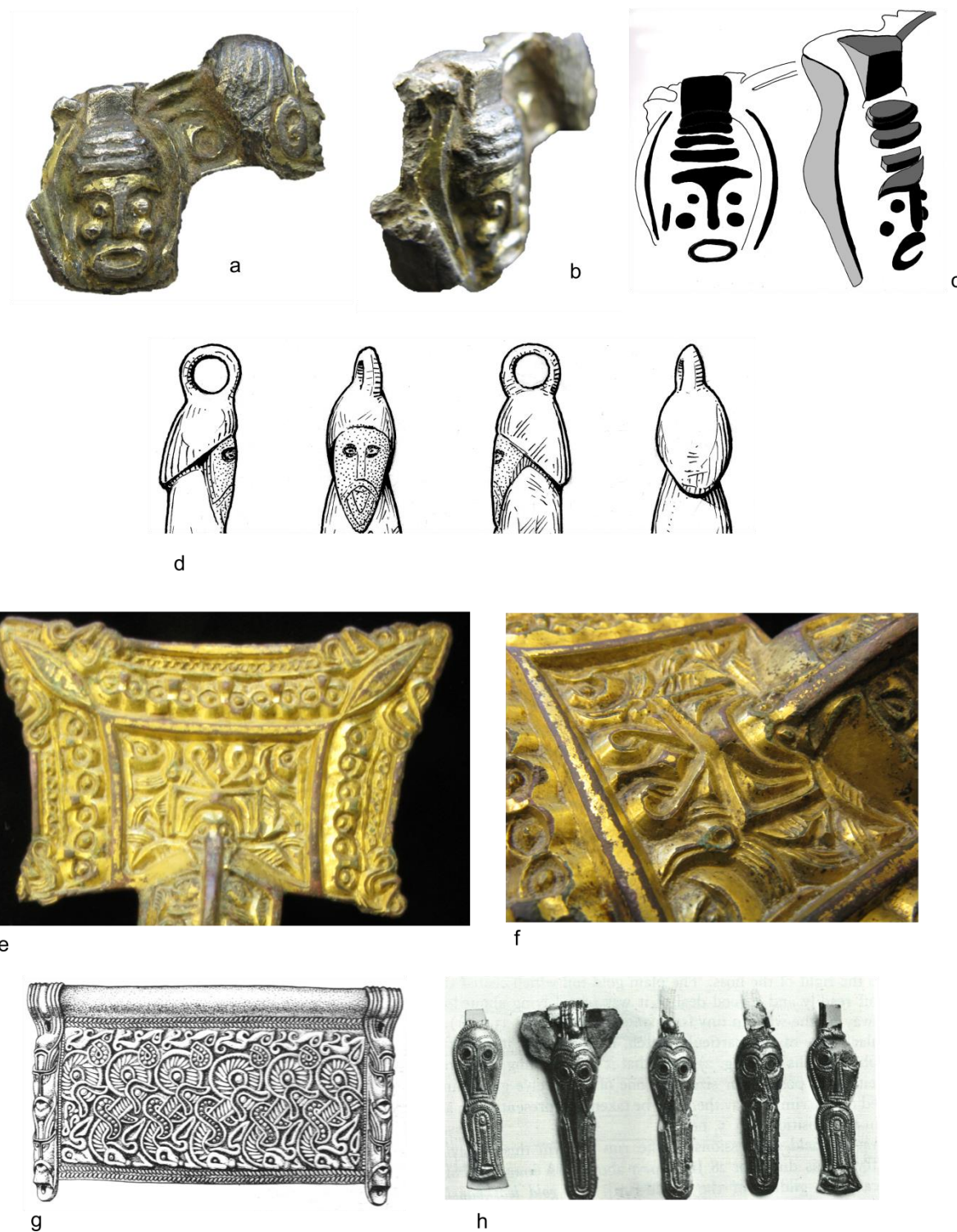


Fig. 6.6 Skeuomorphic imagery (a-c) Mount from Aldborough (Norfolk) (d) Figurine from Carlton Colville (Suffolk) (e-f) GSHB from Barrington (Z21289) (g) heads in the form of drinking horn clips from Mound One, Sutton Hoo (Suffolk) (Evans 2009, 66 Fig. 51) (h) heads in the form of shield clips from Mound One, Sutton Hoo ((Bruce-Mitford 1978, 59, fig. 49). Drawing (B-C) by author, not to scale.

Casting

The structural components of brooches have been recognised as having some symbolic and cosmological significance (Webster 2003, 2012a), but there has been no exploration of the connection between the positioning of human heads on the object and the image content (i.e. the attributes of the motif). Perhaps an examination of metalworking techniques might illuminate further the possible implications of image positioning on brooches. Lamm and Lundström in fact note that the ridges of the framework that follow the contours of an object might have assisted in the distribution of heat and the rapid spread of molten metal (Lamm and Lundström 1976, 22). Human heads too punctuate the ribs, ridges and frames of brooches. The positioning of these might have been prosaic, located so that molten metal would run along the ribs and fill the heads. It seems likely however, that a conceptual

link existed between human faces and the technological processes of casting and making these objects. The heads might have allowed the molten metal to pool and in turn, via these heads the liquid spews out through the mouth or nose. This could have assisted the distribution of molten metal evenly around the mould. This would have happened out of sight in the mould, a technique known and perhaps communicated by the smith.

Not everyone within a community would have owned or have been buried with these ornate objects, as the burial record clearly demonstrates. Human imagery is not carried upon every object either: human faces, for example, do not appear on every GSHB or wrist-clasp (Hines 1993, 1997a). Anthropomorphic images were selectively used and it can be suggested that conceptual notions of the metalworking technology might have influenced the types of designs deployed. The use of ribs and frames could reflect the needs of the smith, but also the conceptual idea too of metalworking as an agent, reflecting the perceptions of the smith and user. Perhaps the concept of an object ‘coming into being’ is relevant here too (Kristoffersen 2000a; Lindstrøm and Kristoffersen 2001; Kristoffersen 2010). The flow of molten metal via the ribs and frames in essence acts as the life force of the object and the ribs, bars and frames help this distribution of the fluid substance like an artery and gives skeletal-like structural integrity to the object. This body metaphor is perhaps emphasised through the inclusion of human heads. Anthropomorphic images played a role in the object’s coming into being and in turn, the object brought the motif into being too. It is clear that this motif of heads ‘spewing’ triangular shapes is one of the most repeated motifs within sixth-century iconography of cruciform and GSHBs. The significance of the display of these motifs is particularly emphasised in the accentuation of their high relief, their positioning on terminal ends and their large size compared to other anthropomorphic or zoomorphic designs carried on the same brooch.

Sociological perspectives on art note that changes in human representational art do not happen without cause, but are generally stirred by ‘associated changes in people’s bodily capacities and the corporeal modes through which they express the world’ (Shilling 2008, 148). Why, therefore, might these early Anglo-Saxon motifs of faces and structural frames have been depicted and why were they connected by the artist in the detailed and elaborate designs that adorned only a percentage of the overall corpus? In this time period, Late Roman and contemporary Scandinavian art provided creative resources for the artists involved in reworking the human image (Hines 1984; Webster 2003, 14). Alongside this, we accept that early Anglo-Saxon designs also represented ‘latent ideas about the construct of nature and man’s place in it’ (Webster 2003, 15). A cue can be taken from the recent investigation of metalworking in Iron Age Britain by Melanie Giles. She proposed that ‘the distinctive technology associated with ironworking made new kinds of social relations *thinkable*: literally forging new connections between areas of Iron Age life’ (Giles 2007, 409). Ironworking in Iron Age societies might have been perceived in close association with other social processes such as ‘agricultural cultivation and human procreation’ (Giles 2007, 396). In early Anglo-Saxon England non-ferrous metalworking was a distinctive technology that communicated ideas and ideology through the imagery it carried and the manufacturing technique, forging connecting between people. The imagery – such as the ribs, frames, clasps and anthropomorphic heads – may well have associated with other technologies such as weaving and bodily concepts. As will be explored below, historical documents imply a shared concept between metalworking and weaving technologies.

Two things could be present in these designs:

- a. Direct skeuomorphs of parallel object designs in textile and leather.
- b. A conceptual link between the technologies.

Here it may be that the reworking of the human image in metal prompted people to think in new ways about the body and its capacity for communicating ideas within visual displays. It also signals a strong sense that material and processes had their own agency and life force.

6.2 IMAGERY AND FUNCTION

The relationship between the heads and the ribs, frames and clasp motifs and the manufacturing process all signal ways in which the human body was intellectualised in early Anglo-Saxon art. Taking the next step, this sub-section examines the function of the object types that carried the majority of human designs and the positioning of designs on the object to explore the role and agency of imagery. The function of an object might imply the types of social context it may have been worn in and how the designs might have performed.

Clasping

Wrist-clasps decorated with Style I are largely found in the ‘Anglian’ regions of England in East Anglia, are female dress fittings and seem to relate to high-status individuals (Hines 1993, 2013a). This object type probably has its origins in Scandinavia (Hines 1984, 1993, 2013a) in the later fifth century there is a ‘dramatic shift’ in whom was buried with these items – wrist-clasps were no longer the preserve of male graves, but were ‘adopted wholesale into the ‘inventory women’s dress accessories’ (Hines 2013a, 23). This change in Scandinavia was ‘amplified in England’ - wrist-clasps were exclusively deposited in female graves (Hines 2013a, 24). Wrist-clasps made physical labour difficult, thus these wrist-clasps will have been worn by those who did not conduct such physical labour or they might have been worn at special events in which the user displayed the clasps (Owen-Crocker 2010, 59). The wrist-clasps were stitched or riveted onto the costume, enabling the closing of an opening in the garment (Owen-Crocker 2010, 57). Securing objects to the costume is particularly emphasised by some brooches and catch-plates that were bent over so that the object is ‘clenched shut and could not easily be opened’ (Hines 1993, 76, 1997a, 281). The object thus became semi-permanently fastened to the costume, the garment could be pulled off and on over the head (Hines 1997a, 281).

The clasps in this study are those decorated with human representational art. The majority of these fall under Hines’ Class C, Form C3. Hines recognised that this type of wrist-clasps are ‘quite homogenous’ and are found in East Anglia, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire (Hines 1993, 67-73). Upon Form C3 clasps, the human heads embellish the clasping mechanism (Morningthorpe grave 353, Holywell Row graves 98 and 16 and fragment pieces from North Lopham HER 30359, Bawdeswell NCM 1944.244, Quidenham PAS NMS-954C64 and Kenninghall BM 1883,0702.9). The clasping mechanisms – the hook and eye – are often embellished with human heads that are enclosed by rectilinear frame and zoomorphic creatures fill the surrounding borders of the clasp (Fig. 6.7). Thus, the human heads are closely associated with the binding mechanism of the clasp. When the cuffs or long sleeved garments were secured, the wearer (or mourner) could have viewed the vivid and figurative head images. On other forms of clasps the human heads are positioned so that they look towards the fastening mechanism (Barrington grave 93).

The act of fastening would have provoked the user to view the image. In this instance when the clasp is fastened the image transforms from two anthropomorphic/ zoomorphic profile creatures to an *en-face* head (Figure 6.3a-b and Figure 6.4d-c). When the clasp is unsecured the user is ‘splitting’ the image, creating two profile heads, thus the user is making and un-making bodies. Within the frame is a pair of zoomorphic creatures that are less-distinguishable, with stylised and disarticulated body-parts. Above the human head is a square panel that contains a zoomorphic being with a raised limb. The chip-carving technique alludes to movement through its 3-dimensional quality (Speake 1980) and also the image content that depicts a human-animal hybrid hints at the notion of transformation. We might link the concept of the body in transformation with the symbolism of ‘fastening’ wrist-clasps and brooches, but it is perhaps precisely the confluence of bodies in flux and the

metaphor of fastening that strikes an emotive and sensory experience. The wrist-clasps are connected in terms of form and style to Western Norway (Hines 1984, 1993). Hines has proposed that this type of decoration might not have derived from Scandinavia, but it may have arrived from elsewhere and influenced wrist-clasp iconography in Norway (Hines 1993). The interplay between the object, function and the decoration, hints at the use of clasps as a mnemonic symbol of the transformative powers of animals and humans and a means to intellectualise the human body, ideas which may have been limited to a number of individuals.

This transformative cosmology may be reflected in other human designs carried upon brooches and wrist-clasps. A series of GSHBs, applied saucer brooches, wrist-clasps and gusset plates carry human faces with small lupine-like ears (see Vol. 2, Fig 12.1). We might consider these small pointed forms as horns, based on the evidence for bird horned-headresses in the seventh-century, but these triangular shapes share a closer likeness with the human figures in wolf costume from Scandinavia and Continental Europe that have small pointed ears (Høilund Nielsen 2001, fig. 6). This stylistic parallel indicates that lupine ears are more probable. In Norse mythology, the wolf Fafnir was bound which temporarily prevented him from devouring Odin (Pluskowski 2006, 156; Wanner 2010, 4). There is strong metaphorical association between the bindings of the wolf and the function of the fitting to bind together the sleeve garment. The lupine imagery or characteristics and their connotations of devouring (or biting) and binding strongly aligns with the object's materiality – the clasping mechanism that “bites” to bind the cuffs. The wolf-human faces thus seem to parallel the pinning mechanism that bites and bind clothes to the body.

Fastening

The small, but repeated clasp motifs hint at the concept and analogy of fastening and the ‘clasp’ image shares iconicity with wrist-clasps and fittings prevalent in early Anglo-Saxon England. The other skeuomorphic designs – the needle and clasp-like imagery provide additional glimpses into the significance of binding in Anglo-Saxon consciousness. The structural aspects of the objects might imitate threads. This concept is reinforced by the needle-like motif that seems to weave in and out of the object. The position of the heads and the way in which the bar is rendered in association with the facial aspects gives the impression that the heads are skewered by the needle or are being woven into the brooch. The heads, skeuomorphic designs and structural aspects work together. The clasping motifs on other object could indicate a need to display control of the human imagery in a way that implies references to textiles or woven material. If this culturally-situated analogy is accepted it is important to recognise that the structural parts fastened the designs to the object, then the human heads are bound through their orifices – the nose and mouth.

Containing

By the seventh century full-bodied figures and 3-dimensional imagery were rare, but found on objects that are connected to bodily display, management and healing. Knappett and others have suggested that the metaphor of containment has resonances with the body. The ‘skin is a boundary between inside and outside’ (Knappett et al. 2010, 593, 596). Late Anglo-Saxon texts reveal how the chest was perceived as a container – as a ‘wordhoard’ or ‘chest of words’ (Waugh 1995, 361). It is possible that the depiction of the full-bodied figures upon objects that functioned as containers might relate to a shift in perceptions of the body and an emerging conception of the body as a form of containment. The sixth-century ceramic chairperson from Spong Hill that sits upon a probable urn-lid would have kept cremated remains safely within the urn (Hills 1980). Although this object is unique, it provides an interesting conceptual link between a full-bodied figure and the notion of containment and curation.

Vessels and buckets



Fig. 6.7 Wrist-clasps carrying human heads that are surrounded by a frame: (a) Holywell Row, Suffolk Grave 16 (b) Holywell Row, Suffolk Grave 98 (c) Quidenham, Norfolk PAS NMS-954C64 (not to scale) (d) Morningthorpe, Norfolk Grave 353, f-g (e) North Lopham HER 30359 (not to scale) (f) Kenninghall, Norfolk BM 1883,0702.9 (not to scale). Drawings by author.

and other objects had the capability to contain and were deposited within mortuary contexts from the sixth century onwards (Cook 2004, 43). In East Anglia, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire however, such items were not decorated with the human form in the sixth century or have not survived. A new repertoire of objects in the late sixth and seventh century had the capacity to hold items: the belt-buckle from Mound One at Sutton Hoo for example and workboxes from female graves (Werner 1985, 2-4; Hills 2011, 16-17). There are four objects from two graves that carry this type of imagery and all were found within high-status male, barrow burials (Mound One, Sutton Hoo; Loveden Hill). A silver-foil fragment of a full-bodied figure was also found in the male barrow burial at Caenby (Lincolnshire) that shares a similar motif as the ceremonial figures from the Sutton

Hoo helmet, indicating that it might have once formed part of a similar object type. There is no particular correspondence between these items, other than they all have the capacity to contain: a purse, a bucket and a helmet made to contain the head.

The final item, a workbox carrying an image of a male figure slaying a dragon comes from a high-status female grave from Burwell (Lethbridge 1931a, 53-7; Ellis Davidson 1950, 180). The workboxes of the seventh century closely relate in style and typology to boxes that contained relics in the Christian world from Continental Europe (Hills 2011, 16). Their diminutive size gives them the capacity to act as small and private objects that may have been worn on the body or attached to clothes (Hills 2011, 16). The concept of containment was thus still prevalent in the seventh century and may by this time have been associated with Christian relics and reliquaries. Meaney suggested that the size of workboxes enabled the containment of small items and noted the small threads found within the boxes could have ‘religious or magic powers’ (Meaney 1981, 188; Hills 2011, 16). She argued that these items could be closely associated with healing the body and textile-work (Meaney 1981, 188). The threads found in the box, for example, might have helped to ‘tie madder and plantain around the head for headache’ and herbs might have been contained for ‘medicinal properties’ – in this capacity Meaney argued that these objects functioned as ‘symbolic first aid boxes’ (Meaney 1981, 188).

A number of other workboxes have been found within early Anglo-Saxon England, but they rarely carry Style II art and the full-bodied human form. These boxes also often carry Christian crosses (Meaney 1981, 188). The connection of workboxes to healing is possible and in this context the human iconography upon the Burwell box could symbolically connect the contents to curing and defending the body from ailments. Other objects of the same date– such as the earscoop from Coddanham – might also relate to bodily protection. Earscoops were in use from the fifth century and might have functioned as tools used to clean out the ears and nose, but they might also have functioned as applicators for medicine or cosmetics (Williams 2007c, 69-70). What is distinctive about the Coddanham earscoop is that a human head forms the handle (see Vol. 2, Fig. 12.3f). This object stylistically dates to the seventh century, paralleling a male figurine from Friston and Carlton Colville in Suffolk and on the workbox from Burwell in Cambridgeshire that shares in similar tapering cap, a comparable shaped head and the absent neck (see Vol. 2, Fig. 12.3a, d-e). The earscoop does not have an archaeological context and so it cannot be assigned as the equipment of a male or female individual; what can be suggested, is that this is another object bearing the human form that might have once had a medicinal function. A figurine from Breach Downs in Kent is hollow and the head is suggested to be a pin head and the body a phial (Evison 1965a, 216). The object may have once held fluid substances, again perhaps for medicinal purposes (Brundle 2013, 209).

Protecting the body from illness is a form of bodily curation, but not the only one. The drinking bottle and horns from Sutton Hoo carry human heads and these items embody concepts of ceremonious sharing through feasting and drinking, binding and securing of social relationships and networks. 3-dimensional full-bodied human forms were produced in the era human imagery was predominantly rendered upon receptacles and items used for the holding or curation of materials and liquids. In this way, bodily integrity and wholeness emerged during a time of increased deposition of receptacles. This marks a distinct shift from the earlier production of anthropomorphic images that were almost exclusively carried upon female fastening and clasping equipment. It is possible that this signals re-conceptualisation of the body by elite individuals or groups, which is further explored below. The representation of the human body in full and in three-dimensions could suggest an intellectualisation of the body and recognition of bodily boundedness and a need to express this through representational art, in the conceptualisation of the body as a container and vessel.

6.3 IMAGERY AND THE USER

It has been long-established that brooches found upon the body might indicate the varied layers of garment worn by the deceased. We assume such practices reflect the ways in which garments were worn in life or at the very least a conception of

dress relevant to the living – but projected onto the dead. Martin has recently proposed that the cumulative layering of garments might have ‘screened off the body, making its movements and gesticulations less and less obvious or at least only visible under layers of textile’ (Martin 2011, 289). This layering of garments has been argued as the screening off of the female physiognomy (Martin 2011, 290). The male costume, in contrast, exposed more of the physical form with trousers or leggings and a shorter sleeved tunic or jacket; the male body was thus afforded with full visibility of bodily movement (Walton Rogers 2007, 199-214; Owen-Crocker 2010, 104-127; Martin 2011, 290). It has been noted that the weight of these brooches would have made these outfits rather ‘awkward and uncomfortable’ to wear (Hines 1997a, 293). The heaviness of the GSHB, the role of the brooch in keeping substantial cloaks in place and the signs of wear and repair that are often found upon these objects all point to such items having a special, rather than everyday use – perhaps saved up for ceremonial and major occasions.

It is, however, difficult to imagine that despite the layering of garments and heaviness of the object, the individual did not possess the ability to gesticulate. Re-enactors who have worn this Anglian costume with brooches, beads and wrist-clasps have observed that the fastening of the GSHB in the centre of the chest does not wholly restrict bodily movement. The arms and hands are free to work from the elbow (Rosie Wilkin *pers. comm*). While the layering of garments might have screened off the body, it is equally possible that the layered garments might have added dramatic expression to the body schema. The layering of garments would have transformed the corporeal appearances, size and capacities of the body, affecting the gesture and praxeology of the wearer. Gestural expressions evident in late fifth to sixth-century art are few and limited, perhaps reflecting the gesticulations imposed on movement by the elaborate costume evident in burials of the same time-frame.

Wrist-clasps would have enhanced the expressive body, bolstering the performative gesticulations of the individual. The underarm would need to be exposed; gestures of gift-giving and serving ale (Enright 1996, 85) would have made such gestures pronounced. The body of the clasps are made from copper-alloy or silver and the ‘clasp or clasp-parts could be gilded, silvered or tinned, or even given a niello inlay’ (Hines 1993, 85) giving these objects a shiny, glittering quality. Brooches are associated with the chest area a significant part of the body in Anglo-Saxon consciousness. As also described above, late Anglo-Saxon texts show the chest was perceived as the ‘wordhoard’ or ‘chest of words’ (Waugh 1995, 361). It was thought that mental activity occurred in enclosed bodily spaces, usually localised in or around the ‘*heorte*, or in the *breost*’ (Lockett 2011, 63). These ideas are further explored in Chapter 7, but this interplay between body and object and the historical textual sources, suggest that the hands and the chest were symbolically-charged parts of the body. It is possible that the brooches and wrist-clasp fittings may have played an important role in display and gestural expression.

Weaving and Binding Metaphors

Carrie Roy argued that the inherent qualities of Viking period metalwork, woodwork and textile processes were associated with a conceived notion of controlling or binding ‘supernatural entities with or through object for apotropaic purposes’ (Roy 2009, 178). The types of objects she examines includes multi-coloured felt from Hedeby, birch burr bowls from a Viking-period grave in Årby, Sweden and a ninth-century sword from the North Arhus farm in Telemark (Roy 2009, 180, 191, 198). Roy argues that the pattern-welded blade, burr bowls and felt, for example, are constituted by knotted or intertwined fibres, strands and strips (Roy 2009, 178). The images, patterns, techniques, processes, materials and motif composition, application and positioning on Norse artefacts convey ‘meaningful and versatile expression of fastening or controlling forces and the supernatural’: suggesting that images of binding and the technologies used to create the object might have helped to ward off or control supernatural forces (Roy 2009, 179)

The practice of weaving was part of everyday domestic life (Walton Rogers 2007, 47) and seemed to have served as a powerful metaphor in later Anglo-Saxon literature (Flint 1991, 226-239). Weaving metaphors were written into textual

accounts such as *Beowulf* 697, 'wigspeda gewiofu' (web of fate) (Bek-Pedersen 2009, 6). In the Exeter Riddles, *Riddle 56* a weaving loom was associated with 'battle, torture and execution' (Cavell 2011, 36):

'I was inside there where I saw a wooden object wounding a certain struggling creature, the wood turning; it received battle-wounds, deep gashes. Darts were woeful to that creature and the wood skilfully bound fast. One of its feet were held fixed, the other endured affliction, leapt into the air, sometimes near the land. A tree, hung about by leaves, was near to that bright thing [which] stood there, I saw the leavings of those arrows, carried out onto the floor to my lord, where the warriors drank' (trans. Cavell 2011, 31).

The terms and metaphor all allude to warfare and torture. The loom is analogous (in appearance and symbolic role) to the rack and the gallows (Cavell 2011, 37-38). Cavell pointed out that while *Riddle 56* describes the loom as associated with war and violence, other riddles such as *Riddle 35* uses the analogy of the 'domestic task of weaving' to describe war objects (Cavell 2011, 41):

'The west plain, wonderfully cold, bore me out of its womb. I know in my mind I was not wrought of wool from fleeces, with hair through great skill. I am not wound about with a weft, nor do I have a warp, nor does thread resound in me through threatening attack, nor does a whirring shuttle glide upon me, nor must the beater strike me anywhere. The worms which adorn fine yellow cloth with trappings did not weave me together with the skills of the fates. Nevertheless widely over the earth someone calls me a joyful garment for warriors. Say with true words, clever with skilful thoughts, with very wise words, what this garment is' (Cavell 2011, 41)

Weaving, binding and braiding terms were thus commonly employed in Old English poetry. Of particular significance is that when 'weaving and binding is applied to objects, they are invariably objects of high status' (Cavell 2011, 41-2). High-status metalwork is 'woven, bound or braided and this includes everything from interwoven mail-coats, to wire-wound swords and helmets' (Cavell 2011, 42). In Anglo-Saxon literature the metal-smith was attributed with the powers of sewing and weaving. In *Beowulf* 406, for example, there is a description of a shiny mail-coat – *searonet* 'armour-net' *seowed* 'sewn' *smibes* 'smith' *orpancum* 'skill' and this sentence has been translated as 'an armour-net sewn by the skills of the smith' (Fulk et al. 2008, 16; Cavell 2011, 42).

In Nordic texts, speaking, reciting and determining were thus connected to textile work (Bek-Pedersen 2011, 150). Historical sources describe the significance of speech during the weaving process and that female figures spoke poetry as they wove. Bek-Pedersen suggests that the 'woven textile came before the written text and weaving before writing' and both 'can be forms of narrative' (Bek-Pedersen 2011, 150). Pedersen conjectures that 'pictorial textile representation would have been a specifically feminine mode of narrative expression in Old Norse culture, as verbal-poetry was a male-dominated form of expression' (Bek-Pedersen 2011, 154). In this way, threading the needle and embroidering pictures is a 'speech-less, wordless type of storytelling' (Bek-Pedersen 2011, 155). Speech during the weaving process also carries a supernatural significance. In the ninth century, the archbishop of Rheims, Hincmar of Rheims condemned the 'naming of unfortunates while weaving' and 'measuring with threads' (Flint 1991, 227). In a largely illiterate society, storytelling and reciting poetry or prose or even voicing viewpoints on social and political matters might have played a central role in social and political environments (Fernstål 2007, 277).

Body Metaphor

Other inter-media associations include text or oral narrative and punishment (Bitterli 2009, 179-180). Scholars working with Anglo-Saxon riddles have identified an inter-media association with the riddling descriptions of inanimate objects and the treatment of the body (Bitterli 2009, 179-180). This type of inter-media association signals a shared motif in bodily punishments of the saints and the processes of book making. Bitterli, for example, observed that St Victor and St Bartholomew were 'flayed alive' while St Chrysanthus was treated like a 'piece of soaked pelt to be dried in the sun' and the Sicilian virgin and martyr St Agatha is 'stretched on a rack and twisted before her breast is cut off' (Bitterli 2009, 179-180). These activities of flaying, soaking, drying, stretching and cutting off bodily parts all seem to closely associate with the making of parchments (Bitterli 2009, 179-180). Some motifs seem to transcend media and perhaps act as a symbol or a metaphor.

Riddles reflect an ontological game with double entendre, challenging people to "Say what I mean" or "Say who I am" (Williamson 1982, 25). This riddling, challenging approach can perhaps be associated with early Anglo-Saxon art that seem to invite the viewer to solve the image (Bakka 1958; Haseloff 1981, 111-132; Leigh 1984). In a similar way, the brooch iconography that includes manipulated human heads that are prised apart or penetrated by needle-shaped designs signal an intended play on sexual themes. A number of riddles from The Exeter Book Riddles describe inanimate objects as a double entendre as a phallus. Riddle 25, for example, describes a girl 'grabbing an onion/ phallus and robbing it of its head' (Fellows 2012, 244). Fellows suggested this riddle does not hint at 'unwanted sex' and a woman's 'sexual autonomy', she suggests that these phallic riddles seem to 'reflect male sexual fantasies and anxieties' (Fellows 2012, 244). Perhaps the needle-like imagery might thus be a double entendre. Although the brooch imagery need not reflect the same male sexual anxiety, it is possible that the human form provided a means to express manipulation of the human form or body. It has recently been pointed out that the horse-like iconography upon the footplate of cruciform brooches might have not represented a horse or human at all. In some cases the image appears distinctly phallic (Martin 2011, 382). It has been noted that Anglo-Saxon literature signals an underlying, but 'general reticence around issues related to the body and sexuality' (Magennis 1995; Klein 2012, 46). Arguably, imagery upon early Anglo-Saxon objects might echo the same reticence.

6.4 IMAGERY AND THE FEMALE

Why then such a paucity of ornamented objects relating to a fastening theme in the male grave context? Could the themes and metaphors above relate explicitly to the feminine sphere and the perceived or actual role of some female individuals? If female dress fittings denote a distinct individual message regarding the deceased that signals something about their role and offices in life, then the possibility for female performance needs to be considered next.

Female Specialists

Recent material culture studies have suggested that artefacts were multi-vocal. The materiality of personal accessories found upon the dead might imply something about the agencies of the living individual rather than being purely evidence of the staging of a tableau by the mourners. Beads, for example, found in female graves from the third century in Scandinavia have been explored in terms of their sensory qualities (Fernstål 2007). Within an oral society, storytelling, verses and other commentaries were integral to social and political contexts. Fernstål argued that as well as looking after their guests they may have used the beads as memory-aids during performances of skaldic verses or stories about family history or heroic deeds, current events, or even scornful or praising comments on what was happening (Fernstål 2007, 277). As such, Fernstål has proposed that women (as well as men) were responsible for passing knowledge on and collective memory (Fernstål 2007, 275). This interpretation works just as well in terms of image-carrying brooches and wrist-clasps. The objects might have enhanced performance and visual spectacle collapsing the interrelationships between image, object and wearer.

Eicher and Roach-Higgins have suggested that the sounds a body makes are a sensory stimulus that helps establish gender identity (Eicher and Roach-Higgins 1992, 17). A girdle group that hangs from a woman's hip would have dangled and sounded as the individual moved (Kristoffersen 2004, 36), signalling a feminine identity. Brooches and wrist-clasps might not sound on their own, but ornamented objects are often found with other dress fittings, including beads and additional brooches (Figs. 5.17-5.24 and Appendix 3, Assemblage, Tables 1-4). These together may well have produced a distinctive sound. It is possible that beads found in female graves might have been used during female oral performances, in the way suggested by Fernstål for Scandinavian beads from prehistoric female graves (Fernstål 2007, 277).

Musical performances in life and at the funeral (or at least the display of musical items) was clearly significant for some male, elite mortuary displays in early Anglo-Saxon England, perhaps exemplified by the lyres found in the princely barrow burials in Mound One at Sutton Hoo and Taplow (Webster 2007). The evidence linking women with musical performance is quite limited and it may have been vocal rather than instrumental. A female figurine from Migration Period Scandinavia, Bornholm hints at an association between female individuals and musical performance. This object is 42 mm and a unique trait of this object is the 'ten prominent teeth' that are found running along the back of the figure (Figure 6.8) (Laursen 2013). This

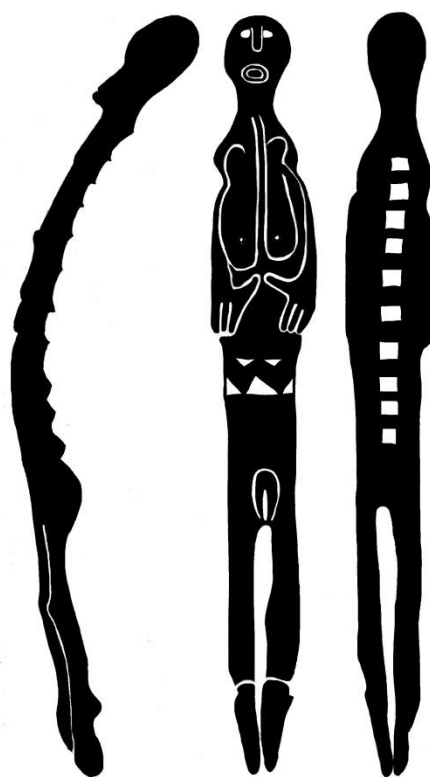


Figure 6.8 Female figurine from Bornholm, a possible metal guiro. Drawing by author, not to scale.

figure might have been played as a hand percussion instrument, perhaps like a metal guiro. The 'prominent teeth' seem to reflect the positioning of the vertebrae implying how the user would have played on the body. It is feasible to suggest that it may have been used by male or female individuals within oral performances telling myths, legends and genealogies in storytelling, singing and chanting or even to induce ecstatic shamanistic states. Although this object is unique it does make a connection between the female body and performance.

In Migration Period England, Scandinavia and Continental Europe, objects in female graves have been considered to represent symbols of female performance and connection with the household (Meaney 1981, 247; Kristoffersen 2004; Halsall 2010, 346). Female individuals have also been associated with healing (Meaney 1981, 259). Meaney suggested that 'amulet bags' may have been linked to healing rituals (Meaney 1981, 259). Dickinson made a suggestion that small pendant buckets and antler cones (perhaps symbolising drinking horns) found in a female grave in Bidford-upon-Avon might associate with

‘drinking symbolism’ or perhaps a ‘prophylactic or allusion to fertility or immortality’ (Dickinson 1993, 52). She argues that these objects and others – such as a scalpel-like knife and amulet bag might represent (what Meaney called) a ‘cunning woman’ who may have practised healing, beneficent magic, divining the future and protective magic (Dickinson 1993, 53). The rarity of these graves suggests that these women ‘would have been special within their community’ or at least honoured in death (Dickinson 1993, 53).

Historical sources describe women acting as seeresses and holding quasi-priest shamanistic roles in the early medieval world (Bitel 2002, 109-110). Tacitus described groups of women who joined soldiers and had specialised skills for healing battle-related wounds, implying that some women might have acted as ‘professional healers’ (Harper 2011, 109). Icelandic literature illuminates on how women often healed using ‘stones of life’ to staunch bleeding (Harper 2011, 109). Harper argued that ‘although countries such as Iceland were often converted by their kings virtually overnight, often measures were taken to preserve or tolerate the pagan religions’ (Harper 2011, 110). She suggests that while these texts no doubt are commenting to a certain degree on contemporary practice, the documents also recreate ‘images of female healing in the past’ (Harper 2011, 110). The concept of healing – of transforming the sick, ailing or wounded body can be argued to hold a semiotic relationship with whole human imagery, keeping the body contained and protected.

Although not all the female individuals that were buried with ornamented objects had amulet bags, the graves that contain brooches with human imagery are particularly rich (see Appendix 3, Tables 1-4). Grave 11, for example, from Holywell Row (Suffolk) contains a GSHB with ornate animal and human decoration. The grave also includes objects such as ‘silver pendants, girdle hanger, strike-a-light, silver bracelets, silver finger ring, two bronze buckles, bronze annular brooch, amber beads, jet beads, crystal beads, glass beads, gold braid, weaving batten, bronze ring and strap ends (Lethbridge 1931b, 1, 5, 8-9; Hines 1997a, 226-227). The silver items, gold braids and weaving batten all indicate this is a high-status female individual. Harrington’s study on weaving tools has identified that these items formed part of the female burial assemblages throughout the late fifth to seventh centuries and this technology had a wider symbolic currency in early Anglo-Saxon society (Harrington 2008, 76). She suggests that ‘women buried with weaving tools in the sixth century in East Kent were founder graves for their respective communities’ (Harrington 2008, 74). It is not clear if grave 11 from Holywell Row is a founder grave, but the deposition of the weaving batten implies that it was invested with symbolic significance. Notably, Lethbridge suggested that this grave belonged to a female child (Lethbridge 1931b, 5) making this an unusual grave as the majority of ornamented objects are found in adult female graves. The worn and broken condition of a GSHB (Lethbridge 1931b, 5) implies that the brooch was probably not used by the young individual. This grave might represent the commemoration of a significant member of a kin or social group, but the infrequency of child graves with such an elite assemblage implies that ostentatious commemorative practices were not always connected with adulthood – but it may perhaps have been staged and/ or the role inherited. The selection and deposition of these objects created an ‘eternal cast member’ within the ‘greater drama’ of the cemetery (Price 2010, 40-1). The deposition of the highly ornamented GSHB carrying images of human heads that are seemingly woven into the brooch and the weaving batten might represent a staged display with possible potent symbolism associated with weaving.

Peace-weavers and Diplomacy

The imagery discussed in this chapter, the symbolism of the objects, the effect these ornamented objects (and other accompanying dress fittings) had on the individual bodily schema and the visual and auditory enhancements, all seem to imply the prominent and symbolic roles of female individuals buried in this attire. The decorative motifs seem to signal key social themes such as transformation and binding. Historical sources illuminate the possible roles of women in society. In *Beowulf* a major female role is that of ‘peace-weaving’ and ‘peace-making’ roles documented – these women ‘enact and embody the process of weaving, they weave and are woven by the ties of kinship’ (Overing 1990, 97; Bek-Pedersen 2011, 142). This

theme of binding and weaving was common across much of early medieval Europe. Amalaberga, for example, the niece of Theodoric the Great, is assigned the role as an Ostrogothic ambassador (Norr 1998, 124). In this sixth-century text from Theodoric (drafted by Cassiodorus) she is explicitly called a counsellor and is consigned 'an active role in her new position as a cultural missionary to discipline the nation with a better way of life' (Norr 1998, 124). She was given her office by means of marriage and had a duty to keep and to reinforce the bond of friendship with Ravenna (Norr 1998, 124). Peace between ruling families bode well for the peace between peoples. Here the influence and performance of an elite female was integral for the well-being of the political state (Norr 1998, 124). Through ritualised actions and social practice, women in early medieval literature took a key role in socio-political discourse by weaving connections and peace between peoples (Overing 1990, xv; Enright 1996, 34; Herbert 1997, 15-16).

Svante Norr suggested that social and ideological expectations such as the embracement of 'education, wisdom, manners, eloquence and diplomacy' must have influenced women like Aethelberga, queen of King Edwin of Northumbria (Norr 1998, 125). Within elite social contexts, a woman's role extended beyond the ceremonial and reproductive, she might be expected to actively perform on the 'political stage' (Norr 1998, 126-7). This corroborates the notion of important roles for the female elite that could involve performance and political engagement connected to the idea of keeping or 'weaving' peace. The decorated personal accessories found predominantly in female graves indicates high-status individuals, but the rarity of representational art within each cemetery, also marks these women out as a visually distinct elite group.

Textiles in burials

Archaeological evidence indicates that weaving equipment and textiles were present in high-status burials and it is possible that these materials were owned and produced by women. Poetry and prose clearly indicate an interrelationship between metalworking and weaving (pp.130-132) and a connection between women, weaving and the supernatural is discussed below (p.134-137). In Migration Period Scandinavia textile production and products played a role in the local economy, which might also have had some importance in the social practices of 'gift bestowal and exchange systems over long distances' (Kristoffersen 2004, 34). Certainly the textiles found within Mound One at Sutton Hoo are key examples of high-status weaving, with surviving evidence of 27 diverse textiles in a variety of weaves and techniques that represent clothing and furnishings such as hangings, accessories and binding tape looped around the sword scabbard (Crowfoot 1983, 450; Marzinzik 2008). It has been noted that while the Anglo-Saxons would have been aware of the weaving pattern, the high-quality twill fabrics might not have been manufactured in England, but might have been imported from the Continent or the Near East (Marzinzik 2008). The hanging or coverlet, however, from Mound Fourteen, might have been produced in Scandinavia (Walton Rogers 2007, 83-5, 229; Marzinzik 2008). Marzinzik suggested that these luxury textiles were 'one device of conspicuous consumption and status display and also integral to the visual displays staged in burial' (Marzinzik 2008). Might female weavers have had a key role in the production and gift-exchange economy of high-status pieces such as that found in Mound Fourteen?

Female weavers are represented within figurative art on the Continent. A small series of bracteates (known as the Fürstenberg type) dating to the sixth century have been suggested to carry female figures that are associated with spinning and weaving by their possible attributes of a weaver's beam and a swift (Enright 1990; Davidson 1998, 115-116). Enright suggested that these figures represent a pre-Christian weaving goddess as two of these bracteates derive from a major cultic sites at Funen and Gudme (Enright 1990). What is more, a bracteate with this type of imagery from Oberwerschen was found under the chin of a female individual who was buried with spindle whorl, a silver needle by her hand and a knife (Davidson 1998, 117). While another female from Grossfahne was buried with three bracteates with this female figure and also with a weaving sword, which seems to reinforce the link between figurative art and the technology of weaving (Davidson 1998, 117). Kristoffersen

interpreted the presence of weaving swords within graves as an indicator of the female individual playing a central role in the execution and administration of textile production (Kristoffersen 2004, 34). Certainly, the Sagas and archaeological evidence clearly indicate a strong possibility, and later documentary sources such as the Domesday Book record the existence, of female embroiderers (Coatsworth 2008, 141).

Women in Mortuary Ritual

There is a connection between grave positioning and imagery at Morningthorpe (Norfolk). The graves containing brooches that are ornamented with less flamboyant designs are not positioned within tight clusters of intercutting burials (graves 153, 208, 209 and 370). These four graves are separate from other graves, but are surrounded by inhumations. Duncan Sayer has suggested that this type of grave positioning indicates that these inhumations were placed in certain plots to allow the continual interment of inhumations (Sayer 2010, 80). He argues that within high-status areas, the mourners created a 'visual genealogy of the heads of each household' (Sayer 2010, 80). A number of graves at Morningthorpe cemetery, however, are separate from other graves, but are surrounded by inhumation burials (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 2.4). The graves that contain ornate decorative pieces (including florid cruciform and GSHBs) are positioned in small clusters. These graves were not separated from other burials, but formed part of an intercutting row of string graves, implying several generations of burial. Only one ornamented object carrying human designs was buried in each cluster. Graves 16 and 342 appear to be the final interments in this group of intercutting graves. A similar pattern is found at other cemeteries; at Castledyke (Lincolnshire) and Bergh Apton (Norfolk) the graves containing human ornamented objects are distributed widely over the cemetery (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plans 2, 2.3). Female graves with these types of objects are often aligned with unusual features within the cemetery. The two female graves at Bergh Apton (Norfolk), for example, were positioned upon a possible prehistoric or Romano-British ditch (feature 23). Grave 16 from Snape (Suffolk) is positioned in a consecutive row of graves near the pyre area and a ring ditch grave (Appendix 3, Cemetery Plan 2). Only some individuals were buried with ornate objects; these were restricted to one per burial plot which might suggest that such items were heirlooms and were inherited until they were finally removed from circulation. The highly ornamented objects were intended to be seen; perhaps to create visual and memorable scenes in the commemoration of the deceased they were also meant to display the wealth and power of the social group or family.

Decorated objects that carry skeuomorphic images of needles, threads and human heads might associate with fastening, speech, senses and gesture and might indeed link with the role of a female individual within society. Explicit wolf-human and human that are positioned on the clasping mechanism of wrist-clasps relate to the concept of binding and transforming. The imagery and object function both relate to the concept of binding and transformation. Might these images and objects relate to the binding performative role of female individuals within social networks? The objects that fasten might have been worn at special events that perhaps associate with events that needed peace-weavers and diplomacy. The women buried with these decorated items we can assume held some kind of special status in these communities – certainly – in death – but perhaps in life as well. The symbolism of the objects points to connections to weaving/ textiles and to bodily integrity and binding. Connections have been made to healing too. What role did these women have and why were they dressed and treated in such an extraordinary way?

Historical sources describe the involvement of women in the funerary ritual. In Ibn Fadlan's account of a funeral of a Rus chieftain, describes an aged woman in Scandinavian societies involved in management and preparation of the sacrifice of a human victim and the laying out of the deceased (Davidson 1998, 166). In *Beowulf* there is reference to a woman reciting a dirge after the battle at Finnsburg. Queen Hildburh ordered her husband and brother's dead bodies to be positioned on a pyre and she mourned, 'lamenting in mournful lays' (Davidson 1998, 167). At a later stage in the text, Beowulf is burned at the cremation pyre and 'an aged woman with her hair bound up laments his death, predicting calamities and suffering' (Davidson

1998, 167). Certainly, the disguised figures in the funerary scene sewn into the ninth-century Oseberg tapestry might represent men and women acting like gods and goddesses in ritualised ceremony (Gunnell 1995 as cited in Davidson 1998, 110). The finds from the Oseberg grave such as the wagon, sled and ship, support the concept that the ceremonial scene upon the ‘tapestry is based on a perception of reality rather than a myth’ (Price 2002, 160) and could reflect an ‘earlier funeral or mythological funerary scene’ (Davidson 1998, 109). Geake has suggested that ‘cunning women’ or women that were buried with amuletic objects might represent individuals of a high social standing within the community that might have played a role in managing and controlling burial (Geake 2005, 262). It is possible, but far from proven that the female role of healer or diviner might have extended to rituals connected to the funeral. The ornate objects found within some women’s graves might indicate high-status individuals within the community that participated or were even leading figures within ceremonial enactment and social performance and involved in funerary rites.

Supernatural Roles

Further evidence for women taking a supernatural role includes the description in Theodore’s penitential. Written in the late seventh century, there is an injunction against women performing ‘incantations or diabolical divination’ (Meaney 1981, 255). Female weavers and weaving have also been related to fate and magic. In Scandinavian accounts, e.g. *Jómsvíkinga Saga* a woman dreams of a loom with weights comprised of the heads of men, which has been suggested to relate to a death omen for a king (Bek-Pedersen 2011, 145). In the Old High German First Merseburg charm in the tenth-century Frankish manuscript there is a description of how women ‘sitting working charms of binding and loosing’ (Meaney 1981, 255). It describes:

‘Once sat women, they sat here then there
Some fastened bonds, some impeded an army,
Some unravelled fetters;
Escape the bonds, flee the enemy!
(Bek-Pedersen 2011, 148)

These few textual sources offer interesting analogies for the explicit weaving skeuomorphic images found on the metalwork discussed in this chapter. Several objects carrying human faces with small, pointed ears were also discussed in this chapter. These were connected to lupine, biting and binding concepts. In Norse mythology shape-shifting, wolf warriors are described as wearing animal skins and sometimes take on powerful animal characteristics from the wolf and bear (Pluskowski 2006, 180-3). The wolf figures on foil plaques fragments from Gutenstein (Austria) and Obrigheim (Germany) have been suggested to represent not just the ‘act of costuming; the warrior so attired underwent in fact the transformation, felt and acted like a wolf or bear’ (Arent 1969, 137). Pluskowski has suggested that such mythology might ‘reflect a general tendency evident in multi-cultural examples of therianthropy – a belief in physical transformation psychosomatically associated with the wearing of a relevant pelt or skin as a metaphysical extension of mimicry’ (Pluskowski 2006, 183). How might this shape-shifting warrior relate to the wolf-human faces found upon female attire from early Anglo-Saxon England? One connection is suggested in a Norse saga – which describes how women ‘manage the sorcery for the warriors in wolf-form’ (Price 2002, 369). It is possible that the female individuals that wore these wrist-clasps and brooches were perceived to possess the power to manage sorcery and the power to transform themselves from human to animal form.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has established that the human images, the object types (brooches and wrist-clasps) and the manufacturing technology, all signal connections to ideas of binding and fastening.

- Well-known motifs and lesser known motifs seem to imitate other media and motifs can be suggested as a skeuomorph of other technologies such as textiles.

These particular forms (needles and clasps) seem to bind designs to each other, perhaps even the images to the object. Even the wolf-human images are analogous to the clasping technique of the wrist-clasps; the wolf relates to biting and binding, as accounted in Norse Sagas. The wolf-human heads, which are also associated with transformation, also reflect the transformative function of a clasp from closed to unclosed and in turn the transformation of completing the worn garment. Other human heads were also placed upon the clasping mechanism of wrist-clasps, again paralleling the clasping metaphor of making and unmaking bodies.

- A conceptual connection was made between the structural frames that helped disperse the molten metal during manufacturing processes and designs of human heads spewing shapes from the nose or mouth.

It was suggested that the creation of a metal object is analogous to body metaphor – the ribs as arteries, molten metal as the life force (which hardens to give skeletal-like structural integrity) and human heads pool and spew fluid substances, assisting in the object's coming into being. In this way it was argued that material and processes had their own agency and life force, moreover – reworking the human image in metal may have prompted people to think in new ways about the body and its capacity for communication. This association between human heads and structural components parallels the iconography of a needle-like form weaving in and out of the object, perhaps stitching the faces to the object. Framing devices continued in use in the seventh century, but use of the regurgitating motif ceased in tandem cessation of the manufacture and deposition of cruciform and GSHBs. The concept of fastening and binding continued in use in Style II interlacing designs.

- Bodily integrity and wholeness emerged during a time of increased deposition of receptacles associated with protection.

There is a shift from the production of anthropomorphic images that were almost entirely rendered upon female fastening and clasping equipment to full-bodied figural art on a new repertoire of object types. These full-bodied, 3-dimensional human forms were produced in an era human imagery was mainly carried upon receptacles and objects used for the holding or curation of liquids or materials. It was suggested that this could signal an intellectualising of the body and its bodily boundaries and a need to express this through representational art, in the conceptualisation of the body as a container and vessel.

- Manipulated human heads that are prised apart or penetrated by needle-shaped designs could signal an intended play on sexual themes.

Scholars working with Anglo-Saxon riddles have identified an inter-media association with the riddling descriptions of inanimate objects and the treatment of the body (Bitterli 2009, 179-180). It was suggested that the lack of explicit images of the biological, sexual body before the seventh century might echo a similar reticence as Anglo-Saxon literature.

- Weaving and binding are associated with metalworking

Weaving was a powerful metaphor used in late Anglo-Saxon literature and it was a part of everyday domestic life. Weaving and binding terms were commonly used in Old English poetry and are applied to metallic objects of high-status (Cavell 2011, 41-2). The verbs weaving and binding were used in the description of the creation of metalwork, implying the symbolic and metaphorical significances of weaving and textile processes. Further, medieval literature describe the ‘peace-weaving’ and ‘peace-making’ roles of women.

- Objects found in female grave contexts imply the possible roles of the living individual including healing, magic, divining and protective magic – all implying a semiotic relationship with whole human imagery, keeping the body protected and contained.

While many mature adult women were buried with image-carrying brooches, some graves indicate that status was not always secured through adulthood. Young individuals buried with these objects might have been a staged display with possible potent symbolism associated with weaving. Archaeological evidence indicates that weaving equipment and textiles were present in high-status burials that were owned and produced by women. Representational art of female weavers are also present on bracteates. Further, poetry and prose clearly indicate an interrelationship between metalworking and weaving and a connection between women, weaving and the supernatural.

- Only some individuals were buried with ornate objects. These were limited to one per burial plot, suggesting that such items were heirlooms and were inherited until they finally were removed from circulation.

It was argued that these highly ornate objects were intended to be seen; conceivably to create staged visual and memorable scenes in the commemoration of the deceased – displaying also the wealth and power of the family or social group.

- The symbolism of the objects points to connections to weaving/ textiles and to bodily integrity and binding, perhaps associating with binding performative role of female individuals

The women buried with these decorated items we can propose held some kind of special status in these communities – certainly – in death – but perhaps in life as well. The objects that fasten might have been worn at special events that perhaps needed peace-weavers and diplomacy. The symbolism of the objects points to connections to weaving/ textiles and to bodily integrity and binding, perhaps associating with binding performative role of female individuals. Connections have been made to healing too. One social context in which relationships between the living and the living and the living and the dead were reworked is the mortuary environment. Historical sources describe the involvement of women in the funerary ritual. The ornate objects found within some women’s graves might indicate high-status individuals within the community that participated or were even leading figures within ceremonial enactment and social performance and involved in funerary rites. The supernatural roles of female individuals are present in old texts and it is possible that the images such as the wolf-human face refers to an ancient belief in shape-shifting, signalling the users’ ability to transform themselves from human to animal form, similar to that described in Norse mythology.

CHAPTER 7

Human Representation and its Changing Portrayal

In the last chapter, brooches and wrist-clasps were shown to carry the majority of human motifs. I explored the interrelationships between the way in which these objects were used, the role of the image, the symbolism of the images and when discernible, the metaphor conveyed by the object. This in turn allowed some conjecture in regards to the potential role of human images and image carrying objects in social performance. I suggested that human faces with animals and human faces deployed in relation to the structural components of an object, might relate to the re-conceptualisation of the human image, its meaning and use and reflect a new awareness of the bounded body and the body as a binding force. In this chapter I investigate the development of human representation, examining the increasing presence of anthropomorphic imagery over time. I explore the re-conceptualisation of the human image over time and social themes that are embedded within anthropomorphic depiction. Shifts in representation are discussed in terms of possible stylistic influences and the social implications of these. Findings are contextualised within archaeological, historical and literary sources to provide a greater depth of background information concerning the treatment of the represented human form.

7.1 SHIFTING ANIMAL-HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Cruciform brooches were widely used throughout early Anglo-Saxon England. Typological analysis provides a useful method with which to track the development of imagery for this type of dress accessory (Mortimer 1990; Martin 2011). These types of brooches carry horse, bird and human designs, indicating a connection between human and animal in visual expression. The horse/ human designs are exclusively portrayed on cruciform brooches and it can be surmised that the female individuals who wore these ornamented objects in life or death were closely associated with the designs and their meaning.

Flaring Horse Nostrils, Human Heads and Omens

Cruciform brooches with animal and human heads located on the finial demark a transformation in the type of imagery carried upon this object type. Martin has observed that as time passes, these brooches carry more human images (Martin 2011). Fig. 7.1 presents a hypothesised typology analysis for this object type as established by Mortimer (1990) and later by Martin (2011). Following this proposed sequence, around c. 350-450 (Martin's Phase A) cruciform brooches with no animal or human decoration and those with zoomorphic faces were used (Fig. 7.1a), by c. 475 horse or zoomorphic faces predominated the iconography of these object types (Fig. 7.1b) (Martin 2011, 385). By c. 474-500 (Phase B1) Style I motifs were applied to cruciform brooches – at this time the double-entendre (human half-faces and pair of beaked heads) emerges (Fig. 7.1c) and by c. 500-525 (Phase B2, type 4.1.1; 4.1.2) the human head appears on the footplate terminal and contemporaneously so does the horse-human head design (Fig. 7.1d-d1). The horse-human head was only used within the chronological window of c. 500-550. The final phase c. 550-575 (Phase C Group 4) is predominantly made up of anthropomorphic faces (Fig. 7.1e) (Martin 2011, 388). The double-entendre design clusters around the fringe of the fenlands, while the horse-human design is restricted to the eastern zone. The inclusion of human heads is thought to be a later development (Martin 2011, 386). Chris Fern notes that horse imagery played a symbolic role in this period and on the basis of cross-examination of the horse motif in art and historical literature argues that it reflects notions of ethnogenesis (Fern 2010). His interpretation is restricted, however, to horse designs and he does not provide an explanation for the anthropomorphic/ horse elements found in cruciform brooch art.

The wide-spread use of horse-head finials marks an increase in the use of horse symbolism in early Anglo-Saxon England (Fern 2010; Martin 2011). The development of anthropomorphic imagery upon cruciform brooches thus signals another crucial change in emphasis and in iconographic expression. This second wave of imagery denotes a shifting emphasis from a single horse head to the inclusion of human faces, or a human head with stylised horse nostrils. The substitution of horse nostrils with a human head and the development of human-head finials with stylised zoomorphic/ horse-like nostrils imply an increasing specific emphasis on the olfactory organ.

The snorts and neighs of the horse are thought on the basis of historical sources to have provided a basis for some kind of divination (e.g. *Germania* ch. 10, Rives 2009, 39 as cited in Poole 2013, 6). In the *Lives of Saints* Ch. 17 it is described that Aelfric proposed that whoever saw omens in horses, birds or dog sneezes was not a Christian (*Lives of Saints* Ch. 17 *De Auguriis*; Skeat 1966, 371 as cited in Poole 2013, 6). The increasing presence of human heads upon cruciform brooches is suggested as an intentional choice to increase the use of the human face on these objects (Martin 2011, 386). Horse imagery has increasingly accentuated nostrils, but the substitution of the nostrils with the human head could suggest a new anthropocentric viewpoint. Style I animal art is argued to represent a zoocentric worldview or perspective (Pluskowski 2006, 154, 2010, 120). These changes hint at a transformation in perception and approach to design. The arrival of the human head images could mark the increasing importance of the human form in displays of ideology and belief. It has been noted that the moulded horse and animal heads on finials seem to operate outside the classifications of Style I (Dickinson 2009, 2; Brundle 2013, 200). The retention of zoomorphic nostrils, but with the addition of human heads that spew out substances from the nose could together be linked to an apparent rise in importance of human bodily expression in connection to prophecy and divination. This shift also resonates with the restrictions placed by the Christian church on the consumption of horseflesh. Horse was not commonly consumed in the sixth and seventh centuries, but its rarity implies a more limited usage for some sections of society, perhaps even for religious reasons (Poole 2013, 329). By the late eighth century, textual evidence suggests that the church increasingly discouraged the consumption of horsemeat or *hippophagy* (Meaney 1992, 113; Poole 2013, 321). Pope Gregory III condemned the consumption of horseflesh – describing it as ‘a filthy and abominable practice’ and called for it to be avoided at all costs (Meaney 1992, 113; Poole 2013, 321). Perhaps then the shift from equine motifs to increasingly anthropomorphic designs could relate to the growing presence of the church and Christian philosophy.

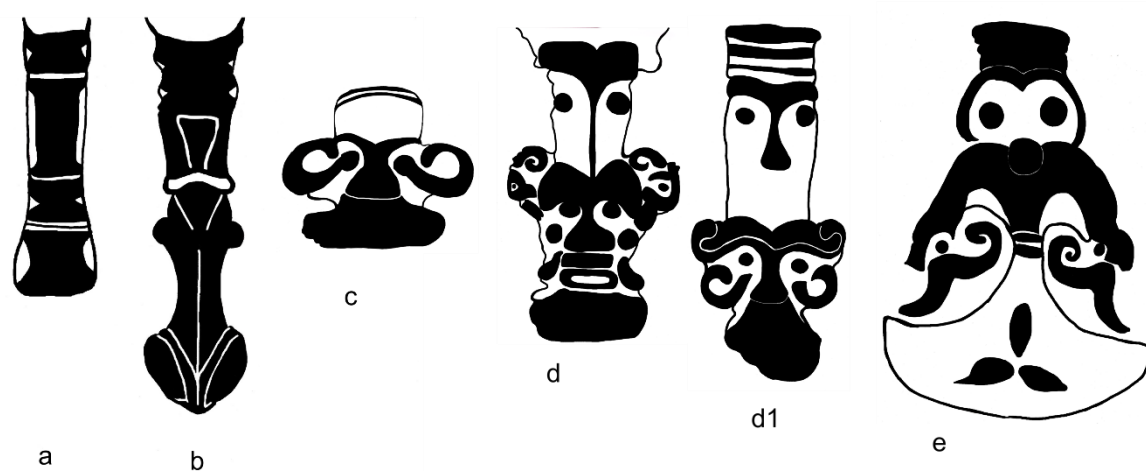


Fig. 7.1 Typological development of cruciform brooches: (a) Cleatham, Lincolnshire Grave 9 (b) Spong Hill, Norfolk C1468 (c) Holywell Row, Suffolk grave 16 Z 7111A (d) Kenninghall, Norfolk 1909.360 (d1) Spong Hill, Norfolk (e) Exning, Suffolk 1892.99.1. Drawings by author, not to scale.

7.2 BODILY SUBSTANCES AND ORIFICES

The widespread distribution of the ectoplasmic motif is likely to indicate that this design formed one part of a central belief system that was shared across these areas. This design (Vol. 2, Figs. 6.1-7.2) is carried on a variety of object types, including florid cruciform brooches, GSHBs, mount fittings, cruciform brooches and gusset fittings. Of the two motifs, triangular form exuding from the mouth and/ or nose, the triangular form exuding from the nose is predominant. In Migration Period Scandinavian art, these ectoplasmic designs are also prevalent upon relief brooches and A, B and C bracteates and is also found in Continental European contexts (e.g. Sievern, Langen type A Davidson 1993, fig. 10). Some of the bracteates that carry Emperor Art or Odin figures have forms protruding from the mouth (Vierck 1967, 110, 112; Hauck 1985, 75-77, fig. 13; Magnus 2001, 288). A recent examination of bracteate art indicates that these forms extend both from the mouth and from the nose (Figure 7.2) (Axboe 2007, 139, fig. 217-220). This design thus forms one part of a well-established artistic repertoire which could relate to some kind of lost oral narrative. This design has been interpreted as representing breath and breathing life or indeed spitting (Vierck 1967, 110; Davidson 1993, 41; Axboe 2007, 139). There are other bodily activities represented in historical literature that could provide additional interpretation for the excreted substances; for example vomiting.

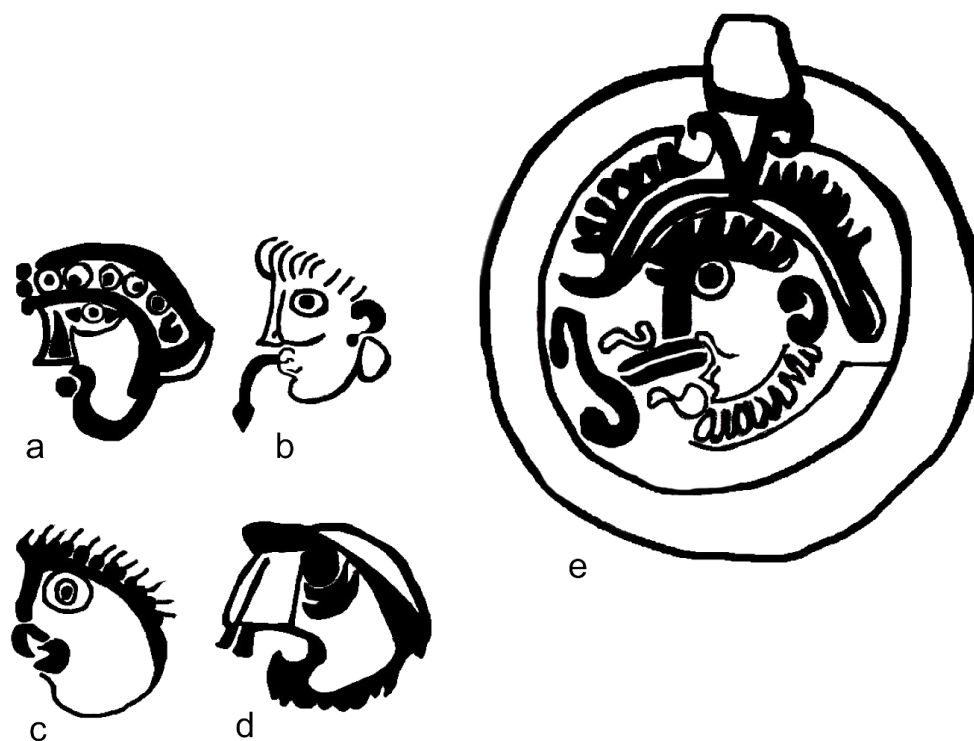


Figure 7.2 Illustration of bracteates carrying ectoplasmic forms protruding from the nose and mouth: (a) Maen-C, Halland, Sweden (b) Tjurkö-A/ Målen, Blekinge, Sweden (c) Lyngby-C Randers, Denmark (d) Scania (after Axboe 2007, 139) (e) Sievern, Germany (after Davidson 1993, Figure 10) not to scale. Drawings by author, not to scale.

Regurgitating Symbols?

Human heads with this ectoplasmic design are repeatedly found upon the headplate knobs of florid cruciform brooches. These *en face* human faces are often flanked by a pair of beaked-heads (Vol. 2, Figs. 6.1-7.2). In his recent study on cruciform brooches, Martin (2011) recognised that this design could relate to Odin – the Norse god and his two ravens. In the end he argued these motifs did not represent Odin, as the two birds were not ‘companions’ of the human, but a human that was ‘partially constituted by them’ (Martin 2011, 381). It is well-established, however, that the material culture of this period often implies the existence of an ‘ideology of transformation’ (Dickinson 2002; Hedeager 2003; Williams 2005, 2007c; Kristoffersen 2010), a belief/ theme

with strong resonance to the events of Norse mythology (Pluskowski 2010; Sanmark 2010; Hedeager 2011). The beaked heads in this light, can be argued to clearly illustrate the characteristics of an Odin-like figure and the regurgitating motif might therefore reflect the accounts of how Odin vomited in order to bring forth the ‘mead of poetry to the Æsir’ (Waugh 1995, 373). The combination of the human head flanked by birds and the ectoplasmic forms signal a connection to speech, recitation and performance as well. In Nordic sagas, Odin sent out his mental faculties in the form of ravens in order to ‘gather knowledge and acquire wisdom’ (Wickham-Crowley 1992, 49). In *Ynglingasaga* he endows them with speech and in *Grimnismal* 20 he worries about losing Muninn (memory), but even more so Huginn (mind) (Price 2002, 98). In *Gylfaginning* 38 Odin sent out his ravens every dawn and at dinner-time they would return, sit on his shoulders and speak the news into his ears (Price 2002, 98). Often these birds are depicted with open beaks and sometimes a small, bulbous shape appears to emanate from the open mouth. Might these small, globular forms represent words that are whispered to Odin? This motif of a male figure and a raven whispering into his ear can be found on eighth-century Anglo-Saxon coinage (Gannon 2006, 99). Gannon suggests that the iconography ‘might have been contrasted with the legends of the Dove and the Holy Spirit dictating words of divine inspiration to St Gregory the Great’ (Gannon 2006, 99-100). If this recycling or blending of ‘pagan’ motifs and Christian context is accepted, then it might be suggested that the motif of two ravens curled towards or near the human head in Anglo-Saxon brooch imagery portray an early representation of speech and hearing and the regurgitated symbols corroborate the action of speech.

Other figures from the Norse tales, including Egill, used vomit as a way of communicating *and* preventing speech. Egill responded to an inhospitable farmer by vomiting on the farmer, the vomit ‘exits from the hero’s mouth, affects the speech-organs of the rival and goes into his interior’ (Waugh 1995, 373). This act prevented the farmer from speaking and returning an insult to Egill; this ‘spewing-contest’ apparently added to his reputation (Waugh 1995, 373). Although the sources suggest that vomit came from the mouth, it is equally possible that it emanated from the nose. Speech then is also closely associated with regurgitating. The Norse texts recount how the spoken language ‘involves eating, psychologically chewing, swallowing, digesting, assimilating from within’ (Ong 1977, 24 as cited in Waugh 1995, 373). This motif could have played a social role over the longue durée, from the Migration Period into the ninth- to thirteenth-century when such ideas appear in literature (Hedeager 2011).

7.3 EMERGENCE OF BODILY DETAIL

The Style I animal-man and human figures portrayed with so-called helmets or diadems, are similar to human heads rendered upon bracteates that derive from Roman medallions, attesting to the strong influence of Roman art (Kendrick 1972; Axboe 2007, 136-138; Webster 2011, 467). Thus, the emulation of power is evident at an early stage in the late fifth and sixth centuries. New finds that have been reported to the PAS are relevant to these ideas.

Development of Costume

A greater range of finds are now known that carry depictions of the human form. A sword fitting from Aldborough (Norfolk), for example, carries two types of human heads – one of the heads appears to have an acorn-shaped cap; the second style of head is represented with a half-mask (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.4c). A mount from Shipdham (Norfolk) sports a figure with a similar shaped headpiece, but this headgear has a rectangular frame extending from the cap that contains a serpentine, zoomorphic motif (Vol. 2, Fig 12.4a). This style of headdress has no known parallel, but it is visually striking. On the sword fitting, the half-mask or eye mask is made clearly visible by a band that stretches across the nose and under each eye. The placement of both heads on this one piece is visually remarkable: the faces are notably dissimilar in terms of facial characteristics and headdress. The accentuated facial aspects – such as the lips – are paralleled on a mount fitting from Thimbleby (Lincolnshire) (Fig. 7.3a). This carries several anthropomorphic beings, one of which is cast in the round; it has a thick brow with a large protruding nose and

an open mouth. A ridge running from the nose of this face to the hair or headdress might indicate a half-face mask, similar to the image portrayed on the fitting from Aldborough. The Thimbleby example (Fig. 7.3a) is probably Scandinavian-made or at least stylistically influenced or a shared design as it carries 3-dimensional beaked heads that are also found upon contemporary relief brooches in Scandinavia such as Hauge, Norway located at Bergen Museum B4000a (Fig. 7.3b).

A buckle prong from Lærkefryd (C 37126) and a series of similar buckles found in Højemark on Bornholm (dnf 85-99), Gudme (C 37021) and Snartemo (pers. comm. Morten Axboe) all provide closely allied parallels. Comparatively, however, the early Anglo-Saxon fittings carry rather grotesque human faces with distorted facial features, but the Scandinavian examples do not sport eye-masks. Half-faced humans, however, are found embedded within the Style I repertoire. Tentatively, these faces constituted by eyes and noses could be interpreted as masks. These rows of mask-like motifs are found upon headplates of square-headed brooches, directly in contrast to the full-faced humans represented upon the same surface.



Fig. 7.3 3-dimensional animals (a) mount fitting from Thimbleby (Lincolnshire) PAS record NLM-219C93 (b) detail of a 3-dimensional relief brooch design from Hauge, Norway (B4000a) Drawing (b) by author, not to scale.

Facial and Bodily Gestural Expressions

Human heads with open mouth contrast with those that have pursed or closed mouths and heads depicted without mouths, see Vol. 2, Figs. 5.1-5.3. It is possible that this facial gesture refers to concepts such as oral narrative, storytelling, singing or prophesising. Alternatively, the open mouth may refer to social themes present in Norse mythology such as symbolic breath or regurgitation – but these concepts link more satisfactorily with triangular symbols exuding from the mouth, discussed above. The raised hand gesture is frequently found upon a variety of objects. This gesture has received some debate as to whether the hand gesticulation is Roman in origin (see Chapter 2). The splayed thumb forms a central part of this Migration Period raised-hand motif and is thought to have some significance (Leigh 1984, 389). It is worth re-stating here that Capelle offered a compelling argument that there are no clear images of a human figure with a splayed thumb on Roman medallions and so this gesture might not refer to Emperor Art (Capelle 2003, 40-41). In Scandinavian art the thumb-sucker design is stylistically related to the raised hand gesture – but this motif has been interpreted as a separate design, not an adaptation of Emperor Art (Fig. 54e-g). This gesture is suggested to have shamanic origins that was later adopted within Christian contexts, used, for example on the stone cross from Drumhallach, Ireland (Fig. 54h) (Watt 2004, 208). In Norse myth, Sigurd licks his thumb and becomes able to comprehend bird language (Watt 2004, 208). A similar motif is described in Irish texts; by biting his thumb, Finn MacCumail was able to foresee future happenings (Scott 1930 as cited in Watt 2004, 208). Might the Anglo-Saxon raised hand gesture relate to this thumb-sucking motif? There are five adaptations of the Anglo-Saxon raised-hand gesture:

- An orans-like gesture that is not touching the face (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.3b-c)

- Hand touches the face/ cheeks (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.2f)
- Hand covers the mouth (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.2a-b1, e, h)
- Hand in-front of face with thumb pointing forward (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.2i-j)
- Hand covers the eye (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.3a)

The hand and thumb are rendered close to the face, but there are no pictures of thumbs explicitly inside the mouth. These five motifs could be symbolically similar or they might represent local adaptations of Emperor Art or reflect stylistic influences from different sources? Covering the mouth or eyes and touching the cheeks has close parallels with gestures in Roman and Byzantine art. Grieving men and women were portrayed with a hand raised to the face (Maguire 2007, 139). There are textual accounts from the Roman world of female mourners weeping, tearing their hair, scratching at their faces and beating their chests as explicit grieving gestural expressions (Corbeill 2004, 83). The face and the chest were areas used in the visual and physical expression of sorrow.

A square-headed brooch from Snetterton (Norfolk) carries a rare depiction of two hands near a human head. This human head could be viewed as a face if turned upside down too (Fig. 7.5a-b). Viewed from one side (with the footplate lobe downwards) the hands are raised above the head with splayed fingers and from the opposite side the hands are raised to the mouth, paralleling the gestures of the male figures on the drinking cups from the male barrow burial at Taplow (Buckinghamshire). These motifs might signal grief or sorrow. It is possible that the hands raised upwards might also reflect something similar to Byzantium art where this type of gesture portrays ‘an abandon of joy, surprise, or sorrow, depending on the context’ (Maguire 2007, 160). A fifth-century ivory plaque in Berlin, for example, carries an image of a mother holding up her hands, stressing an ‘inability to intervene’ as a soldier is about to dash her baby to the ground (Maguire 2007, 160). In the sixth-century Vienna Genesis, the miniatures of the death of Deborah, folio 13v depicts a woman with her hands raised in lamentation (Maguire 2007, 159). This hand gesture is also found upon the ninth-century Oseberg tapestry that depicts a funerary scene; the horned figure holds an item in the left hand and raises the right hand (Fig. 7.5c). This riddling design on the Anglo-Saxon brooch could also associate with different views or human experiences – the hands raised above the head could associate with joy and the hands near the face could express grief. In this way, this *double entendre* is analogous to the modern double-face mask with a happy and sad face.

An analogous gesture is rendered on an early Anglo-Saxon scabbard mount from Great and Little Chishill in Cambridgeshire (PAS BH-A99B35) which carries a figure with a raised hand near its face (Fig. 8.7a). The hand appears to grip onto a band, perhaps representing a limb or more likely facial hair. Again, this gesture can be compared with Roman gestural expressions of grief: pulling hair that formed part of the ritual duties of mourners towards the dead (Šterbenc Erker 2011, 44-46). A similar interpretation has been recently suggested for a broadly contemporary figurine from Tissø, this female figure pulls on her braids and this ‘braid-pulling’ has been compared with ‘gestures known from classical antiquity of people pulling their hair in despair as a gesture of mourning’ (Arwill-Nordbladh 2012, 48). This gestural motif continued in use in the medieval period as an expression of grief: in La Chanson de Roland, at the sight of Roland’s corpse, Charlemagne tears out his ‘hair from his beard and head with both hands’ (Bartlett 1994, 53). It is possible that such expressive bodily gestures of sorrow, grief, surprise and even joy might have refracted through the early Anglo-Saxon world too. This theme is explored in greater depth in Chapter 8.



Fig. 7.4 Detail of raised hands on early medieval objects (a) FCB from Icklingham, Mitchell's Hill, Suffolk Grave 1 (1909.470) (b) FCB from Haslingfield, Cambridgeshire (Z21283) (c) ASB from Alwalton, Cambridgeshire (after Gibson 2007, 307) (d) florid cruciform brooch from Bergh Apton, Norfolk Grave 18 (e) bracteate from Penzlin, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Germany (f) detail from a brooch from Kirchheim u. Teck, Grave 85 (g) detail from a brooch from Pompei, Lorraine, France (h) stone cross from Drumhallach, Ireland (e-h after Watt 2004, 207, fig. 34). Drawings by author, not to scale.



Fig. 7.5 Raised hands a-b) Detail of the square-headed brooch from Snetterton, Norfolk (NHER 9035, PAS NMS-750C07) (c) horned figure from the ninth-century Oseberg tapestry (after Davidson 1993, 128 fig. 30)(d) detail from the drinking cups from Taplow (Buckinghamshire) (e) detail from the mount fitting from Great and Little Chishill (PAS BH-A99B35). Drawings by author. Not to scale.

7.4 DEVELOPMENT OF FULL-BODIED IMAGERY

By the seventh century, there are distinct and clear transformations in the portrayal of the human form, the types of material culture that carried human representation and the contexts in which the objects were used. Notably, by this time period animal-human representations significantly are transformed or different, perhaps reflecting a distinct shift in animal-human relationships. Concurrent with the transition to Style II interlace and ribbon-like motifs, there is a transformation from hybrid, mixed-bodied creatures to the portrayal of separate animal and human bodies. The emergence of full-bodied human representational art hints at the use of narrative scenes or images that depict dramatic performance. In Vol. 2, Figs. 1 and 4.1 illustrate examples of dramatic performance, including the workbox from Burwell showing a human figure stabbing a dragon-like creature (Vol. 2, Fig. 1b) and the mount from Loveden Hill carrying a man who grips two serpentine animals (Vol. 2, Fig. 1h), the man-between-two-beasts on the purse lid at Sutton Hoo (Vol. 2, Fig. 4g) and the Sutton Hoo helmet plaque depicts a horse rider and fallen warrior (Vol. 2, Fig 4h). The types of animals that are represented are generally rendered in full and are more recognisable and much less ambiguous. The types of animals are also presented as if they are controlled by human

figures: they are being ridden, fended off, attacked, or gripped by humans. Perhaps in response (or concurrent) to this shift in human-animal imagery, there are a series of figures that are not represented with any animal – but are single, independent figures. These full-bodied figures and the human figures represented with animals are dressed in a variety of costumes and use gestural expressions. What is more, many of these were portrayed with recognisable sexual body parts – a crucial development in representational imagery of this time period.

Sexualised Imagery

Discussions of the early Anglo-Saxon figurines and their clear presentation of partial or full nudity remain largely unexplored, but in a recent paper I have argued that the development of full-bodied human figures with genitalia is a direct implication of a change in terms of how the body was expressed in early Anglo-Saxon art (Brundle 2013). The portrayal of genitalia creates two distinct categories: male and female. These two categories contrast with the hybrid creatures, embedded within Style I, which can be divided instead into animal and human. In early Anglo-Saxon art, the presence of bearded and moustachioed faces alongside the non-bearded faces indicates a need to represent an un-ambiguous male face and sometimes the need to contrast this. A GSHB from Kenninghall exemplifies the display of this: it carries two addorsed human heads and one is bearded while the other is clean shaven (Vol. 2, Fig.11.3g). Even the whetstone sceptre from Mound One at Sutton Hoo carries a series of bearded and possibly non-bearded faces. Varied types of facial hair might demark a time in the masculine lifecycle in terms of age, puberty or manhood, role or power or perhaps some other social theme (Williams 2003, 2006, 91). It remains debatable for the modern viewer whether these un-bearded faces represent young males, females or a ‘third-gender’ or another social theme (e.g. youth).

The first portrayal of the biological sex for male and female human figures emerges in seventh-century England. Eleven figurines are known in early Anglo-Saxon England (Brundle 2013) and from these the 3-dimensional and full-bodied figurines from Eyke, Friston, Carlton Colville and Eyke in Suffolk have explicit genitalia (Fig. 7.6a-d, f). Fig. 7.6 illustrates similar figurines that are represented with female genitals that have been found in Breach Downs (Evison 1965b), Broadstairs (Meaney 1981) and Higham (BM 2001,0711.1) in Kent. The figurine from Halesworth in Suffolk is semi-dressed and is topless as shown by her breasts and she wears a pleated skirt and veil. As for the male figurines from Friston and Carlton Colville, male genitalia can be seen bulging through their clothes. However, not all the figurines are portrayed with genitalia – such as the horned figurine from Tuddenham-St-Martin. Other horned figures, such as the figure on the belt buckle from grave 95 at Finglesham (Kent), are represented with biological sex (Fig. 7.6h), but other horned figures (e.g. the ceremonial figures on the Sutton Hoo helmet (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.2g) are not rendered in this fashion.

In the early Anglo-Saxon Style I repertoire, it is apparent that gender is represented through facial appearance and skeuomorphic images relating to gendered-practices. There might be ‘third gender’ figures, but it is difficult to identify for certain if these images relate to gender or to supernatural qualities or even a theme such as age. There are distinctly different ways of constructing gender in early Anglo-Saxon figural art. The female figures are depicted naked and clothed, but they do not bear any items. The male figures were never entirely naked (even the Finglesham man sports a belt and helmet) and all have some clothing. Male figures without martial equipment such as the figurine from Carlton Colville might represent an ‘un-gendered’ male associated with the ‘female sphere’ (Hedeager 2011, 131). Expressions of gender were changing in the male mortuary context; in this time-period the deposition of weaponry in the grave ceased (Welch 2011, 279). Weaponry perhaps no longer formed part of gendered display. It is thus perhaps not unusual to find full-bodied figures that do not bear arms. None of the figurines bear any items. In this context the key foci for display thus appears to be the clothes, gesture and intact bodily facets such as facial hair and genitalia.

The representation of sexual organs might suggest that these objects were associated with 'ideas about fertility' and it has been conjectured that they might even relate to the 'Anglo-Saxon equivalent of the god Freyr and his sister Freyja (Webster and Minter 2007, 226). It is also possible that these figurines might represent gods, but there is no characteristic evidence to support this interpretation (see Price 2006). What is worth emphasising is that while some of the human figures in the Style I repertoire might depict female individuals, the figurines are the first depiction of the biological-female. The significance of this development should not be overlooked and one way of examining the significance of this development is to cross-compare this new realism with Scandinavian and Continental material.

The study of male and female representation is not a new topic for Scandinavian scholarship, which has been explored through the examination of human figurines, gold foil figures and figures rendered on bracteates (e.g. Simek 2002; Watt 2004; Hedeager 2011, 122-128; Arwill-Nordbladh 2012, 50; Helmbrecht 2012; Mannering 2013). Unlike early Anglo-Saxon representational art, both male and female figures are well represented in Migration Period art in Scandinavia (Simek 2002; Watt 2004; Back Danielsson 2008; Hedeager 2011). The style of hair, the type of gestures and the types of carried objects and adornment have been recognised as a means to define a male from a female character and even to attribute feminine qualities to male figures (Hedeager 2011, 131). The naked male body also formed part of the visual repertoire. Several of these figurines, for example, from Lunda were recovered from a settlement strata and date to AD 450-600 (Andersson et al. 2004, 158). Other types of objects carrying this type of imagery include gold foil figures from Uppåkra – these figures are portrayed with male genitalia and belts, but Watt noted that this seems to have been a 'half-hearted attempt at depicting the genital' (Watt 2004, 199 fig. 30 e-f). Although male figures are sometimes portrayed with genitalia, representations of female genitalia are not commonly found in Scandinavia. A recent discovery, however, of a gold, nude female figurine from the Smørenge field in Bornholm in Denmark (Laursen 2013) offers an interesting parallel for the Anglo-Saxon female figurines. Although this is a rare type of object – again, the pronounced portrayal of the vagina and the breasts clearly articulates the significance of portraying the female biological body (Fig. 7.6i).

A seventh-century belt buckle from Picardie in northern France carries an image of two nude figures: a male and female figure, both with pronounced genitalia, which might represent a pre-Christian or Christian motif (Salin 1959, 257, fig. 67). From the Merovingian world, however, the majority of figurative images are of full-bodied male figures that are clothed and are not depicted with genitalia (Salin 1959, 257-420; Young 2009). Recently, Young has suggested that belt buckles carrying secular scenes combined with religious images and acted as a way for high-status male individuals to reach accession themselves (Young 2009). A bezel from a Frankish gold signet ring found in Postwick (Norfolk) carries an image of two rudimentarily depicted male and female human figures that appear to be embracing each other, above them is a cross (Webster 1998/1999b, 31-32). It seems that the depiction of costume and adornment were not necessary for this display and there is a notable absence of sexual body parts (and possibly even arms) in many examples, indicating that this type of detail was also inappropriate. Images of naked bodies or covered genitalia are thus extremely rare on the Continent *and* in early Anglo-Saxon England. The depiction of female individuals is even rarer. It is possible of course that the female image was portrayed upon objects made of organic materials that have not survived, such as wood, leatherwork or textiles, but rarity within the known corpus may also reflect a reality.

The portrayal of human genitalia in later manuscript illustrations could imply an intentional Anglo-Saxon use of sexualised imagery. The eleventh-century Harley 603 Psalter is the first of three English copies of the Utrecht Psalter composed in the ninth century at Hautvilliers near Reims (Temple 1976, 81-3). Six illustrations in this manuscript have been suggested to 'exemplify a distinctly Anglo-Saxon version of hell and damnation, different from that portrayed in the Utrecht Psalter' (Semple 2003, 240). Mortuary practices in later Anglo-Saxon England such as the use of hills or mounds and bodily punishments in secular laws (amputation and decapitation) parallel illustrations in the Harley Psalter (Semple 2003, 237-240).

Other stylistic details were also changed. The demons were portrayed with ‘anthropomorphic’ and ‘zoomorphic’ bodily elements with ‘human and one bird foot with enormous claws...talons for feet, noses like elephant trunks and large, pendant breasts and genitalia’ (Tselos 1959, 139). Animal-human hybridisation is firmly rooted in the Anglo-Saxon consciousness with traditions of portraying zoomorphic hybrids in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic initials in manuscript illuminations (Tselos 1959, 139) and burying the dead with objects ornamented with Style I designs. These added details in the Harley 603 Psalter convey the perceived ‘drama of the underworld’ and the hybridity and human genitalia made the demons ‘fearful to behold’ and ‘terrible to suffer to under’ (Tselos 1959, 139). The demon is illustrated with female ‘pendant-shaped breasts’ and male ‘genitalia’ and animal bodily components (Tselos 1959, 139). This hybridization of male-female and human-animal is perhaps imagined as the most appalling image to behold. In this time period, human figures in Anglo-Saxon manuscript art were rendered ‘lively and naturalistic’ – contrasting with earlier miniatures (Wilson 1984, 179). The use, however, of sexualised and gesturing figures as a means to convey drama is perhaps embedded in the Anglo-Saxon consciousness and may have its origins in the pre-Christian world. The production of seventh-century human figures portrayed with genitalia and gesturing with their hands, objects or animals exemplifies a novel array of performers and performance.

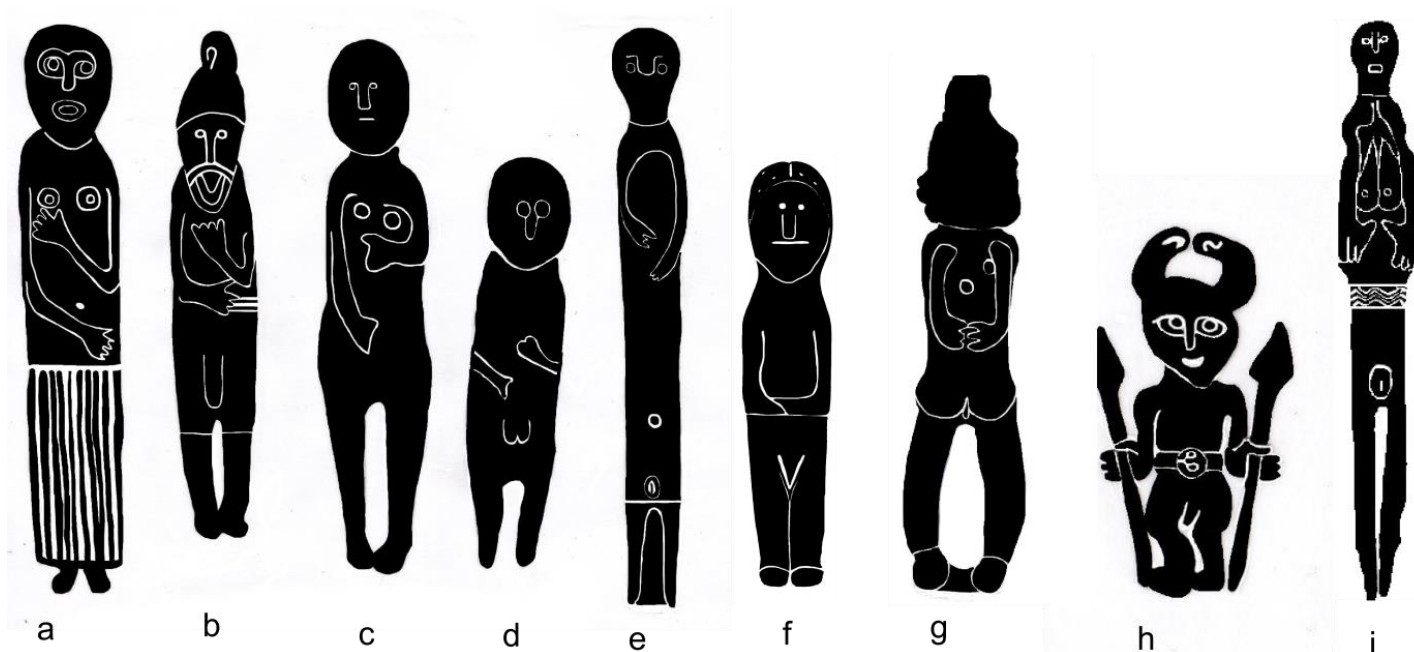


Fig. 7.6 Seventh-century figures that are represented with genitalia (a) Halesworth, Suffolk (b) Carlton Colville, Suffolk (c) Higham, Kent (d) Eyke, Suffolk (e) Breach Downs, Kent (f) Friston, Suffolk (g) Broadstairs, Kent (h) figure from a belt buckle from Finglesham, Kent (after Hawkes et al. 2006, 264 fig. 2.102) (i) Migration Period figurine from Bornholm. Drawings by author, not to scale.

Gesture and Biological Sex

The earliest example of a full-bodied human figure is carried upon a sixth-century ceramic urn-lid from Spong Hill. The figure, called the ‘Chairperson’, is represented with its head resting in its hands, elbows on the knees, staring into the distance. This figure is not represented with genitalia, however (Hills 1980, 52) and while it was of importance to represent a full-bodied, 3-dimensional human form on this urn, sexual bodily parts were not required. Style I human designs are not rendered with genitalia either, but by the seventh century, the sexualised body is portrayed on metalwork. This imagery is restricted, however, to a series of 3-dimensional figurines from Suffolk and Kent, a figure on the purse-lid from Sutton Hoo and a figure on a belt buckle from Finglesham that can be seen in Fig. 7.6 (Davidson 1965).

In recent years, scholars have suggested that the presence of genitalia might relate to the concept of fertility (Webster and Minter 2007, 226; Pestell 2012). It is possible that the hand postures of the Anglo-Saxon female figurines, with one hand near the stomach and the other on the chest, might reflect a *Venus* type position (per comm. Tim Pestell). This hand gesture, however, reflects a hand on chest and waist motif displayed on other Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian figurines and continental high-status objects (see discussion below in Chapter 8). These continental examples are closer in time to the early Anglo-Saxon figurines than the Roman and Romano-British statuettes of *Venus*. Additionally, a comparative hand posture is also presented on two different objects: a Christian reliquary and an altar on the Continent. It seems unlikely that a fertility gesture such as the *Venus Pudica* would have been portrayed upon these eighth-century objects.

The Anglo-Saxon figurines share some commonalities with contemporary Scandinavian figurines. These objects are also small, 3-dimensional items that could sit within the palm of the hand and they have figural human characteristics such as hair and bodily features (Andersson et al. 2004). The male Anglo-Saxon figures can also be associated with a series of bracteates embellished with images of a male figure from Denmark and Lower Saxony – that covers his genitalia with one hand (Behr 1992, 127, tafel vi). Other male figurines from Bornholm appear to cover or hold their genitals (Laursen 2013), perhaps drawing attention to the male genitalia in a similar way as the bracteate figures. However, the male figures upon the bracteates from Bifrons (Kent) and Binham (Norfolk), for example, have splayed legs and raised hands, but they are not rendered with male genitals and they are not covering or touching their crotch area (Behr 2010b, fig. 12).

The human figures on the Anglo-Saxon bracteates perhaps underscore a reticence in the display of exposed genitalia or even indications of covered genitalia. The Carlton Colville and Friston male figurines are also perhaps connected to a theme of concealment rather than the exposure of the sexualised body parts. What is also worthy of note is the male figure on the purse-lid from Sutton Hoo is depicted with a phallus, but the Torslunda die and Valsgärde plaques that share a similar motif are *not* rendered with genitalia. This could indicate alongside the overt depictions of male genitalia on other eastern English finds that the portrayal of genitalia was not necessarily a stylistic importation from Scandinavia, but a local development in Eastern England governed by a regionally specific ideology.

The portrayal of both gesture and genitalia are thus significant developments in representational art in early Anglo-Saxon England. Notably, these male and female figurines share similar gestural expressions and this might signal a common meaningful significance. The rarity of figures bearing sexual body parts perhaps indicates the restricted usage of figurines with genitalia. The repeated gestural designs on these objects and the portrayal of genitalia strongly signal that there was an audience for a developed bodily symbolism. This contrasts, however, with a recent study on the human image in Vendel and Viking Scandinavian art which claimed the portrayal of the biological sex was not a particular focus for representation in this era (Helmbrecht 2011, 134). Helmbrecht argued instead that the portrayal of bodily comportment – posture and gesture – was particularly essential in pictorial expressions during the Vendel and Viking period (Helmbrecht 2011, 134, 2012, 86). Hedeager has also proposed that in addition to bodily gesture other body parts are also expressively represented. She argues that the faces of the guldgubber figures often appear similar and thus carry a sense of anonymity, but it is the head, hair, hands and feet that are discursive parts of the body (Hedeager 2011, 128). It might be suggested that the significance of gestural expressions cannot be divorced from the importance of the body schema (e.g. bodily appearance). Helmbrecht's study did not include a female figurine from Bornholm as it was discovered after her study was published. This figure embodies the distinctive significance of the portrayal of biological-sex and a human gesture. The Bornholm female figurine is represented with her hands on the stomach, which is also shared by three male figurines from the hall complex at Lunda in Sweden – two figures have erect penises and the other has an indentation that might represent a phallus (Fig. 7.7) (Andersson et al. 2004, fig. 12). Several gold foil figures at Uppåkra also carry similar hand postures, but are not represented with genitalia (Watt 2004). Thus, male and female figurines connected by bodily gestures appear in association with major central place sites. These signal that the

significance of portrayal of biological sex and certainly gestures may lie in the specific site-context of the finds. This has direct implications for the expression of the body in this time period within the North Sea littoral.

Although the Anglo-Saxon figurines are portrayed with varied features, some share the depiction of biological sex and three share a similar gestural expression: Halesworth, Carlton Colville and Eyke (Suffolk). Figurines from Higham and Breach Downs (Kent) also share the same gesture and biological-definition. These rare finds and their equally rare Migration Period comparators embody a complex social narrative about the display of male and female bodies. It can be suggested that the manufacture of the exposed or clothed body in three-dimensions did not come about by chance. An examination of possible stylistic influences might offer information on how and why the sexualised body came into being in early Anglo-Saxon England.

Potential Stylistic Influences

Full-bodied human figures were represented in the seventh century in Merovingia and Scandinavia and there are some parallels with the Anglo-Saxon figures. As discussed above, however, biological-sex was not often represented in Merovingian figural art, but often occurred in Scandinavian art. Male figures in Anglo-Saxon art contrast with Scandinavian male humans as these are portrayed with clothes with the genitalia bulging through the trousers and only very rarely are such human genitalia rendered exposed. Depiction of the naked human body in early Anglo-Saxon England is perhaps rooted in the Romano-British past. The portrayal of the undressed human body in Roman art was not transmitted to late fifth- or sixth-century art in England. A bronze statuette of Mars, for example, from Foss Dyke (Lincolnshire) dating to the first to third century AD is rendered with 'curling locks brimming out from beneath a baroque helmet and the prominent tuft of pubic hair attached to the lower edge of

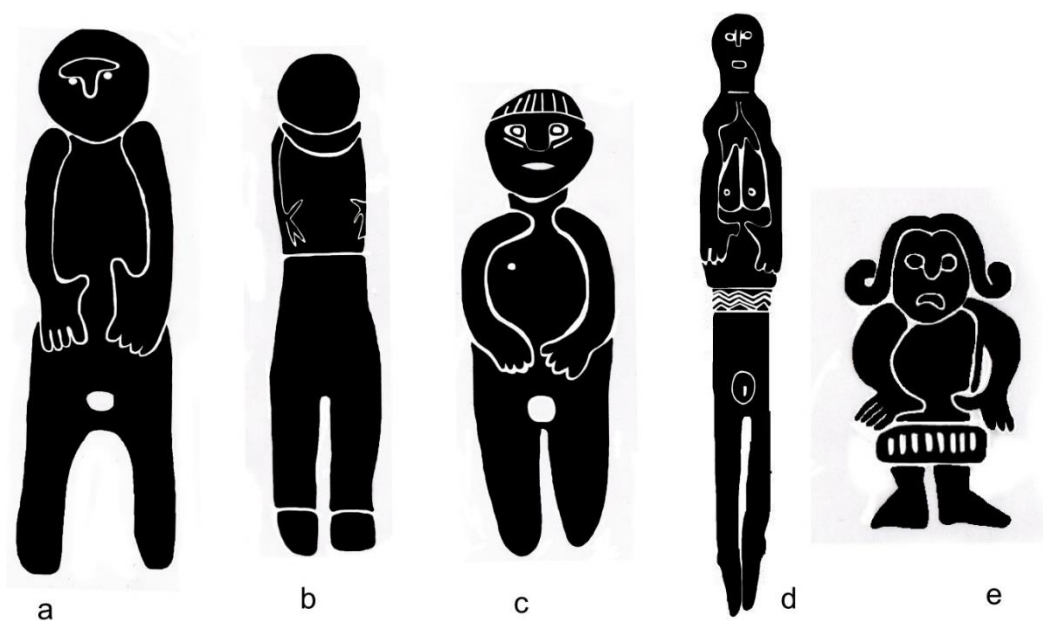


Fig. 7.7 Figurines from Scandinavia (a-c) Figurines from Lunda, Sweden (d) Bornholm figurine (e) gold foil figure from Uppåkra Drawings by author, not to scale.

the deep furrow marking the groin-line; also the musculature of chest and legs are rendered in terms of line and pattern' (Henig 1985, 11). The portrayal, however, of seventh-century male genitalia is highly reminiscent of naked figures depicted in 2-dimensions upon objects that were found from Romano-British temple sites. A 'sheet-bronze sceptre binding' from Farley Heath from (BM PRB 1936.3-11.1) for example, carries a human figure with nude male figure that is surrounded by animals and tools (a long-hafted hammer and tongs) (Aldhouse-Green 2004, 200). Another example is a bronze headdress, possibly a diadem, from Hockwold-cum-Wilton in Norfolk (BM 1957,0207.1) that has a naked male with similar genitals holding a curved staff and sphere. A naked, ithyphallic deity is represented upon a sheet-bronze plaque from Woodeaton temple in

Oxfordshire, also from a Romano-British temple (Fig. 7.8b) (Goodchild and Kirk 1954; Green 2003, 15, plate 6). A series of seven wooden figurines from Ireland, Scotland and England dated to 3000 cal. BC – 350 cal. BC (Coles 1990) and one of these - a figurine from Ballachulish (Argyll) – shares a remarkable likeness to the female figurine from Eyke (Suffolk). This figurine has a radiocarbon date of 540 + - 70 BC (RCAHMS, Canmore ID 23569) and sports close-together eyes, a linear body, a thick neck, oval head, female genitalia and remarkably – a comparable bodily gesture (Fig. 7.8a).

It is well-established that by the seventh-century personal accessories that were highly evocative of the Roman past were being deposited within female graves (Geake 1997). The early Anglo-Saxon nude individuals portrayed in a similar style as the Romano-British figures, might thus indicate a resurgence of indigenous traditions, rather than classical allusions to Roman rulers, through types of human representational art that was used by elite groups within socio-political and religious contexts. The depiction of the full-bodied, biological body, might thus hint at emerging social groups that drew upon the human image as a media to convey narratives of power.

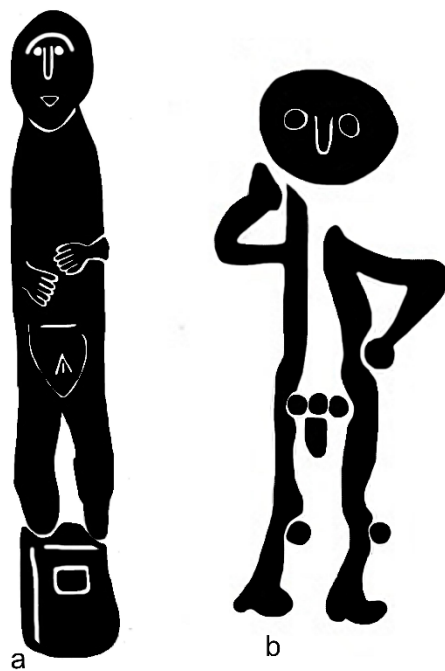


Fig. 7.8 Illustrations of a prehistoric and Romano-British figures (a) wooden figure from Ballachulish in Argyll, Scotland (b) figure carried on a metal plaque from Woodeaton temple in Oxfordshire Drawings by author, not to scale.

Costume

Concurrent with the re-emergence of the naked figure in seventh-century England is an increase in the human heads with headdresses and full-bodied figures depicted in garments and headdresses. The most frequently depicted headpiece is the bird-headress. A total of eight items carry this motif – the dancing warriors upon the Sutton Hoo helmet represent one of the clear examples of this design. Another figure portrayed with curved horns is the figurine from Tuddenham-St-Martin (Suffolk). This style of headress is also found in contemporary Scandinavia and seems to have had a long heritage, stemming back into Bronze Age Scandinavia (Gunnell 1995; Helmbrecht 2008). In early Anglo-Saxon England, human heads portrayed with bird-headresses are rendered on mounts from East Cambridgeshire (PAS FAHG-8EAAA3) and Attleborough (NHER 2989), Saxlingham Nethergate (PAS NMS-F90626) and Reepham (NCM 2011.186) in Norfolk. A figurine from Great Waldringfield

(Suffolk) has a low relief band c. 1.5 mm wide running from side to side and this may have originally held horns that were subsequently broken off and rubbed down. This transformation implies the horns were no longer required, but the human form remained significant to the user. The figurine was reworked in the era when 3-dimensional, full-bodied human figures without horned or bird-headaddresses emerged, perhaps reflecting a shift in conceptual viewpoint and a shift in usage of the human form in ideological expression.

The figures on the helmet from Sutton Hoo are adorned in garb that consists of 'richly ornamented bands' that have been argued to represent late classical garments with early Persian ancestry (Gannon 2003, 58). Similar caftan garments are represented on fifth-century Scandinavian artefacts and are suggested to relate to Asiatic Hunnic influences (Vierck 1978; Arrhenius 1982, 77; Hedeager 2011, 204). This wrap-over may have been worn by individuals in Anglo-Saxon England. A fragment of textile was found on the belt buckle from grave 126 at Castledyke cemetery in Lincolnshire that has been identified as a wrap-over coat (Walton Rogers 1998; Owen-Crocker 2010, 180-181). A similar caftan-like garment is portrayed on the seated rider plaque. The fallen warrior wears a similar garment, but the pattern differs from that rendered on the 'dancing warriors'. The central and lower hem of the fallen warrior is patterned with horizontal bands and the body of the garment is chequered, but the belt and wrist-cuffs are similar in design to the dancing warriors. This caftan-like costume is also represented on other items, including the silver foil fragment from Caenby (Lincolnshire) and a mount from Cambridgeshire (Vol. 2, Fig. 12.2e, h). It is possible that the earlier Style I animal-man design that is depicted with an ornamented shoulder pad might also be sporting a caftan-like costume.

Other figures with costumes that are represented in the seventh century include the man between two animals depicted in cloisonné on the purse-lid from Mound One at Sutton Hoo. This figure is considered to wear a 'blacksmith's apron' rendered using millefiori glass in a checkerboard pattern (Bruce-Mitford 1978, 513-514). The belted apron terminates at the waist area and they could be bare-legged or wearing skin-tight trousers emphasising his penis. Comparable to this, the male figure on the Finglesham belt buckle is portrayed with exposed genitalia, implying he is not wearing trousers or leggings. The smith figure is portrayed on other Anglo-Saxon objects including the eighth-century Franks Casket. The front panel shows 'a smith (Weland) greeting a woman (Beauhild) and her maid (?) in the smithy. A headless body (Beauhild's brother) lies on the ground while outside a man appears to be killing birds, doubtless to supply Weland with feathers for the wings he will construct for his escape' (Bradley 1990, 43). This smith, like other male figures on the casket, is rendered in a tunic with a bodice, possibly bare-legged with a short skirt hanging in folds similar to Antique models (Owen-Crocker 2010, 184). A possible bare-legged 'Wayland' figure is represented on a tenth-century cross-shaft from Leeds Parish Church (Bailey 1980, fig. 16a). Bare-legged, short skirted figures with hammer and tongs could reference earlier portrayals of the smith. An uninscribed Roman tombstone from Dringhouses in York depicts a blacksmith portrayed with a short skirt that terminates near the thigh, the depicted toes indicating bare legs (Wacher 1975, 175). These costumed figures seem to represent a social need for human figures dressed in varied garb; they are represented upon high-status objects with depictions of varying functional roles. This is perhaps most apparent on the 3-dimensional figures. The figurine from Halesworth is portrayed in a pleated skirt and a veil, the skin-tight trousers of the Friston figurine and the belt and knee length trousers of the Carlton Colville all give these figures a distinctive dressed/ costumed appearance.

In contrast a die from Fen Drayton in Cambridgeshire (PAS NLM-468D41) depicts a human figure adorned in an animal costume (Vol. 2, Fig. 1c). This individual stands upright in profile. It grips a sword with a zoomorphic left paw and a spear in the right. The head is represented by a lupine creature with fangs, the animal garb finishes at the knees of the figure and a tail droops near its anthropomorphic feet. Motifs comparable to the Fen Drayton die design are rendered on foil applique from Gutenstein in Baden-Württemberg and one of the four dies from Torslunda, Oland in Sweden (Leahy 2006, 270-280). The die D from Torslunda shares a closer stylistic correspondence to the die from Fen Drayton with the 'position of the body, the shape

of the head and teeth, the form of the feet and the tail hanging behind the legs' (Leahy 2006, 279). The wolf-human figure from Eastern England is also rendered upon a die matrix indicating that it was probably re-produced on different media, suggesting distribution of human images (Leahy 2006, 279-280, 2011, 453). The costumes of these figures from Scandinavia and Continental Europe have been suggested to be a 'deliberate picture of a human being wearing a mask and costume' (Gunnell 1995, 70). Written sources in the early medieval period point to conceived notions of the use of animal skins in ritual and religious contexts (Price 2002, 374-396). While Old Norse sources do not make direct references to the use of veils, headdresses or masks that are present within Anglo-Saxon representational art; Odin is consistently regarded as *Grimr* and *Grimnir* – 'Mask' and 'Masked One' in the *Grimnismal* (Price 2002, 171).

There are surviving masks of Viking Age date and context made from animal pelt, although as Price points to, these are not necessarily religious items (Price 2002, 171). Nevertheless, in representational art, a clearer connection can be made between costumed figures and religion. The Oseberg tapestry, for example, portrays several female figures in boar- and beaked-head costumes that play a role within a ritualised mortuary scene (Krafft 1956; Price 2002, 173). These figures might depict women wearing masks, but it has also been suggested that they might also represent 'shape-shifters in animal form' (Price 2002, 173). Warriors dressed as wolves are represented in the Roman world. Explicit images of Germanic warriors wearing 'narrow-pawed wolfskins' that 'cover the head and shoulders' are depicted in scene 36 of the first century AD Trajan's Column (Speidel 2004, 17-18). In the fourth century, the later Roman army comprised of recruits from 'Germanic lands beyond the Rhine and the Danube' – many bore images of wolves on their shields and like Beowulf was a boar-warrior, the 'wolf shield-badges' of Julian's Auxilia Palatina symbolised 'wolf-warriors' (Speidel 2004, 20-2). Ancient Germanic mythology is argued to be a link 'between earlier Indo-European and later Icelandic mythology' that describes shape-shifting wolf warriors (Speidel 2004, 18).

The Halesworth figurine is rendered with a pleated skirt and a long veil that falls to the feet, paralleling figures in Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture. A panel, for example, from Breedon-on-the-Hill (Leicestershire) carries a female figure with a veil and draped costume, possibly depicting the Virgin (Wilson 1984, 82, Fig. 88). Hawkes argues that Roman/ late antique art was 'being used as a source of inspiration for the portrayal of a female figure' and 'male apostolic and/ or clerical figures' (Hawkes 2003, 87). The veiling of women in Late Antiquity was not compulsory, but the Church 'advocated the covering of a woman's head with some kind of headdress' – whether a diadem or veil or some other headgear (Parani 2007, 521). A small group of Furstenberg type bracteates, however, from Scandinavia and the Continent stylistically correspond with the figurine from Halesworth. These female figures portrayed on the bracteates have exposed breasts and linear, pleated skirts (Hauck 1992a, 447 fig. 8-9) directly paralleling the Halesworth figure. It is possible that the pleated skirts of the bracteate figures were influenced by the Roman draped costumes, in-directly influencing the costume of the Anglo-Saxon figurine. These bracteate figures, however, are represented with 'a crown-like hairstyle and Byzantine diadem' (Enright 1990, 55) and not a veil. Comparatively, the figurine from Eyke (Suffolk) could be portrayed with a 'long pony tail' (Pestell 2012, 86) or a headdress. A contemporary figurine from Breach Down in Kent shares a similar design and this has been suggested to represent a 'pony tail' (Webster 2002b, 15). The portrayal of facial hair of the figure from Carlton Colville implies that hair is likely to be delineated on other figurines. The figures from Eyke and Breach Down have no indications of hair, suggesting the pony tails are in fact headdresses, perhaps veils.

Female figures wearing veils are illustrated in Anglo-Saxon manuscript art. In the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon Benedictional of St Aethelwold, for example, (Add MS 49598) in the folio of a bishop pronouncing a blessing several women are represented with this headgear (Wilson 1984, 160, 167-8). Iconographically, this manuscript closely relates to the Carolingian ivories of the school of Metz, but the images also embody 'English invention' – the clothes seem to 'dominate the person' and 'detract from portraiture' (Wilson 1984, 169). References to Anglo-Saxon women wearing veils is accounted in the

late seventh- to early eighth-century *De Virginitate*, a moral work on virginity dedicated to prominent nuns (Owen-Crocker 2010, 134). Aldhelm of Malmesbury criticises the rich dress of individuals sworn to the religious life: ‘In the place of dark head coverings they wear white and coloured veils which hang down richly to the feet and are held in place by ribbons sewn on to them’ (Wilson 1971, 94). While the Romano-British sculpture may have offered a source for stylistic influence, the dress of the Halesworth figurine shares a stronger stylistic correspondence with bracteate art. The long veil, however, echoing Aldhelm’s criticism (Wilson 1971, 94), could signal an early Anglo-Saxon development. Archaeological evidence suggests that veils could have formed part of the funerary costume for some high-status female individuals – and it is worth noting that veils appear to have been lengthened over the sixth to seventh centuries (Walton Rogers 2007, 156; Owen-Crocker 2010, 100). Several gold threads were found at the feet of the ‘princess’ buried in Cologne Cathedral, dating to the sixth century (James 1992, 247; Owen-Crocker 2010). The veil of the Halesworth figurine thus seems to have been in-line with elite figures in the early Anglo-Saxon and Frankish worlds.

In early medieval manuscript art men are usually rendered with ‘sub-classical, draped garments’ or ‘short tunics and cloaks’ (Owen-Crocker 2010, 196). The two male figurines from Carlton Colville and Friston are represented in close-fitting clothes, no cloaks and tapering caps, suggesting no influence from the Roman wardrobe. The Carlton Colville figurine wears ‘belted knee length trousers’ (Webster 2002a, 46) indicated by the lines beneath the knees. A figure rendered on a bracteate from grave 29 at Bifrons in Kent has a comparative line beneath the knee which could indicate ‘short breeches’ (Owen-Crocker 2010, 188 fig. 146). A bracteate from Sletner, Norway also carries a similar design of belted knee-length trousers or breeches (Fig. 8.7j on p.178). A bracteate, however, from Allesø Fünen in Denmark carries a similar motif as the Bifrons figure, with splayed legs, but the figure presented on the Scandinavian bracteate is not portrayed with knee-breeches (Behr 1992, 127 Table VI 4a). Perhaps the use of knee-breeches was restricted to early Anglo-Saxon England and Migration Period Norway, attesting the strong connection between these two areas in this time period (Hines 1984, 284). The second century BC Gundestrup cauldron from Denmark carries human figures that are also depicted wearing tight-fitting trousers to the knee (Dunlevy 1989, 21). In the *Book of Kells*, dating to the ninth century, a figure in ‘tight knee-breeches, worn without a covering tunic which the Roman world would have regarded as barbaric’ (Owen-Crocker 2010, 176 fig. 135).

In contrast with the knee-breeches, the Friston figurine is portrayed in trousers indicated by a ‘groove across the back’ (Webster and Minter 2007, 225). Other contemporary objects carrying similar imagery include the bucket mount from Loveden Hill, the figure that grasps a pair of serpentine-creatures has lines at the ankle, suggesting trousers (Fig. 8.7g). A similar design – of a male figure gripping two serpentine creatures – is also wearing trousers rendered on a bracteate from Riseley, Horton Kirby, Kent (Owen-Crocker 2010, fig. 145). It is difficult to determine if the male figures depicted on the eighth-century Franks Casket are wearing ‘close-fitting trousers beneath their tunics’ or are ‘bare-legged’ (Owen-Crocker 2010, 188). Other figures on the Casket such as in the scene of the Magi are portrayed with ‘corrugated’ trousers – that might represent a ‘Northumbrian style, as very similar trousers are depicted on a Northumbrian coin’ (Owen-Crocker 2010, 188). The Friston figurine and the Loveden Hill figure, however, are not portrayed with tunics, but are rendered with skin-tight trousers only. A figure on the Viking Age cross from Bilton in the north of England depicts a tunic-less figure, but Owen-Crocker has argued that the ‘ornaments at the head and chest suggest the figures were intended to be clothed’ (Owen-Crocker 2010, 189). The Anglo-Saxon figures are not represented with ornaments – such as a pin or brooch – so it could be that the individuals are rendered topless or perhaps with skin-tight shirts.

The tapering caps of the Friston and Carlton Colville figurines, a figure slaying a dragon on a workbox from Burwell and the 3-dimensional human face on the earscoop from Coddanham, all parallel the caps worn by male figures on the eighth-century Franks Casket (Webster 2012b, 45). It is possible that these small figures might represent supernatural, mythical beings or humans dressed as deities or perhaps even human individuals that had a special status within society. The emergence of new

costumes indicates an increasing social need to represent individualistic figures that were not stylistically connected with animals or hybrid forms and this distinct change is evident by the eighth century. Despite the rarity of these figures, the development and portrayal of full-bodied clothed figures, genitalia, female individuals and naked and partially-nude figures in the seventh century indicates a major transformation in the way the body is conceptualised and expressed in visual culture. It is possible that internal and external factors were influencing and perhaps triggering this expression and re-conceptualisation of the human body. The portrayal of varied costumes implies the increasing importance of portraying an individualised human figure on high-status objects. This contrasts with other motifs such as the wolf-warrior on the die from Fen Drayton that could be reproduced numerous times on other media. In Late Antiquity, the increasing diversification of dress as portrayed in figurative art and described in textual sources has been suggested to represent the 'heterogeneity' and the 'complexities of late antique society' – a society 'reinventing itself under the pressure of changing historical conditions' (Parani 2007, 525). The seventh-century costumed figures, in particular the figurines, in their diversity perhaps reflects heterogeneity and complexities of the development of kingdoms and the increasing presence of the Church – key social transformations in the early Anglo-Saxon world.

7.5 TRANSFORMATIONS AND BODY-LORE

Peter Brown's thesis on the body in the early Christian world provides a useful analogical study on the development of the treatment and perceptions of the body for early Anglo-Saxon England. Brown argued that by the fifth century AD in Western Latin Europe, the individual body 'whose use and very right to exist was subject to predominantly civic considerations of status and utility' was now under new, Christian bodily lore (Brown 1991, 437). In this new world, the human body was thought to have been created by God and Adam and had 'brought upon it the double shame of death and lust' (Brown 1991, 437). New sensibilities to nudity were showing in the 'collective imagination' of the late antique world in late Roman codes of upper-class dress (Brown 1991, 437). The body was carefully covered and elite individuals were no longer presented with the 'taut musculature' and 'refined poise' that at one stage had signalled 'signs of the athlete and the potential warrior' (Brown 1991, 438). Emperors were no longer represented in the nude to show their unopposed power, the age of displaying the heroic body as a mark of upper-class status slowly came to an end with the increasing influence of the Church (Brown 1991, 437-438).

As Brown implies, shifts in perceptions of the body were part of the complex changes in North West Europe and the Mediterranean in the social and political world. The increasing presence of the Church gradually shifted the way individuals saw their own bodies and how high-status individuals presented their self in art and in the flesh. There was a change in the perception of nudity because of the transformation in belief. In the Old Norse world the 'self' was created within a gendered framework using extravagant clothing and costumes, animal-ornamented jewellery, weapons and other paraphernalia (Hedeager 2011, 133). Wiker argued that dress in the Scandinavian Iron Age (AD 400-1000) became more important resulting in the disappearance of the naked human form, perhaps influenced by Christianity (Wiker 2001 as cited in Hedeager 2011, 234). The Church had an impact on the presentation of the body in these societies, the manufacture of the early Anglo-Saxon 3-dimensional figurines is also probably a response to the new religion (Webster 2011, 474). In the Christian ethos, the separation of the human and animal is an 'essential part of Christian acceptance for the Anglo-Saxons' (Cramp 2008, 9). The presentation of the full-bodied, independent human form might be related to this new attitude. However, there is an unprecedented rise in the depiction of the biologically-sexed body upon high-status objects although these remain rare in the era when Christianity was introduced. This is in some ways paradoxical: the portrayal of the naked body becomes more overt with the increasing presence and influence of the Church. Perhaps this is yet another aspect of the experimentation and fluorescent innovation in practice that seems to be provoked by Christianity in the seventh century.

In order to further understand this dramatic shift in the portrayal of human representational art, this section explores other key social transformations that might be associated with these changes. Sociological studies recognise that shifts in representational art do not happen without cause, but are generally stimulated by ‘associated changes in people’s bodily capacities and the corporeal modes through which they express the world’ (Shilling 2008, 148). The development in art suggests that there was some kind of social need for the represented full-body, singular and individualised male or female human form. In order to examine such transformations in representation we need to explore the ‘re-formations of embodiment’ (Shilling 2008, 148), the ways in which the individual experienced and interacted with the world.

The body in Textual Sources (Law Codes)

In seventh-century England there are fundamental advances in the material and written world that demonstrate a shifting world view. The display and treatment of the human body are central to these social transformations. The development of written Law Codes, for example, portray the body as a ‘victim’ and account the compensation that individuals were entitled to if their body was injured by another (Richards 2003, 97). Law Codes were written across early medieval Europe; the earliest were set in Salic Francia and Burgundy and dated to the sixth century and by the seventh century laws were set in Kent, Alamannia, Lombardy, Riparian Francia and Visigothic Spain (Oliver 2011, 14). These codes were not based on a Roman model, but ‘demonstrate a sense of territorial self-identity and sometimes the influence of contemporary political relationships with other Germanic peoples’ (Oliver 2011, 10). Within these judicial documents, ‘personal injury tariffs’ or fines were set for damage to particular parts of the body (Oliver 2011, 12).

Crimes and punishment were catalogued and bodies and body parts acted as ‘counters within an economy of pain, payment and value’ (O’Brien O’Keeffe 1998, 212). The late seventh-century Law Codes hint at an earlier installation of bodily punishments, which then escalated in later laws (O’Brien O’Keeffe 1998, 215). In the Law of Wihtrud, a servant who did not receive permission from his lord to work on a Sunday had to pay a fine, but in the later law of Ine the slave would receive the lash or pay a fine (Attenborough 1922, 27, 37). It is suggested that this change in body perception in the codes hints at the growth of Christian influence as the church ‘moves from a peripheral influence to a major force in the governance’ and ‘identity of England’ (Richards 2003, 115). Hough recognised that the ecclesiastical penitentials might have had a minor influence on secular law, ‘such as the introduction of money payments into penitential handbooks and the infiltration of religious terminology into the codes issued by Anglo-Saxon kings’ (Hough 2000, 139). However, she argues that ‘the two forms of legislation appear to have operated largely independent until at least the end of the ninth century’ (Hough 2000, 139). There is thus little evidence to suggest that the Church had power over the secular law makers in the establishment of the law codes in the late seventh century.

The law codes recite bodily compensation in judicial law, which signals that the biological body was recognised as a potential subject over which power could be asserted. The Kentish laws describe that any ‘injuries inflicted on a free woman requires the same compensation as those inflicted on a free man’ (Oliver 2011, 181). Oliver speculates that likening fines for harming women to those for harming men could indicate regions where no gender distinctions were made in law, unlike other regions like Burgundy that had higher rates of fines for injuries to women (Oliver 2011, 181-182). Alongside injuries to bodily parts, these laws also include injury to genitalia. Within the context of early medieval Europe ‘the highest fine for damage to the genitals is found in the laws of Kent’ (Oliver 2011, 230).

Perhaps not surprisingly (given the established secular management and control over bodily compensation), the writing of the law codes coincides with the production of male and female biologically-sexed and nude figures in seventh-century representational art in Kent and Suffolk. The horned and naked man (bar a belt) represented upon the belt buckle from Finglesham and three 3-dimensional female figurines from Breach Downs, Broadstairs and Higham are distinct examples of

high-status objects that clearly display human genitalia. While the belt buckle was found in a male grave, the Broadstairs figure was found in a female grave. As discussed above, figures with genitalia are also present in the high-status male ship burial at Sutton Hoo. A male figure upon the purse-lid from Mound One is portrayed with a small, downward projecting penis. Similar to this figure on the purse-lid are two 3-dimensional male figurines from Carlton Colville and Friston also clearly rendered with penises. The 3-dimensional female figurine from Eyke (Suffolk) is portrayed with genitalia too.

The correlation between the written laws that acknowledge power over the biological body and the increased visibility of the nude body and genitals in art could signal developing uses of the body in elite socio-political expressions. Combined with this, the distinct use of new clothing depicted upon full-bodied figures might indicate the emergence of perceptions of individuality contrasting strongly to collective personhood signatures in art of the fifth and sixth centuries. The use of this type of imagery in Kent and Suffolk corresponds with a political moment, in which other evidence signals political exchange between England, Scandinavia and the Continent in this time period. The Sutton Hoo cemetery has been argued to have politically aligned itself with Scandinavia in response to the increasing influence and presence of Merovingia in Kent (Carver 1998b, 136). Decorated objects from a grave in Finglesham cemetery in Kent and Mound One at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk share a common stylistic theme of a male figure with horned-headress. However, the horned ceremonial figures on the Sutton Hoo helmet share a closer stylistic similarity with figures in Lincolnshire, the Borders and Scandinavia than the Kent example, which perhaps delineates the connections between elite individuals and social groups in Kent and East Anglia and the North.

Bodily Display in Funerary Ritual

In the seventh century there is a significant shift in the types of graves that contain objects with human designs. There is also a change in the types of objects that carried human imagery. With the diminishing presence of grave goods in female graves in the early to mid-seventh century, the number of objects with human imagery dwindles. Concurrent with the decrease in female objects carrying such art, it is apparent that the majority of objects carrying full-bodied human images were being deposited within high-status male graves. These graves include buried and cremated bodies interred within barrows. In this era, cremation was a minority rite, but it was largely restricted to the higher and elite segments of society (Bayliss et al. 2013, 526). The elite seem to have appropriated this mortuary rite and perhaps with it the metaphorical association of the 'second body' (Williams 2004b, 277). Cremation was a widespread rite in the late fifth to sixth centuries, Williams proposed that the post-cremation processes of collecting of the charred and fragmented remains metaphorically relates to the re-making of a 'unified whole or body' and the urn served as a 'skin' or 'second body' (Williams 2004b, 277). The notion of bodily fragmentation and reassembly seems to have been restricted to the elite few by the seventh century. The notion of the elite taking over existing practices is not new. In a study on cults of martyred royal saints, for example, Cubitt argued that these cults have 'lay origins' which were later taken over by high status ecclesiastics and the secular elite (Cubitt 2000, 61-65). The corpse and severed body of Edmund of East Anglia, for instance, decapitated in 869 by the Vikings, was collected by the lay people who 'built the first humble church in which Edmund's remains were placed' (Cubitt 2000, 64). Cubitt argued that lay veneration preceded 'official ecclesiastical recognition' and the cults was 'taken up and reshaped by the ecclesiastical and secular hierarchies' (Cubitt 2000, 64-65). The seventh-century elite seem to have remodelled the cremation practice. If we accept William's interpretation, it seems the elite asserted their authority over practices connected to bodily ritual and metaphor in an era when the portrayal of human representation was changing in type and usage.

It is possible that the elite uptake of the cremation rite, which could have metaphorical associations with the unified whole, and the production and usage of full-bodied images (perhaps connecting to bodily integrity and wholeness) could have been influenced by the Merovingian world via trading ports – like the *wic* in Ipswich. Throughout the fifth to seventh centuries in Christian Merovingia, great lengths were taken to preserve the corpse for the coming resurrection such as the use of perfume

and scent, embalming and adorning and positioning flowers and herbs around the corpse (Effros 2002, 70-75). The daughter of Sigibert II (d. 656), for instance, had a ‘cushion of herbs cradling her skull’ and a high-status female grave from Saint-Denis showed evidence of the corpse having been ‘submerged in a preservative solution and that a similar fluid was injected into her mouth’ (Effros 2002, 74). The preservation of the body seems to have been a prime concern for the mourners in the Merovingian world. It is possible that this concept of body preservation might have influenced the production of full-bodied figures and the deposition of workboxes, amulet bags and small pendants that are all related to healing, bodily wholeness and integrity and protection in conversion period Anglo-Saxon England (Meaney 1981, 259). Burial practices in this era ally with Merovingia (Welch 2011, 267) and it is possible that other concepts were also exchanged. The production of these items is not restricted to East Anglia, but these are also found in Kent – a region closely aligned with the Christian Merovingian world. The figurines from Kent share similar gestural expressions as those from East Anglia, suggesting that that in certain regions bodily gestures were becoming more formalised and were recognised by elite groups, which is explored further in Chapter 8. These Anglo-Saxon figures most importantly are not direct copies of Scandinavian figurines, their production was likely to have been influenced by internal and external forces, but they remain something of a novelty.

Returning to the high-status male graves in early Anglo-Saxon England, all the items carrying anthropomorphic representational art from high-status male graves are likely to have formed part of the personal regalia of the deceased or were positioned and displayed, at least, to signify symbols of office within the burial tableau. Such personal, bodily accessories were not necessarily positioned on the corpse, but were part of a strategic mortuary display. Even a cremated male interred within a barrow burial was deposited with an object carrying full-bodied human representation (Loveden Hill), dating to the seventh century (Fennell 1964, 136-148). In two high-status graves, the human image does not form part of human bodily attire or paraphernalia with the corpse, but is rendered on objects that adorned horses (Appendix 3, Grave Plans Figs. 5-6) (Carver 1998b, 89; SCCAS 2004). The horse-and-rider graves provide contrast in terms of display and presentation of image-carrying accessories, the horse played a role in the display of the deceased’s insignia we might assume. Although the incidence of female graves containing objects with human representation drops, the use and display of anthropomorphic depictions upon feminine objects does not cease altogether. An ornamented workbox from Burwell was found in a female grave, a Frankish seal-ring from Postwick carries an inscribed female name and a series of 3-dimensional figurines might have been worn by both men and women. This small selection of objects hints at a shift from functional, personal accessories worn on the body, to objects that perhaps pertain to other roles and activities. Although these objects were not all found in secure mortuary contexts, these novel object types indicate that human representational art remained of some significance for high-status female insignia.

As discussed above, the development of naked human figurative portrayal is concurrent with the writing of law codes, underscoring the establishment of the fiscal value of the body. It also correlates with other key social and political advancements in this time period. Execution cemeteries, for example, in the seventh and eighth centuries, signalling the development of defined areas for the undertaking of corporeal punishment, the display of the punished fleshy body and the interment of such decommissioned bodies (Buckberry and Hadley 2007). At Sutton Hoo, the eighth-century executed bodies that were interred around Mound Five signal the complex interplays between boundaries and the treatment of the dead, which has been explored elsewhere (Carver 2005, 347-8; Reynolds 2009, 239-240). Such interplays have been suggested to relate to an early kingship and the development of strictly delineated territorial power (Reynolds 2003, 2009, 1-33, 219, 23). Within the domestic sphere, the use of enclosures might have meant that individuals who inhabited and moved about farm/ residential units experienced a ‘very visible and real restriction of their domestic space’ (Reynolds 1999, 50, 2003, 130).

Certainly, this sense of boundedness and restriction was broadly concurrent with the increasingly well-defined spatial organisation of cemeteries and a greater attention to layout suggests that burial grounds were increasingly planned affairs in the seventh century. Such cemeteries include the square-alignment created by graves at Street House (Sherlock and Simmons 2008;

Sherlock 2012), linear arrangements at Carlton Colville (Lucy et al. 2009b, 386) and the Sutton Hoo mound burials that were constructed along the bank in a sequential pattern (Carver and Fern 2005, 307-311). Penannular ditches and rectilinear enclosures surrounding individual graves (Lucy 2000, 99-100) indicate a focus towards an ideology of boundedness and restriction. The gradual decrease in cremation rite and the predominance of inhumation practice (Williams 2006, 23) and a decline in burying with weaponry (Welch 2011, 279) occurred with a recognised increase in the deposition of small, portable and pendant-like objects in graves (Geake 1999, 203). Concurrent with such changes, isolated burials have been identified that demonstrate evidence of trauma, lack of furnishings or grave elaboration such as stone-covering and are suggested as burials with 'outcast status' (Reynolds 2009, 209).

Body Law, Politics and Power

In the seventh century, mortuary sites appear to be more strictly planned. Mortuary sites – such as Sutton Hoo (Suffolk) and Street House (Northumberland) – are indicative of people choreographing elaborate mortuary displays. The burial ground at Sutton Hoo has been interpreted as a 'theatre of death' (Carver 2000, 38; Carver and Fern 2005, 306). An analogous interpretation might be to consider these elaborate displays as a 'materialised narrative' (Price 2010, 40). Price suggested that the mortuary process and items that were deposited within the grave may have acted as references or motifs that connect the burial with other burials, thus creating a narrative relevant for that time and place (Price 2010, 40). Although Price focuses on Viking graves in Scandinavia, this theoretical approach to cemeteries is relevant for some mortuary sites in seventh-century England. The new and elaborate mortuary displays indicate that this was an era in which individual graves conveyed concepts of social, political and cultural identity. Moreover, the ritualised performance of burying the dead at boundaries and possibly as outcasts or deviants and creating fixed locations for judicial bodily punishment, are perhaps material demonstrations of authority of an emergent elite. In this context of bodily display and practises, the development of full-bodied human figures portrayed with enactment poses is perhaps not altogether a surprise. Figures with bird-headaddresses, weaponry or interacting with animals, in animal skin and in the act of slaying beasts are likely to have been based upon oral narrative and it can be conjectured that they are also based on real ceremonial performances or enactments. In the rendering of these motifs upon personal accessories of elite individuals, social groups may have been aligning themselves with myth and legends shared across the North Sea littoral; what is more, the rarity of these designs might signal a restricted sovereignty over the portrayal of mythological scenes and figures. It is unclear if the deceased individuals or the mourners, who buried the individual with ornamented objects, were connected with the implementation of law codes and bodily punishment. It can, however, be suggested that in this time period, social groups and individuals seem to have increasingly exercised governance over people through the treatment and display of the physical body and human representational art.

In contrast to the figures that might refer to pre-Christian mythology or enactment, the bezel from a Frankish gold signet ring carrying figurative imagery might commemorate a secular ceremonial event. This object from Postwick (Norfolk) carries the inscription of a female name and two figures, one male and another female. Although these figures are rudimentarily depicted their close positioning together has led Webster to interpret them as 'embracing' each other (Webster 1998/1999a, 31). The text upon this item reads *Baldehydis* which, as Webster points out, 'would have had an Anglo-Saxon cognate form, *Bealdhild*' (Webster 1998/1999a, 32). This bezel might have been associated with an Anglo-Saxon female who married Clovis II in c. 648 and who took on the role as Queen-regent after Clovis died in c. 657 (Webster 1998/1999a, 32). Interestingly, they are not portrayed with clothes or genitalia, but their bodily positions can be paralleled with the double figure gold foils found in Scandinavia. These figures, dressed in garments and sometimes dress fittings, have also been suggested to refer to marriage and marital law (Simek 2002). Although this is one object and it is uncertain how it ended up in early Anglo-Saxon Norfolk, this type of imagery is closer in style to the 3-dimensional figurines given the absence of weaponry or animals. The artistic focus,

for the figures on the bezel and the majority of the figurines, is the bodily gesture, biological sex and human social relationships.

7.6 CONCLUSIONS

The inclusion of human heads in representational animal art and the eventual prevalence of anthropomorphic designs indicate a transformation in belief systems; the human form became a predominant image in the visual expression in eastern England. If horse heads are associated with a pre-Christian form of divination, the increasing dominance of the human heads upon cruciform brooches might imply a shift in ideology towards the human body and its bodily substances as symbols of prophecy. This interpretation does not offset the suggestion that forms which appear to exude from the nose and mouth might symbolically refer to the management of speech, analogous to ideas found in later Norse sagas. It is no surprise, therefore, to find human heads in the ensuing Style II designs, albeit these are largely restricted to high-status male mortuary contexts at Sutton Hoo – and the development of the full-bodied human form in three and two dimensions. Some of these figures share common costumes and gestures, which marks a break in the tradition of representing human figures with helmets or diadems – and the emergence of new bodily gestures and sexualised imagery. The later 3-dimensional figurines contrast with the 2-dimensional figures. The majority of these figurines are not represented with weaponry, animals or animal costumes that might refer to other ceremonial performances and ritualised contexts.

Early Anglo-Saxon communities may not have perceived that the body had monetary value, yet the archaeological evidence indicates the human form was beginning to be manipulated in new and enhanced ways in the very era in which control over corporeality and perceptions of the body seem to have been changing. There is a striking paradox between the emergence and use of full-bodied human representation in terms of the portrayal of the exposed and clothed human form and the reality of bodily punishment and mutilation in seventh-century England. Bodily display and performance, as evident in the archaeological material and historical documents, was not only shifting with the developments of kingdoms, but was perhaps playing a fundamental role in the display of power and the agency of social and kin groups. Full-bodied, gesturing figurative representations emerged in a period in which ritualised performances and narrative formed a crucial part of the display and exercising of power and control for emerging elites. The figures perhaps evoked and commemorated mythological narratives and secular kin links through costume, props, bodily gestures and the portrayal of the biological male and female individuals. The study of possible stylistic influences indicates that the costume of full-bodied, early Anglo-Saxon figures might have taken influence from the Continent and Scandinavia. Although the Scandinavian world (and to a lesser extent Merovingia) portrayed biological sex, it seems more likely that this portrayal in the seventh-century may have been an internal development in early Anglo-Saxon England, concomitant to the emergence of other corporeal practices.

CHAPTER 8

Gesture and Art

The previous chapter recognised six considerable developments in early Anglo-Saxon representational art in Lincolnshire and East Anglia:

- an increasing occurrence of anthropomorphic imagery
- an emphasis on human bodily orifices
- the development of 3-dimensional human figures with new bodily postures and the presence of more than one gestural expression
- the development of individual character using costume and bodily detail
- the emergence of female representation and biological sex

These developments were argued to be concurrent with social changes in the early Anglo-Saxon world; archaeological and historical evidence indicates that elite social groups were implementing judicial law and bodily punishment. Mortuary traditions become structured and bounded space became more prevalent within apparent elite complexes suggesting a shift in social dynamics. Transformations in the mortuary, settlement and representational art together signal new management and conceptualisation of the human body. The previous chapter identified that the portrayal of the biological body may have formed part of an artistic tradition stemming from Scandinavia, but the lack of direct parallels indicates that these full-bodied figures were probably conceptualised in early Anglo-Saxon England. It is also clear that Romano-British and Roman artistic traditions may have exerted an influence on these designs. The development of the rendering of biological sex seems to have been closely connected to the emergence of a repertoire of new gestural expressions. This chapter explores these gestural expressions and their context. There is a paucity of research on human bodily gestures in early Anglo-Saxon England even though there has been a recent inundation of published research on early Anglo-Saxon art (e.g. Cramp 2008; Dickinson 2009; Pollington et al. 2010; Karkov 2011; Webster 2012a). Focussing on a range of figurative gestural expressions evident in the Lincolnshire and East Anglian corpus, bodily gestures are examined in the context of relevant historical sources and stylistic parallels.

8.1 GESTURAL ART

In the medieval period, up until the thirteenth century, hand gestures held more power than documents (Schmitt 1991, 60). Art-historical studies have identified the significance of human bodily expression in medieval and Roman contexts (Brilliant 1963; Clanchy 1979; Barasch 1990; Gameson 1995, 138-9; Dodwell and Graham 2000; Corbeil 2004; Heyn 2010). In medieval discussions, the *Sachsenspiegel* provides a glimpse of human bodily expression and the role of gesture in the courts and church in medieval Europe (Barasch 1990, 5-12). Dating to the thirteenth century, this document was the first significant manuscript that detailed the German customs, laws and material culture, which influenced much of Europe for three-hundred years (Dobozsy 1999, 1). Although the represented bodily gestures in the *Sachsenspiegel* may not have been performed in reality in medieval courts, these gestures might have had symbolic occasional value (Barasch 1990, 7).

In early Anglo-Saxon art very few gestures can be identified in the portrayal of the human form and figure. Even in post-conversion England, figural narrative scenes are quite rare and depictions centre on iconic scenes involving Christ, the Virgin Mary, the apostles or saints and angels (Hawkes 2005, 352). In the eighth and ninth centuries this 'deliberate phenomenon' was deployed, some think as a means of portraying the 'Ministry of Christ' (Hawkes 2005, 365). The stone monuments sporting figural carvings were positioned and displayed in specific settings to 'exhibit and celebrate, in permanent and public form, the function and identity of the Church in Anglo-Saxon England' (Hawkes 2005, 365). In Anglo-Scandinavian stone sculpture, gestural figural art is also very rare (Bailey 2000, 16) with examples including secular martial, armed figures (Bailey 2000, 16; Hadley 2008, 275-278). These figures have been considered to represent the 'assertion of distinctive aristocratic military ideals' connected with new political leadership and economic changes in North East England (Bailey 2000, 16). There are also figural scenes that appear to show scenes from Norse mythology, such as Tyr's binding of Fenrir and Thor's fishing expedition, but again these are rare (Bailey 2000, 17).

Only 11 objects have been identified in this study carrying human figures that are represented with a gesture of some kind. These date to the sixth and seventh centuries and carry designs that show a particular human bodily posture (Vol. 2, Fig. 4.1-4.3). These include human heads with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic limbs include the raised hand to the face, the orans and gripping gesture; all dating to the sixth century. The majority of these designs are carried upon feminine dress fittings, masculine sword fittings or drinking mounts. Full-bodied, seventh-century figures are positioned with their hands raised to the shoulders; with weapons; hands on the waist; hands folded at the waist; and hands on the chest and waist. The majority of these figures are found upon objects found in male graves including a helmet and a purse-lid; metal-detected or stray-finds cannot be securely assigned to a context. The rarity of such gestures upon metalwork could be explored if such designs were carried largely on other materials such as textile, leather and wood or point to a general variety in human figural imagery. The Church is known to have condemned the use of expressive bodily gestures (Barasch 1976, 35). The sixth-century Spanish bishop Martin of Braga, counselled a 'moderate way of life, expressly including moderation in behaviour, bodily movement and gesture' (Barasch 1976, 35). Such advice was also given by Alcuin of York in the eighth century, who instructed his pupils to 'avoid exaggerated gesticulation' (Barasch 1976, 35). These texts imply that constraint of secular performance was encouraged by the Christian Church.

Recent scholarship has identified a connection between the miniatures in the *Sachsenspiegel* manuscript and image-bearing artefacts termed *guldgubber*. *Guldgubber* are small portable objects, they range from 7-8mm to over 30mm in height and are made of gold foil; the image is created by stamping the foil or the foil was cut out to form a human or animal figure (Watt 1999; Lamm 2004, 41; Ratke and Simek 2006, 259). There are three main categories of anthropomorphic imagery on *guldgubber*: single human figures, pairs of human figures and animal double-*gubber* (Lamm 2004, 41). This object type was in use during the Migration Period to the Viking Age and these are frequently found in timber long halls of elites (Watt 1999, 174). Margareth Watt recognised that the varied and repeated designs on these objects indicate that messages and meaning may be contained in their human gestures, postures and bodily paraphernalia (Watt 1999, 174). These suggest that the human figures might have played some symbolic role within socio-political and ritual environments in Migration Period Scandinavia.

Human figures with bent feet and knees and with the palms of their hands showing have been paralleled with illustrations from the manuscript *Sachsenspiegel*, which depicts a number of corpses in similar gestures (Fig. 8.1) (Ratke and Simek 2006, 260-263). In this interpretation, the body gesture does not indicate dance and life, but it implies death or the dead. *Guldgubber* imagery may also be connected with legal transactions; the gestures of pairs of human figures or *doublegubber* indicate types of marriages as recorded in medieval texts (Ratke and Simek 2006, 263). A female figure, for example, grasping a man by his wrist has been argued to reflect the medieval Friedel-marriage, i.e. the widow marriage; the woman being the active party selecting him (Ratke and Simek 2006, 261). There are other gestural motifs contained in other medieval manuscripts, including the

Norwegian *Speculum Regale* (or the King's Mirror). In this manuscript, an initiation ceremony includes kneeling, kissing and placing the hand upon a sword pommel; Larson first recognised that this gesture shares a similarity with a description in the



Fig. 8.1 Corpses from medieval manuscript illuminations (a) detail from the *Sachsenspiegel* manuscript (b-c) guldgubber 'wraiths' from Bornholm Museum Drawings by author, not to scale.

Anglo-Saxon poem the Wanderer (Larson 1908, 461). In this way, guldgubbers are thought to be connected to the expression of kingship and social legalities. Although there is a substantial time gap between the Migration Period and the thirteenth century, it has been noted that the conservative nature of the legal procedures might result in laws and legal behaviour remaining fairly static over the *longue durée* (Simek 2002, 107). Despite the gap in time between the dataset discussed here and these late sources, it is important to not dismiss the possibility that such gestures survived in secular contexts or even re-emerged in later tradition (Brundle 2013).

8.2 RITUAL, RELIGION and GESTURAL ART FROM FUNERARY CONTEXTS

This next section examines early Anglo-Saxon gestural art and analogous designs from Late Antiquity and contemporary non Anglo-Saxon contexts. The art of the sixth and seventh centuries emerges at a time of religious and cultural transformations, caught between the end of Roman Britain and the development of new powerful 'Germanic' identities (Dickinson 2005; Webster 2012a). By the first part of the seventh-century, mortuary archaeology provides 'evidence of a self-conscious pagan resistance to Christianity and its political baggage' (Burnell and James 1999, 96). Martin Carver proposed that the elite seventh-century princely burial ground at Sutton Hoo was choreographed in response to the increasing presence of the Christian mission and the Christian alliance between Merovingia and Kent (Carver 1998b, 136). The boat-burial and the objects found within the chamber (e.g. defensive kit that was ornamented with Style II animal imagery and human figurative art) might have signalled a sense of solidarity with pre-Christian Scandinavian ideals (Carver 1998b, 136, 168). Other elite barrow burials such as Asthall (Oxfordshire) might represent an event of 'transculturation' (Dickinson and Speake 1992, 123). It has been proposed that these high-status graves embodied elite Anglian burial practice 'in order to resist external domination, in the context of a small, independent polity threatened by more powerful, nouveaux-Christian neighbours' (Burnell and James 1999, 96). It is probable that high-status religious figures and secular elites that bought into the Christian faith thus provoked 'politically motivated pagan reactions' within the early Anglo-Saxon world (Burnell and James 1999, 96). The shifts in human representational art in the late sixth to seventh century suggest that this so-called pagan reaction was not restricted to the

seventh century. Interestingly and perhaps not unsurprisingly, the development of early Anglo-Saxon human representation broadly corresponds with the growth and impact of Christian imagery in the Byzantine world. Indeed, Kitzinger pointed to three distinguishable phases in Christian religious iconography:

‘First, the era of tentative beginnings in the third century; then starting with the triumph of Christianity under Constantine and continuing to the reign of Justinian, the great era of expansion; and, finally, the most critical and least well-defined stage, which lasted from the middle of the sixth to the early eighth century’ (Kitzinger 1980, 141)

In these later stages of Christian art, the human image was no longer an ‘objective statement’, but developed into a ‘conduit or receptacle of divine power’ the visual form was perceived to have ‘special properties which enabled it to hold or attract that power’ (Kitzinger 1980, 156). Kitzinger suggested that the eighth-century ‘iconoclastic crisis’ of the Byzantine world coincided with two other developments in art: the appearance of Christian art in Northern Europe and the art of Islam (Kitzinger 1980, 141). In the art of Islam, figural imagery in religious contexts was rejected, while the Northern people developed ornaments and manuscript illuminations contributing to figural art (Kitzinger 1980, 158-160).

In eighth-century Anglo-Saxon England, the emphasis shifted from ornamenting pagan metalwork with representational art to Christian manuscripts and stone sculptures as the major media (Webster 2012a, 132-138). The emphasis on producing human imagery upon metal in the sixth and seventh centuries and the general absence of human imagery upon eighth-century metalwork thus correlates with broader shifts in the Byzantine world. For early Christian Britain, Brown and Herren have suggested that before the late seventh and early eighth centuries, the paucity of figurative Christian art might relate to a theological perception of the time – that representational art may have been viewed as contrary to the teachings of the scriptures (Brown and Herren 2001, 63). Irish Christian art thus offered little or no source of influence for the portrayal of the human form. The only analogous imagery can be located in the addorsed and affronted heads and disembodied heads discussed in Chapter 4. Late Roman Britain might, however, have exerted some influence on human representational art. Indeed, Wilhelm Holmqvist suggested that the anthropomorphic style phenomenon must have emerged exclusively from the late Roman world (Holmqvist 1951, 59). Whilst figurative Germanic art may have been influenced by Roman art (Kendrick 1938), it has been recently suggested by Capelle that the concealment of the human form in Style I was particularly ‘un-Roman’ (Capelle 2003, 41). Roman art is argued to have been interpreted by the Germanic people and reused in a new social world. The early Anglo-Saxon gestural designs might thus embody a transformed meaningful significance. The presence of human bodily parts within designs, in particular hands with thumbs, for example, has been recognised as an important motif - a distinctive symbol of the human form (Capelle 2003, 41). The Anglo-Saxon people incorporated a limited series of bodily gestures within their visual culture, but as yet we do not know the full-extent of gestural art and its purpose. This section examines the stylistic influence of each gestural expression in thematic sub-sections.

Orans Gesture

Roman figural iconography does not seem to have influenced the types of gestural expressions that were identified in this study. Indeed the designs can be associated more with Frankish or Migration Period Scandinavian designs. The orans gesture, for example, which appears in early Anglo-Saxon art, is painted on the walls of a late fourth-century house-church at Lullingstone, Kent (Potter 1997, 63, fig. 47; Gannon 2010, 83). The figures are represented in late Antique robes with their hands stretched out, this gesture is depicted in Fig. 8.2a (Henig 1995, 141). Despite this clear late Roman context, this expression is found upon objects from Continental Europe and to a lesser extent in Scandinavia (Fig. 8.2bi-iii) (Watt 2004, 205; Young 2009). This indicates that multiple sources of influence are possible and that such motifs might indicate a shared

gestural tradition linking the pagan and Christian spheres within the North Sea littoral. The use of this orans gesture in England and abroad might imply that this gesture was known to individuals or communities in early Anglo-Saxon England. As for the meaning of this posture, the orans position has been suggested to have been an expression used within both pagan and Christian spheres and associated with piety and prayer (Jensen 2000, 35; Laing 2010, 78).

The rarity of this gesture in early Anglo-Saxon England makes the objects carrying such designs highly distinctive within the data set. Only two brooches - from Snetterton (Norfolk) and Scampton (Lincolnshire) carry this type of design (Fig. 8.2c-d). This gesture, however, is not restricted to female accessories; the male barrow burial at Taplow (Buckinghamshire), for example, contains objects that carry similar imagery. The drinking horn mounts are rendered with a row of male human heads with stylised or zoomorphic raised limbs, perhaps positioned in the orans position (Fig. 8.2e). Although this grave is outside the geographical focus of this thesis, it provides a useful indication that rare examples of this motif are found in at least one high-status male mortuary context.

This regional sample indicates a distinct absence of human figures with their hands in the orans position. Watt identifies only a handful of objects carrying this gesture, including a gold-foil figure and a bracteate (Watt 2004, 205). This gesture is more frequently found upon Merovingian belt buckles (Young 2009, figs. 24.2, 24.5). These plate-buckles are suggested to have been made for elite secular individuals who were ‘concerned about protecting themselves spiritually’ (Young 2009, 351). In a similar way, the portrayal of this gesture is found in Scandinavia, restricted to guldgubber from Sorte Muld and a bracteate from Skåne (Watt 2004, 205 fig. 33). These have been suggested to represent the divine epiphany or an expression of adoration shown by a non-divine worshipper (Hauck 1993, 456; Watt 2004, 205). This posture might well have been part of a repertoire of gestures used in daily practice or ritual expressions relevant for the secular elites or a few officials (Watt 2004, 204).

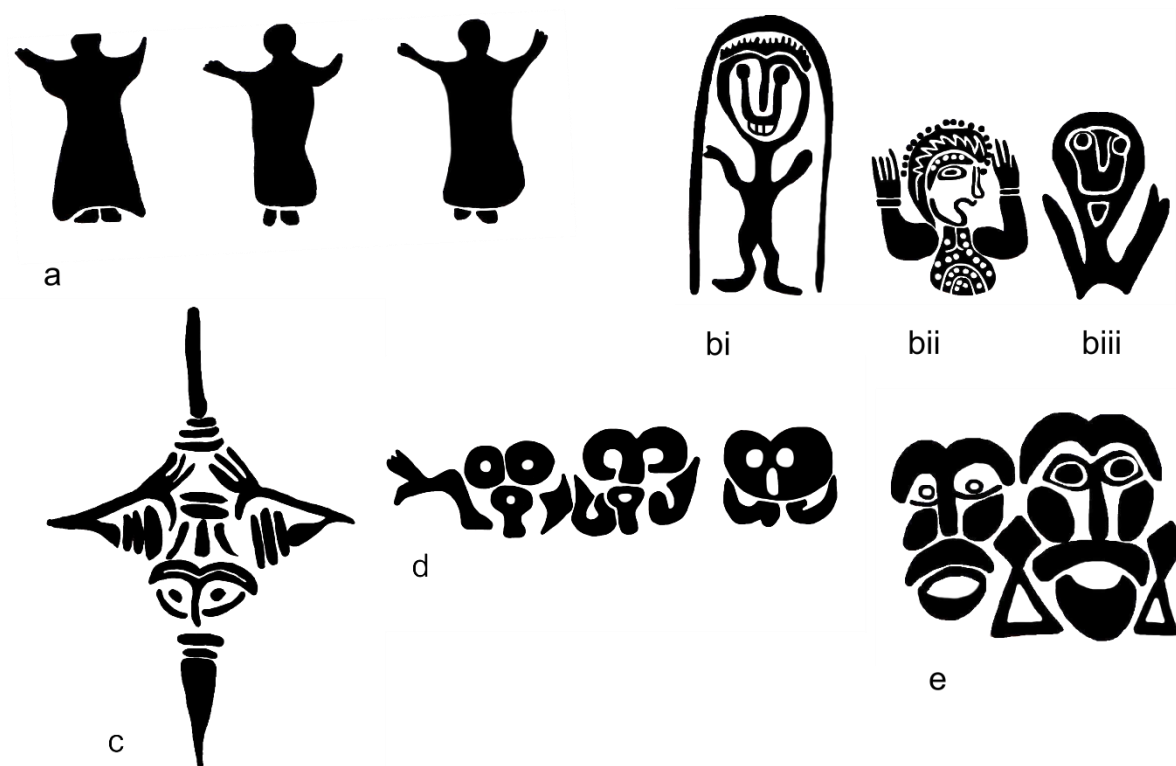


Fig. 8.2 Illustrations of the orans gesture a) Wall from a late fourth-century house-church at Lullingstone (Kent) (bi) belt buckle from Merovingia (bii) bracteate from Skåne (after Watt 2004, fig. 33e) (biii) gold foil figure from Sorte Muld 349 (after E. Koch in Watt 2004, fig. 33d) (c) square-headed brooch from Snetterton (Norfolk) (d) GSHB from Scampton (Lincolnshire) (e) rim mount of a small drinking horn from Taplow (Buckinghamshire) Drawings by author, not to scale.

Hands on the chest and the waist

There are 12 known 3-dimensional, human figurines in early Anglo-Saxon England all dating to the seventh century. Five of these carry a hand on the chest and the waist area (Brundle 2013). Three of these are from Suffolk (Carlton Colville, Halesworth and Eyke) and two are located in Kent (Higham and Breach Downs), see Fig. 8.3c, and e. In Anglo-Saxon literature the chest was recounted as having a symbolic significance, the chest acted as a site of mental capacity. Bazelmans, for example, argued that the author of *Beowulf* accounted that wisdom resided in and stemmed from, the heart or the mind (Bazelmans 2000, 348). In Late Anglo-Saxon Christian contexts, it was thought that ‘mental activity happens in enclosed bodily spaces, usually localised in or around the *heorte*, or in the *breost*’ (Lockett 2011, 63). The hand postures that are arranged near the chest might semantically associate with these later perceptions of the body and the location of thought and wisdom. However, to gain a better perspective on how this gesture came into being this section turns to explore stylistic parallels. A recent study of the figurines has explored stylistic influence, function and role of figurines in society (Brundle 2013). In this article it was argued that some of the figurines with this hand posture share a stronger stylistic connection with Merovingian Christian figural art than Migration Period Scandinavian figurines. Since this publication, further comparable artefacts and art have come to light, which enhance the argument and suggests a wider scale of usage.

Similar to the orans position, the hands on the chest and the waist gesture is paralleled in Roman and Romano-British art. The Venus character has five classical gesture schemes (Lindgren 1980, 73), one of which shares some similarity with the Anglo-Saxon figurines (Fig. 8.3f). The *Venus Pudica* position – standing nude while covering her breasts and pubic area with her hands – broadly correlates with four of the figurine’s hand posture. A Roman figurine from Malton (North Yorkshire) has been ascribed to this position with her right hand on the chest and the left near the pubic area (Durham 2012). A Romano-British figurine from Wiltshire is positioned with her hands resting on her waist, but this has also been ascribed as an adaptation of the *Venus Pudica* gesture (Green 1978, plate 35; Lindgren 1980, 79 plate 43). According to Emma Durham’s catalogue of Roman figurines in Britain, only one possible example is extant – the figurine from Malton, which perhaps suggests that this posture might well have been represented in Roman Britain. While the figurines from Higham, Breach Down and Eyke associate with this Venus gesture based on the use of nudity and the hand-on-chest-and-waist posture, only the Breach Down figurine is represented with its right hand on its chest. The other figurines are rendered with the left hand on the chest.

This might imply an association with fertility (Pestell 2012). A distinctly male figurine, however, is also rendered with his left hand on the chest and right on the waist. His covered penis is clearly present, but we might expect this to have been represented erect if intended to convey a sense of fecundity. This hand posture might have related to fertility established in the Roman period and re-kindled in the seventh century. Other contemporary parallels from Scandinavia and Europe provide a different potential context.

This hand gesture can be recognised on figures rendered on prehistoric and Migration Period Scandinavian artefacts. On the Gundestrup cauldron from Denmark a number of human figures are depicted with heads, limbs and torsos (2nd century BC). The figures are represented so that their left hands rest on the centre of the chest and the right hands rest immediately below this (Fig. 8.3g-h). There are several bronze figurines from Scandinavia, two of which are stylistically related to each other and the cauldron figures. Fig. 8.3i illustrates a bronze statue from Denmark represented with its right hand to its breast and the left arm on the waist; although it is a stray find it is stylistically dated to the third- to the fourth century AD (Jørgensen et al. 2003, 390). Another bronze figurine dating to the fifth century again from Denmark demonstrates a hand gesture similar to three Anglo-Saxon figurines with the left hand flat against the right side of the chest, see Fig. 8.3j (Brøndsted 1960, 315). The raised hand near the face and a hand on the chest design are also represented within Migration Period Scandinavian figural art. A bracteate from Skovlund (Denmark) and gold foil figures from Bornholm and Uppåkra (Sweden) are rendered with the

same gesture, see Fig. 8.3k-m (Watt 2004, 207 fig. 15). These finds suggest similar hand gestures were in use in pre-Christian contexts over the long term or re-emerged at particular socio-cultural, political or temporal moments (Brundle 2013, 211).

Contemporary Parallels

Scholars of early Anglo-Saxon representational art often look to Scandinavia to find stylistic parallels and textual analogies, perhaps because of the recent focus on identifying shared belief systems within the Northern World. In the Merovingian world varied disembodied heads and full-bodied human figures ornamented metallic, stone and textile objects, which often express a Christian ideology (Salin 1959, 255-420; Young 2009). It is not surprising, therefore, that four of the seventh-century figurines share a close stylistic affinity with human figures that are represented upon a series of contemporary high-status Merovingian and Lombardic Christian objects.

A house-shaped reliquary was discovered beneath a church altar at the abbey of Fleury, Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire in Loire (France), dating to the seventh or eighth century and is made from wood and copper-alloy plates with gold foil (Perin and Fefferm 1985). The box measures 133mm in length, 112mm in height, 51mm in width and evidence suggests that it could have been suspended and possibly worn on the chest (Perin and Fefferm 1985, 142). All of the figures are rendered in gold foil, made through repoussé. Both of the longest sides carry images of six supposed angels (on one side one figure is represented with a sword, identified as the Archangel Michael). Represented upon one end of the object a male or female human figure without a mouth is rendered in an orans position (prayer gesture) with raised hands. The human figures upon the longest sides are represented with five types of bodily postures (Fig. 8.3n). Remarkably, one of these postures directly corresponds with three of the figurines from early Anglo-Saxon England. The Halesworth, Eyke, Carlton Colville and Higham figurines are all represented with their right arm across the waist and left hand on the chest. The reliquary carries four figures that are represented with their right hand on chest and left hand at the waist and two figures with their left hand on the chest and right hand at the waist.

A Latin inscription on the reliquary provides a glimpse of possible commissioners and the act of gift-giving; the inscription reads that a person named Mumma made this reliquary for the love of St Mary and St Peter (Perin and Fefferm 1985, 142). The name Mumma can be ascribed to a male or female individual and so the person might have been an abbot or abbess (Perin and Fefferm 1985, 91, 142). It has been suggested that this reliquary was presented to the abbey by a lady named Mumma (Hubert et al. 1969, 281). It is equally possible that Mumma was an elite secular individual that donated a gift to the ecclesiastical institution. Interestingly, the figures represented upon the reliquary lack religious paraphernalia, bar the Archangel Michael who carries a sword. We might expect, for example, such religious figures to carry a book or a bell and might this, therefore, imply that this gesture was not a religious gesticulation? The repeated postural designs alongside the recognised orans position might imply that this posture evoked some authoritative understanding derived from the secular world.

From Cividale in Italy, an eighth-century stone altar carries a scene of the adoration of the Magi and the Visitation of the Virgin (Fig. 8.4a). Along the longest side there is a representation of the Adoration of the three Kings of the East. Standing beside or behind the seated Virgin and the infant Jesus, there is a female figure adorned in a vale and pleated dress that terminates near her ankles. This figure stands with her left hand on her chest and the right on her pelvis. This bodily posture directly parallels some of the figures upon the Merovingian reliquary and the 3-dimensional Anglo-Saxon figurines. Similar to the reliquary from France, the altar was built by a secular high-status individual - by Duke Ratchis in c. AD 734 through donations by Count Pemmo and was finished around c. AD 737 (Hubert et al. 1969, 247-248). It is possible that this woman might represent a religious figure, perhaps Mary's Cousin Elizabeth, whom is depicted in the Visitation scene, for example. Equally, however, the figure might represent a secular elite e.g. the Duke's Roman wife, Tassia. Ratchis strove to reduce the disparity between the Lombards and the Romans (Bury et al. 1913, 215) and might have presented his Roman wife into the adoration of the Magi scene, perhaps representing her in an authoritative posture. Her stance is different from the other figures.

She directly faces the viewer and she does not engage with the other figures, which perhaps communicates to the viewer some form of differentiation. Interestingly, an elephant ivory panel from North-East France, probably Lorraine, which dates to the late ninth century, carries a similar image of the Adoration of the Magi, see Fig. 8.4b (V&A 150-1866 Williamson 2010, 202-3). Again, standing near the Virgin and her infant is a figure. However, this individual is male and is suggested to represent Joseph (Williamson 2010, 202-3). The figure stands with his right hand on his chest and the left near the abdomen. Although the ivory panel was manufactured about a hundred years after the altar, the repetition of this hand gesture within this particular scene implies the continued significance of this particular gestural expression.¹⁵ It is also worth noting that this posture appears again on an early to mid-thirteenth century, pewter mirror-case found in Perth, which carries four individuals: one on horseback that is suggested to be Tristram from the Arthurian romance (Hinton 2006, 212 fig. 7.5). Two of the three standing figures are represented with their right hand on their chest and the left near their waist; these figures are portrayed with headdresses (possibly crowns?) and are cloaked.

Even more compelling is clear evidence that this hand posture was in use in pre-Christian Europe in the ninth century too. A stone sculpture, for example, called the Zbruch idol from Ukraine is four sided and each surface has a human figure with gesturing hands (Simek 2002, plate 24a). At least two of the figures are holding items such as a horn and a ring, which perhaps signify the apparatus connecting to a pre-Christian belief system (Slupecki 1994, 223). All of these figures (including those

¹⁵ The reversal of the hand gesture might relate to a gender distinction.

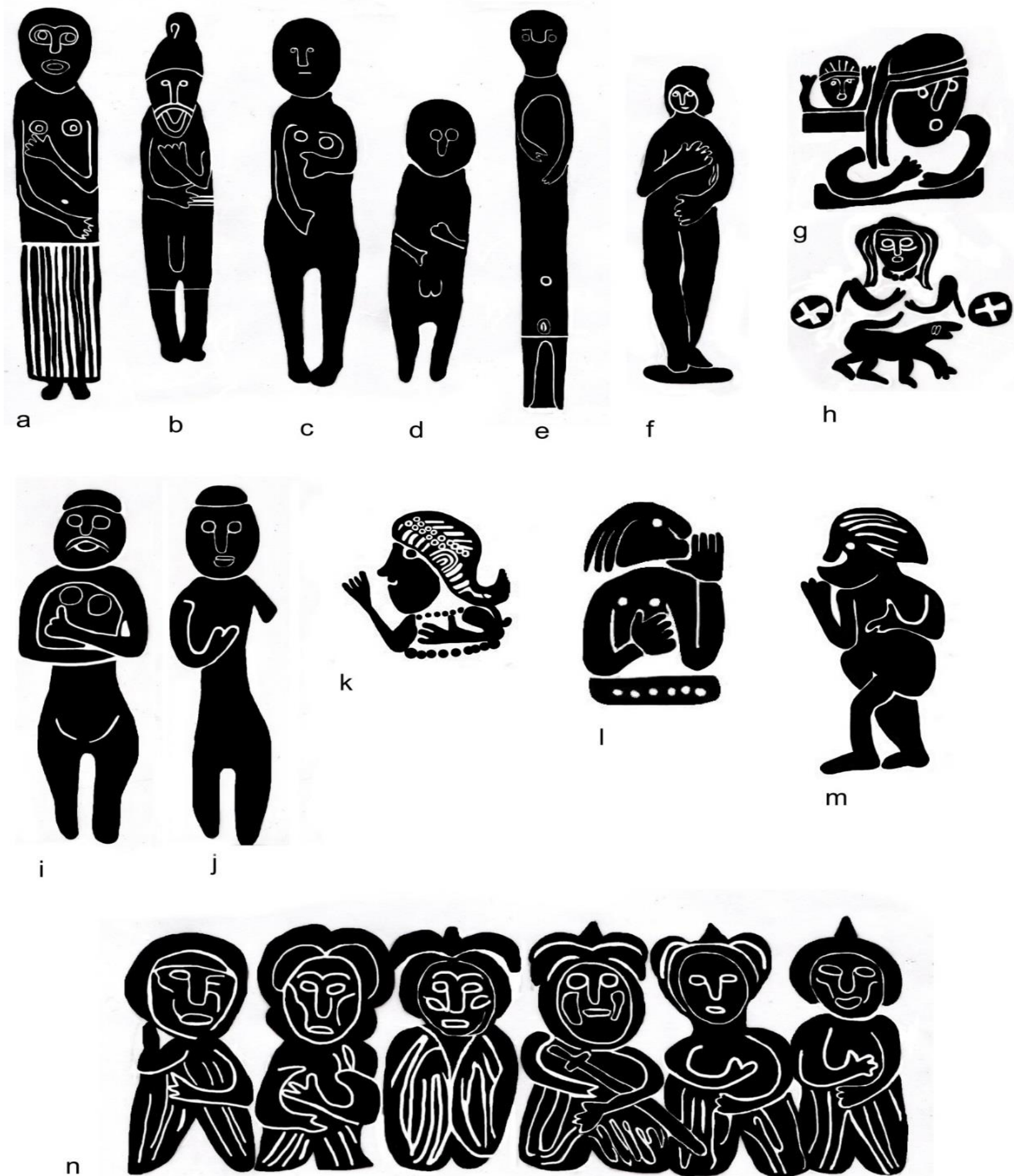


Fig. 8.3 Parallel hand on chest and waist gestures from Scandinavia and Continental Europe (a) Halesworth (Suffolk) (b) Carlton Colville (Suffolk) (c) Higham, Kent (d) Eyke (Suffolk) (e) Breach Downs, Kent (f) example of the *Venus Pudica* gesture (g-h) Gundestrup cauldron from Denmark (i) 3rd-4th century AD figurine from Denmark (j) fifth-century figurine from Denmark (k) bracteate from Skovlund (Denmark) (after Watt Figure34d) (l) guldgubber from Sorte Muld, Bornholm (after Watt E. Koch in Watt Figure34c) (m) guldgubber from Uppåkra, Sweden (n) reliquary from Fleury, Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire in Loire (France). Drawings by author, not to scale.

holding items) are positioned with the right hand on the chest and the left hand on the waist, see Fig. 8.4c. This statue carries a



Fig. 8.4 Bodily gestures from Continental Europe and early Anglo-Saxon England (a) eighth-century stone altar from Cividale, Italy (b) ninth-century elephant ivory panel from North-East France (c) ninth-century Zbruch idol from Ukraine (d) pendant from Gammertingen, Germany (e) repoussé foil from the Staffordshire Hoard. Drawings by author, not to scale.

series of human gestural expression, embodying the complexity of bodily expression in a pre-Christian context. Other gestures

include the orans position and a kneeling posture. Kneeling figures are also represented upon objects from the Staffordshire Hoard and upon the pendant from Gammertingen in Germany Grave 20, see Fig. 8.4d-e (Werner 1935, 96). It is out of the scope of this thesis to explore the reversed hand posture of the ninth-century ivory carving and the stone idol within its cultural context, but gesture and gender differentiation are a prominent theme that has emerged from this discussion. This suite of images and these gestures were present and used in non-Christian and Christian societies between the sixth and ninth centuries.

Gestural Art from Funerary Objects

One of the most frequent gestures in early Anglo-Saxon art is the raised hand to the face. This gestural motif was portrayed in Roman and Byzantine figural biblical and pagan scenes in order to convey 'inner brooding sorrow' (Maguire 2007, 139). The fourth-century Weepers Sarcophagus from Sidon (Lebanon), for example, displays varied standing female mourners, each taking a subtly different posture of brooding sorrow: 'one rests her chin on her hand; another lays her cheek on her palm; while another, more emphatically, presses her mantle against her eyes' (Maguire 2007, 142 fig. 33). An example of this figure is illustrated in Fig. 8.5a. A silver vase from Berthouville (France) is ornamented with scenes from the Iliad; a group of Trojans mourn as the body of Hector is weighed for ransom (Maguire 2007, fig. 34). The figures are all represented in varied mourning postures. Several of the figures raise a hand to the face, one figure rests his raised right hand on his left arm and another figure stands with clutched hands that meet at the pelvis (Fig. 8.5b-d). What is more, these postures all have strong resonance with early Anglo-Saxon gestural expressions.

The figurines from Carlton Colville and Halesworth share similarities with the figure standing with one hand near the chin and the other resting upon the waist (Fig. 8.5c, e-f). This hand gesture is also present in Iron Age European societies, including the Etruscan society in ancient Italy and has been suggested to represent mourning (Armit and Grant 2007). The male figure that clutches his hands near the pelvis on the vase appears to stylistically relate to two Anglo-Saxon figurines from Friston and from Broadstairs (Fig. 8.5d, g-h). This posture is also rendered upon early Christian art of the fourth century, the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, for example, carries a figure with this posture that has been suggested to relate to humility and awe and possibly immobilisation – see (Fig. 8.5i) (Barasch 1990, 46-8 fig. 23). In Byzantine art, this type of posture – the cupped hands with fingers intertwined or crossed with one hand clasping the wrist was used in the context of mourning (Maguire 2007, 153). Upon a Roman battle sarcophagus, a woman stands with 'her hands lowered and her fingers intertwined' (Maguire 2007, 154). This gesture is also represented upon a 3-dimensional Late Roman or Iron Age figurine from Henley Wood (Somerset) that is depicted in (Fig. 8.5j), again indicating a possible re-emergence of particular bodily gestures. In Scandinavian Migration Period art, this posture is represented upon gold foil figures (or guldgubber). Although there is some variation, five figures from Uppåkra, two from Lunda in Sodermanland and at least two examples from Sorte Muld are rendered with this posture, see Fig. 8.5k (Watt 2004, 205-206 fig. 14). This gesture is also found within the Merovingian world. Two belt-buckles from Ecublens and Yverdon in Switzerland, for example, carry the depiction of a human figure between two beasts, the figures stand poised with their hands folded at the waists (Salin 1959, figs. 135, 136).

The seated figure on an urn-lid from Spong Hill shares several similarities with figures rendered upon Roman sarcophagi art. Many of these tombs display funerary scenes that include funerary furnishings as well as bodily gestures (Corbeill 2004, 78-9). One scene includes the deceased lying-in-state with a seated individual nearby. These chairpersons are seated with their elbows propped on their knees and with their chin resting on their hands, which according to Anthony Corbeill expressed contemplation and grief (Fig. 8.6a) (Corbeill 2004, 78-9). This type of gesture also appears on a fifth-century ivory plaque that carries a depiction of the two Marys who sit weeping beside the tomb of Christ with their heads resting on their hands (Maguire 2007, 134 fig. 17). Parallel to this, the ceramic chairperson represented on an urn-lid from Spong Hill has funerary connotations and is portrayed in a similar posture in a seated position, resting their head in their hands (Fig. 8.6b).

Gripping Hands and Crossed wrists

There are three objects carrying a gripping gesture and crossed wrists, including a sword-scabbard mount from Cambridgeshire, which carries a helmeted-head human profile that appears to grip his moustache or perhaps his body, see (Fig. 8.7a) (PAS find no. BH-A99B35). It shares a close association with the human figures along the mouth of the drinking horn from Taplow, Buckinghamshire (Fig. 8.7b). These figures grasp their own body – the hand is flexed so that it grabs its own wrist. The figure on the sword pommel mount does not demonstrate this particular flexed gesture, but certainly appears to grasp onto its facial hair or body. This type of imagery is quite rare and has only been found on masculine object types or objects found with the grave, however, these gripping designs share a strong connection with a series of masculine and feminine artefacts in Scandinavia and Continental Europe.

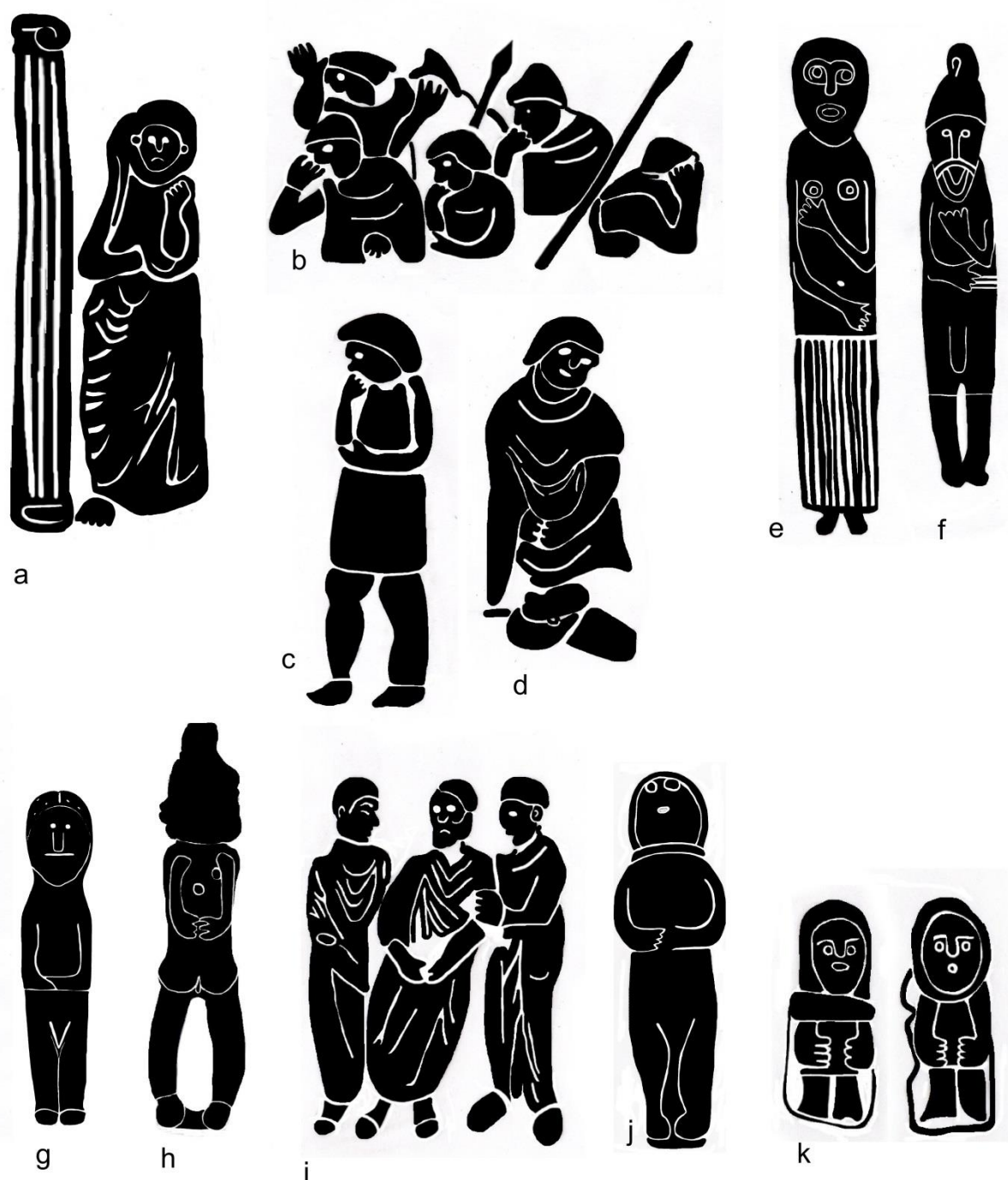


Fig. 8.5 Mourning gestures from classical and early medieval worlds (a) fourth-century weepers sarcophagus from Sidon, Lebanon (b-d) silver vase from Berthouville, France (e) figurine from Halesworth, Suffolk (f) figurine from Carlton Colville, Suffolk (g) figurine from Friston, Suffolk (h) figurine from Broadstairs, Kent (i) fourth-century sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (j) Late Roman or Iron Age figurine from Henley Wood, Somerset (k) gold foil figures from Uppåkra. Drawings by author, not to scale.



a



b

Fig. 8.6 Mourning gestures (a) Relief with lying-in-state from the tomb of the Haterii (b) chairperson from Spong Hill, Norfolk. Drawings by author, not to scale.

This gripping design is rendered upon a high-status relief brooch from Hauge, Klepp in Rogaland in Norway that is richly ornamented with filigree, cloisonné with red-garnets or glass (Kristoffersen 2000b, 315-316). The inner panel of the headplate is filled with zoomorphic or anthropomorphic heads and spindly arms that finish in a four-digit hand (Fig. 8.7c). One of these hands has an opposable thumb. The other hands are similar in design and may also be anthropomorphic; these hands are ornamented with bands on the wrists.

The majority of the hands cross over the long arms or a stem that is not connected to a hand and may, therefore, represent a body. This design might also be carried upon the grip of the Snartemo sword from a cist mound burial in Vest-Agder (South Norway) dating to the sixth century AD. On the varied components of the sword hilt there are several geometric, human and animal designs. Full anthropomorphic figures may be depicted within two panels of the guard. The elongated, skinny arms entwine and at least two hands are decipherable on the lower design (Fig. 8.7d). These hands cross over or grasp the body or limb of the creature. It is not rare to find human figures seizing serpent bodies, such as the foil band on the sixth-century vessel from Uppåkra seen in Fig. 8.7e (Hårdh 2004, 64, 82 fig. 14 and 15) and upon the fifth-century drinking horn from Söderby-Karl, Sweden as Fig. 8.7f illustrates (Holmqvist 1951, 59; Capelle 2003, fig. 41). The gesture of grasping animals is present in seventh-century Anglo-Saxon art. Fig. 8.7g, for example, illustrates the male figure on a bucket from Loveden Hill, Lincolnshire. Humans are also portrayed gripping weaponry and offensive equipment e.g. Sutton Hoo helmet, Suffolk (Fig. 8.7h-i). There thus seems to have been a development in the seventh century, this gesture was no longer restricted to human hands grasping the body, but now human figures were portrayed gripping objects and creatures. This type of gripping art does not appear to have been restricted to brooches, swords and drinking vessels, but is also carried upon a B-bracteate from Sletner, Ostfold Norway. A human figure clutches his right ankle with his right hand (Fig. 8.7j) (Haseloff 1986, fig. 17). It was observed by Haseloff that there might be some significance connected to human figures that embrace their own legs, but he did not take this idea further (Haseloff 1970, 29).

In the Roman world the gesture of grasping another person was a legal practice, leading someone by the hand and sometimes the wrist was perceived as a polite way of guiding an individual to the proper location (Barasch 1990, 134). Moreover, it was recognised as a symbolic gesture that implied taking possession of the grasped individual (Barasch 1990, 134). The art-historian Moshe Barasch explored the longevity of this gesture and argued that this hand position is a legal gesticulation and is represented in various twelfth-century illuminated manuscripts (Barasch 1990, 91). The occurrence of this gesture implies it is symbolic, rooted in an earlier ideology. Barasch identified that such a gesture was used in scenes that portrayed powerlessness and incapacity – when individuals could not alter a terrible fate or ‘avert impending doom’ (Barasch 1990, 94). Similar to this, Ratke and Simek parallel this gesture from *Sachsenspiegel* with guldgubber that are positioned with one hand grasping the wrist or just above the wrist and argue that it implies a wounded person (Ratke and Simek 2006, 262). Such a gesture is also represented in the thirteenth century Norwegian *Speculum Regale*, an educational work, which recounts that it is good manners to approach the king with the right hand grasping the left wrist (Rold 1993, 199 as cited in Watt 1999, 182). In some of the contexts given, the incapacity or restraining of the right hand by the left may be a gesture of coming in peace – that is the sword-hand restrained. The reoccurrence of this gesture in thirteenth-century manuscripts from Germany and Norway suggests that this bodily expression was integral to particular elite and ritualised social situations and environments, perhaps rooted in earlier gestural expressions. The role of this gesture in the two manuscripts are not completely separate and do not stray far from the meaning in Roman gestural language. Although it is speculative, being brought to, meeting or greeting an elite or king may request and equally perhaps invoke a sense of reverence, vulnerability, and feeling of powerlessness or even ‘coming in peace.’

The figure, however, upon the sword mount pommel might be gripping his moustache rather than his body. Human figurines from Eyrarland and Baldursheimur in Iceland, Lund in Sweden and Feddet and Søllested in Denmark are rendered as

if pulling their beards, but these have been dated to the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries (Helmbrecht 2011, 138). Explicit depictions of male figures pulling their hair are quite rare in Migration Period Scandinavian art, but it is possible that a full-bodied human figure might be pulling its hair on the relief brooches from Sandal, Jolster, Sogn and Fjordane (B6656) and Riskedal, Hjelmeland in Norway (S2578) (Fig. 8.7k-l) (Kristoffersen 2006, 80-81). In the late fourth to fifth century AD, the writings of St John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople condemned the 'shrill voices of lamentation, the rending of garments, the tearing of hair and beard, the clawing at the face and breast and the embracing and kissing of the dead' (Barasch 1976, 35). There is evidence to suggest that hair pulling was used as a mourning gesture from at least the Roman period and is generally represented on sarcophagi (Barasch 1976, 24-7). This gesture appears in the eleventh-century prose: The Song of Roland. It describes, on catching the sight of Roland's corpse, Charlemagne tore out 'hair from his beard and head with both hands' (Bartlett 1994, 53). This type of gesture also resurged in the thirteenth century Byzantine art, artists depicted mourners 'pulling their hair' and 'scratching their cheeks' (Maguire 2007, 132). It is quite possible that this single early Anglo-Saxon example of a male figure gripping or pulling his facial hair might relate to a mourning gesture.

In early Anglo-Saxon England, the Taplow burial is considered to be a high-status male barrow burial (Webster 2007) and the silver-gilt material used to manufacture the sword scabbard indicate that it is also a high-status piece (PAS BH-A99B35). Although only masculine objects were found to carry gripping-hand imagery in early Anglo-Saxon England, it nonetheless might associate with the concepts of fastening and binding that were evoked by feminine-ornamented objects discussed earlier. In Scandinavia, this type of hand gesture is not limited to guldgubber, but is represented on technically and conceptually accomplished high-status objects including brooches from a female grave and a sword from a male grave. The gripping motif seems associated with particularly high-status individuals within the North Sea littoral, both male and female. In the *Sachsenspiegel* there are three types of gesture that involve grasping or covering the wrist or just above the wrist and crossing wrists. These gestures fall under the type 13a, 13b and 14 in Karl von Amira's illustrative catalogue of hand gestures in the *Sachsenspiegel* illuminations – see Fig. 8.8a-c (Amira 1905, 231-232). There are thus further parallels between early Anglo-Saxon gestures that appear to cross wrists and the images in the *Sachsenspiegel*. The ceremonial figures carried upon the Sutton Hoo helmet have their hands raised in the air, brandishing a sword with their wrists crossed. On the Snartemo sword two male figures are joined by long entwined hair. They also have one hand raised to the chin, the other hands cross at the wrists and the thumbs are also crossed (Fig. 8.8d). Other objects bearing analogous figures include the ninth-century Oseberg tapestry depicting a funerary ceremony (Brøgger et al. 1920, 348; Bonde and Christensen 1993, 581). The tapestry includes male and female individuals attired in costumes, bearing weaponry or defensive equipment. Amongst the processional characters a wagon containing a corpse is drawn by rider-less horses. In this scene there are two female figures that stand parallel to each other, seemingly not moving with the procession, but standing amongst the thriving crowd with raised arms and crossed wrists (Fig. 8.8e). An analogous gesture is also rendered on a ninth-century grave marker from Lindisfarne, which has been suggested to represent Viking warriors who raided the monastery of Lindisfarne in 793 (Cramp 1984, 206-7 pl. 201, No. 1133). Among the figures bearing weapons, one character rest his crossed wrists by the waist. Interestingly, the figure at the opposing end of the sculpture touches the top of another figure's head, perhaps relating to the mourning expression of hair pulling discussed above. In the *Sachsenspiegel* the crossed wrists gesture refers to an expression of 'homage' and is suggested to have been a variant of the incapacity gesture, relating to the sense of reverence, showing special honour or respect shown publicly (Amira 1905, 232-233). This gesture is thus another powerful symbol associated with high-status objects, performance and elite contexts.

Although stylistic parallels offer evidence for a meaningful significance for these gestures, there is a need to contextualise these in terms of the physical body and how it acted or was treated in society. This exploration might indicate the symbolic role of bodily gesture during this era of religious, political and social transformation. However, we cannot

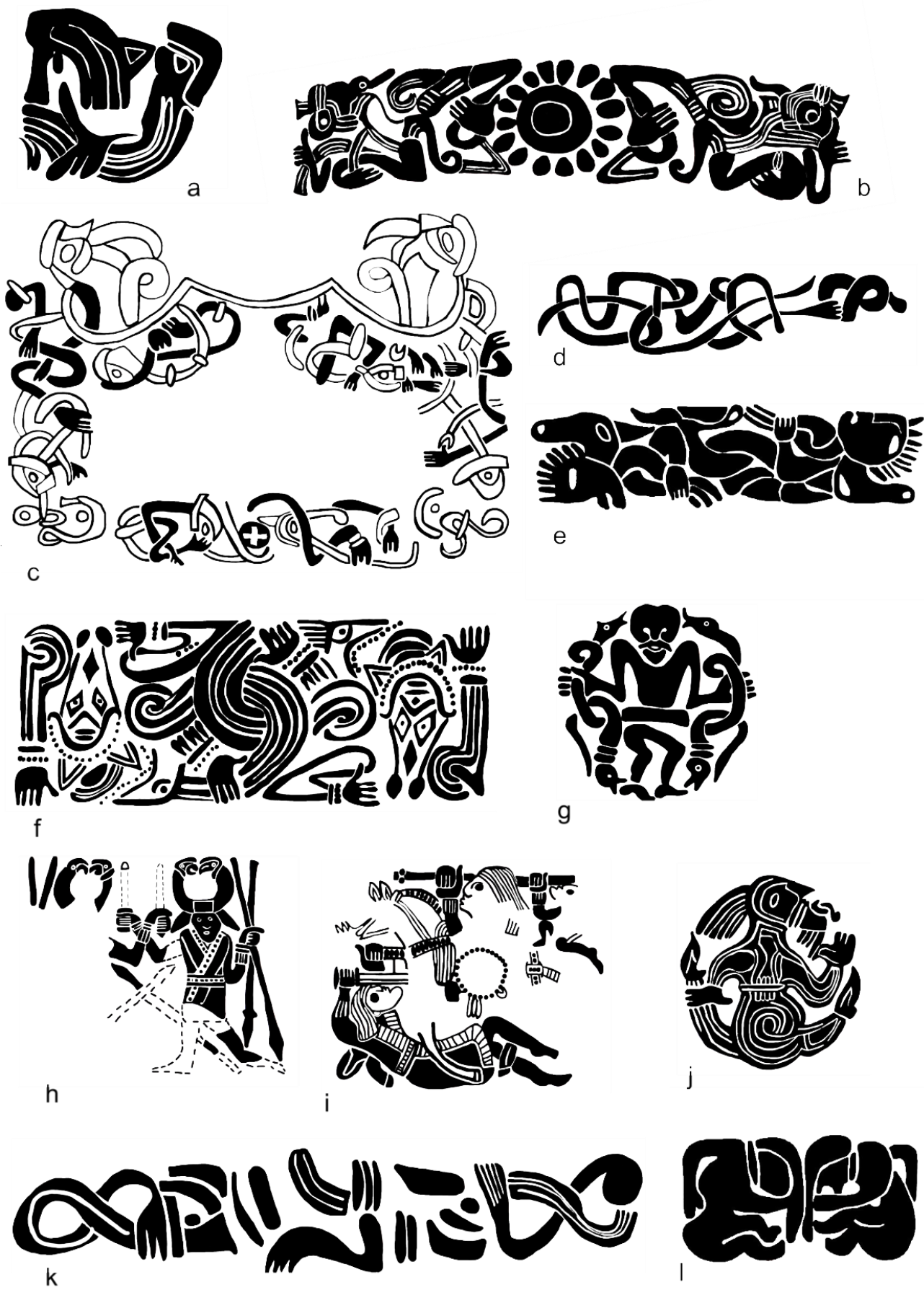


Fig. 8.7 Gripping bodily parts and animals/ weapons and crossed-wrists gestures (a) Sword scabbard mount from Cambridgeshire (b) drinking horn mount from Taplow, Buckinghamshire (c) relief brooch from Hauge, Klepp, Rogaland in Norway (d) sword from Snartemo, Vest-Agder, South Norway (e) foil rim of a drinking vessel from Uppåkra (after B. Nilsson in Hårdh 2004, fig. 14) (f) drinking horn from Söderby-Karl, Sweden (after Holmqvist 1951, 50, Figure 1a) (g) bucket mount from Loveden Hill (after L. Kerr in Pollington Figure 13.54) (h-i) helmet plaques from Mound One, Sutton Hoo (after Bruce-Mitford v.2 149, Figure 110) (j) B-bracteate from Sletner, Ostfold in Norway (after Haseloff 1986, Figure 17) (k) relief brooch from Sandal, Jolster, Sogn and Fjordane (B6656) (l) relief brooch from Riskedal, Hjelmeland in Norway (S2578). Drawings by author, not to scale.

simplistically assume that gesture had a meaningful license across art, the grave and time. We cannot by-pass the concept that burial practice is historically situated and each cemetery might have had varied conceptual understandings connecting to corpse posture.

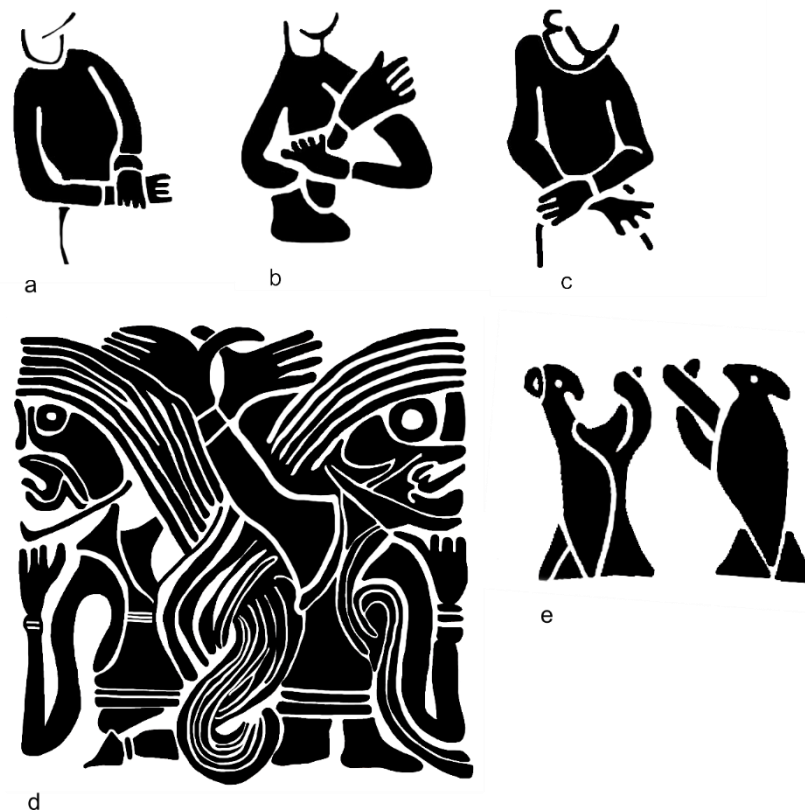


Fig. 8.8 Figures gripping their arm/ forearm and crossing their wrists (a) type 13a (b) type 13b (c) type 14 (a-c after Amira 1905) (d) Snartemo sword (e) Oseberg Tapestry (after S. Krafft 1956 in Gunnell 1995, Fig. 35). Drawings by author, not to scale.

8.3 GOVERNANCE OF THE BODY AND LOCALISED-SYSTEMS OF POWER

In Chapter 4 the seventh-century full-bodied figures that bore weaponry were suggested to represent some form of martial dramatic performance. This repertoire of weapon-bearing figural designs seemed to have operated within a strict economy of bodily postures, which shared stylistic parallels in Scandinavia and Continental Europe. This insular repertoire of human representation across the North Sea Littoral might have conveyed social, political and ideological connections. Such connections might relate to shared ideas of ceremonial acts or ritual-performance related to perceptions, myths or actualities of warfare and warriors. The seventh-century 3-dimensional figurines, however, do not carry such paraphernalia and are represented with new gestural positions, thus immediately situating them in a different performative and gestural context. In the discussion above, the two main types of bodily posture for these figurines were: the ‘hand on the chest and the waist’ and the ‘folded-arm position’. These were to varied extents, in circulation in Scandinavia and Merovingian Europe. While we can only conjecture the true meaning, it can be suggested that these postures are likely to have been recognised by a variety of individuals or social groups. The hand on the chest and waist posture carried on three of the figurines shares a striking parallel upon a reliquary and altar in Christian Europe. The types of artefacts that this gesture is rendered upon and the historical context of the objects, signal the significance of this gesture in elite spheres in both Christian and non-Christian worlds. These objects are interlinked by this gesture and by their biography. These objects were given or owned by religious institutions. Might these objects and their designs have been commissioned by secular elites? The manufacture, craftsmanship and rarity of

the figurines all imply that figurines were not commonly available or produced, thus we might suggest that these objects were limited to individuals or social groups that had access to the resources and the artisan. We might add that the social access or ability to commission, to produce, to gift or possess one of these sculptures of the diminutive human form implies the elite social context of this object type.

As suggested above, Armit, has argued for a link between corpse posture and representational gestural expression in Iron Age Europe and that certain gestures, especially the 'left hand on chest and right on waist' was associated with death and mourning (Armit and Grant 2007). If some of the similar postures of the early Anglo-Saxon figurines were associated with the display of authoritative, elite secular individuals as discussed earlier (pp. 168-173) then it might be logical to identify analogous gestures in the mortuary arena. This section investigates the relationship between early Anglo-Saxon corpse bodily arrangements and gestures in representational art. Before proposing this method, there is also a need to problematize the types of gesture that are represented in the grave before we can consider any connection between gesture in art and practice.

Corpse bodily arrangement

Bodily arrangements in the grave might relate to objects interred with the corpse. At Edix Hill, for example, there is a correlation between corpses with crossed legs and 'rich individuals'; what is more, the arms were arranged to 'enhance the display of finery' (Malim et al. 1998, 34, 41). Similar to Edix Hill, the cemetery at Melbourn demonstrate several instances where the corpse's arms and hands are positioned as if to display a relationship between the body and the object. In grave SG64, for example, a hand was positioned near a pair of shears thus giving the impression that the corpse is holding the shears (Fig. 8.9a) (Duncan et al. 2003, 95). In other instances, the limbs are positioned so that they appear to interact with other corpses in the same grave. In grave SG78, in Fig. 8.9b¹⁶ for example, a female was positioned as if 'protecting the accompanying foetus' (Duncan et al. 2003, 95). The gestures of protecting the foetus or displaying a connection between the body and object in the burial tableau are not frequent. Instead, this type of grave might be interpreted as situational – reflecting an emotive particular individual story rather than a general burial rite. These examples, therefore, might represent aesthetic rather than cultural significance.

This issue of cultural and aesthetic significance is not wholly unexpected given the complex nature and role of the mortuary environment in early Anglo-Saxon England. Withers suggested that the 'role of the visual in the formation of identity and subjectivity encourages the distinction of historical/ cultural significance from aesthetic significance' (Withers 2012, 252). The corpse that is adorned with decorated objects is identified as a scene display, probably playing a crucial role in the consolidation of identity (Williams 2006, 121). It has been suggested that identities were reconfigured during the processes of a funeral, including the relationships between the dead and the living and the living and the living (Williams 2006, 21; Devlin 2007, 42). The selection of objects and the arrangement of the corpse and objects in the grave might embody the reworking of the perceived, actual or reworked identity of the newly deceased (Devlin 2007, 41-43).

¹⁶ Grave SG78 includes a scutiform pendant, a circular sheet made from gold or copper-alloy often with a central repousse boss and decorated with geometric designs and a suspension loop. The pendant is reminiscent of a shield, from which the type - 'scutiform' - takes its name.

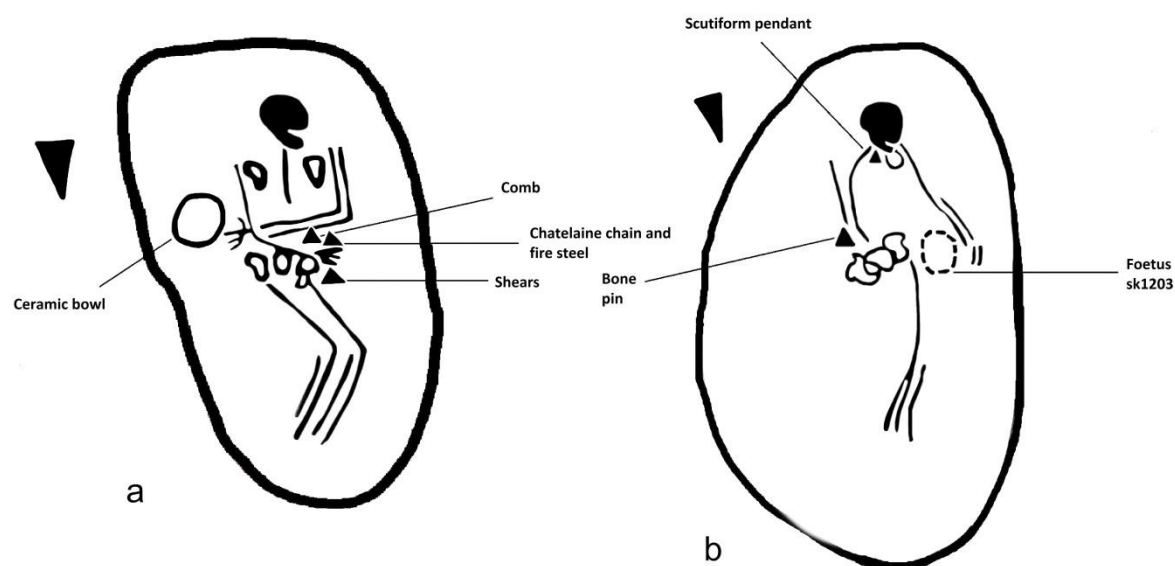


Fig. 8.9 Corpse bodily arrangement (a) Grave SG64 (b) grave SG78 (after Duncan et al. 2003, 95). Drawings by author, not to scale.

It can be conjectured that corpse bodily postures could have played a crucial role in re-creating identities during the funeral. Moreover, for graves with more than one interred individual, the way in which the individuals are positioned might have conveyed a sense of the real or reworked social relationships and political connections between the dead and the mourners and the living and the living. It is also possible that individual graves were planned events to express a 'narrative' within the 'wider drama' of the cemetery (Price 2010, 40-1). It might even be conjectured that burials like the woman and a foetus in grave SG78 might not reflect an immediate mother and child kin relationship, but perhaps reflects a socially accepted burial tableau for this cemetery for a particular circumstances or event. The scene might have been choreographed by the mourners to convey some other type of accepted social or aesthetic implication.

Crucially, however, as Malim and Hines have pointed out, the more often a body position is repeated the stronger the implication that corpse posture perhaps related to an intentional burial rite (Malim et al. 1998, 34). Particular corpse postures might have thus 'conveyed clear symbolic meaning' (Malim et al. 1998, 34). In his discussion on semiotics, Robert Preucel suggested that 'all communities have regular and repeatable patterns of meaning-making. These patterns are thus typical of that community and help to define and constitute it, as well as to distinguish it from other communities' (Preucel 2006, 8). If this is an acceptable interpretation, we might consider the repeated corpse bodily arrangements as a context to explore pertinent issues related to human representation and gestural expression.

Limitations and Issues

There are, however, some inherent dangers of interpreting the skeletal arrangement and metallic artefacts. The corpse bodily postures might correlate with organic materials that were deposited within the grave, but these materials have simply not preserved. Nevertheless, with or without organic and inorganic artefacts, it can be suggested that the corpses with similar gestural postures in cemeteries in East Anglia and Lincolnshire might indicate a common burial rite rather than a situational or aesthetic practice. Additionally, there are problems with examining graves in East Anglia that require outlining here. Due to the acidity in the East Anglian earth, a number of skeletons have not preserved and have disappeared altogether (e.g. Bergh Apton in Norfolk cf. Green and Rogerson 1978; Morning Thorpe cf. Green et al. 1987b) or the skeletons have been reduced to body stains (e.g. Harford Farm, Caistor St Edmund in Suffolk cf. Penn 2000). Moreover, the extent of the majority of cemeteries has not been found, thus causing some bias in representation (e.g. Swaffham cf. Hills and Wade-Martins 1976). In addition, some nineteenth-century excavation reports do not include grave plans (e.g. Tuddenham in Suffolk cf. Kennett 1977). There may be

natural and taphonomic implications that might cause bias in identifying gestural expression in the grave, such as post-depositional movement in the grave caused by animals, the decaying corpse and later burials. Duday, among others, has observed the impact of natural and corpse taphonomy (Duday 2009). The varied processes in corpse decay, including the decomposition of the internal organs and muscles might to some extent effect the skeletal posture (Duday 2009, 52-7). The ‘putrefaction in fact produces a rather viscous mass that may slide under the force of gravity’ (Duday 2009, 34). He also describes how the

‘bones are subject to various forces (for example gravity, torsion of the vertebral column etc.) and when freed by the breakdown of ligaments, move under the action of these forces. The sediments later invade the interstitial spaces and block the bones in their new position. They will only be freed by further disturbance for example excavation’ (Duday 2009, 53).

However, Duday also noted that the repeated burial posture might indicate a ritual action that was ‘intentionally performed during the original deposition’ rather than an accidental, taphonomic action (Duday 2009, 20). Other factors that might affect body positioning include ‘instantaneous rigor or cadaveric spasm’ (Knüsel et al. 1996, 123). Individuals clutching objects in their hands at death might have experienced this spasm, but it has been reported to only occur ‘in conditions of high nervous tension’ such as ‘intense emotion and fatigue’ or a violent or sudden death (Knüsel et al. 1996, 123). Knüsel, Janaway and King have suggested that ‘the rigidity is not released until after putrefaction has destroyed the muscles concerned’ (1995, 123). One archaeological example they give is a group of 12 individuals ‘haphazardly interred in a ditch outside the Roman fortification, dating the late fourth or early fifth century’ A.D (Knüsel et al. 1996, 124). They were deposited about the same time and rapidly. One of the individuals was found with a pig molar between the forefinger and thumb; this individual has ‘a depressed fracture delivered by a blow from an edged weapon’ and ‘since there is no sign of healing, it is likely that he succumbed to a perimortem injury’ (Knüsel et al. 1996, 124). Another example they provide is of a First World War soldier that was found in a ‘kneeling position, taking aim with his rifle’ (Knüsel et al. 1996, 123). However, it has recently been observed that there is no scientific evidence for cadaveric spasm and each example can be explained through local conditions (Bedford and Tsokos 2013, 244). In the case of the WW1 soldier, it has been proposed that the body was ‘posed to look like a living soldier with a gun aimed, to confuse the enemy’ (Bedford and Tsokos 2013, 247). The forensic examples drawn upon by Knüsel, Janaway and King – such as self-stabbing suicide – that might have been cases of homicide and staged manipulation (Bedford and Tsokos 2013, 245).

Equally, Bedford and Tsokos have observed that drowned individuals that clutch debris might have made ‘a last ditch effort at survival and grabbing grass and other debris just before succumbing’ (2013, 245). Individuals grasping small objects, such as a pig molar, might indicate a similar last minute effort to survive before death. In these archaeological examples it is difficult to determine if the individual experienced cadaveric spasms, was buried alive or if the corpse was staged (Knüsel et al. 1996, 126). However, it is perhaps important to reemphasise how repeated patterns in the skeletal record might indicated staged, ritualised bodily postures (Malim et al. 1998, 34; Duday 2009, 20; Bedford and Tsokos 2013, 247). With these caveats in mind, this section briefly explores bodily posture, examining biological sex, age and grave assemblages. Cemeteries in East Anglia and Lincolnshire included here were selected for clear grave plans with representation of hand, arm and forearm bones; and a representational sample of burials.

Bodies in the Grave

Hand posture is chosen as a main focus as it has more relevance to the representational art under study here. Nine cemeteries in East Anglia and Lincolnshire and the cemetery at Buckland in Kent were included in this study to indicate that these bodily

postures are not restricted to East Anglia and Lincolnshire (Table 7). Moreover, the 1994 excavations of Buckland have recently been published, providing a revised and up-to-date chronological framework. The Buckland cemetery is thus cross-examined with recently published cemetery reports from the study regions. The 10 cemeteries were scrutinised for five bodily postures:

- the left hand gripping the right forearm or arm
- the right hand gripping the left forearm or arm
- the right hand on chest and the left on the waist
- the left hand on chest and the right on waist
- hands on pelvis/ waist

There are other types of body positions, but these gestures are particularly relevant for the discussion here.

Table 8 Table listing the cemeteries used to examine corpse bodily posture

Cemetery	County	Date of cemetery	Number of graves with relevant gestures	Reference
Melbourn	Cambridgeshire	<i>c.</i> AD 575-AD 675	15	Duncan et al. (2003,
Edix Hill	Cambridgeshire	<i>c.</i> AD 500-650	22	Malim et al. (1998,
Westfield Farm, Ely	Cambridgeshire	Late 7 th century	3	Lucy et al. (2009a,
Trumpington	Cambridgeshire	7 th -8 th century	1	Dickens and Lucy (2012,
Cambridge Backs	Cambridgeshire	7 th century	4	Dodwell et al. (2004,
Buttermarket, Ipswich	Suffolk	<i>c.</i> AD 650-680	1	Scull et al. (2009,
Carlton Colville	Suffolk	7 th to 8 th centuries	1	Lucy et al. (2009b,
Castledyke	Lincolnshire	6 th to 7 th centuries	17	Drinkall et al. (1998,
Cleatham	Lincolnshire	Late fifth, sixth and seventh centuries	9	Leahy (2007b,
Buckland	Kent	Late fifth, sixth and seventh centuries	23	Parfitt and Anderson (2012,
Total			96	

Gripping Arm Posture

The left-hand-gripping-the-right-arm posture appeared more frequently than other gestures. This posture was in use in the sixth century in both male and female graves; the grave goods of these individuals range from a few to rich assemblages consisting of metal objects. At Melbourn, there are three female graves and a single male grave in this posture. Two of these female graves (SG64 and SG75) contain items that could be interpreted as high-status. Grave SG 75 contains various brooches, spindle whorl, buckle, knife and amber beads, while grave SG64 consists of a ceramic bowl, girdle group, shears and an antler comb. It is worth underlining that these two females are at opposite ends of the age spectrum, with SG64 aged 13 and SG75 aged 45+.

At Edix Hill, the majority of sixth-century female cadavers that were arranged in this posture demonstrate a rich assemblage, while the other females and males are interred with a limited array of objects. However, these graves might be later interments as they have been assigned a sixth to mid-seventh century date range. At this cemetery, a sixth- to late sixth-century high status female was buried within a double-burial with another female (grave 19), both were buried with a number of items, but only one of the postures can be determined as the skeletal remains were disturbed by another burial. At a late seventh-century cemetery at Westfield Farm, Ely (Cambridgeshire) a series of male and female graves are positioned around a barrow grave of an older juvenile (c. 10-12 years) with an array of objects (Fig. 8.10). The skeletons in grave 3 and 14 are positioned with a gripping-forearm posture (Fig. 8.11). Grave 3 is positioned away from this group and contains an adult female positioned gripping her right arm/ forearm. The grave-good assemblage includes a knife and a small buckle. There is no archaeological evidence for the barrow, but the 'arrangement of other graves around it and its high-status grave-good assemblage provides some support for the existence of such a mound' (Lucy et al. 2009a, 84). A similar suggestion could be made for Grave 3, which could have been positioned as a new mortuary foci. Grave 14 is a male adult (c. 31-35 years) positioned with his right hand positioned under the left arm/ forearm, perhaps keeping the hand in place (Lucy et al. 2009a, 107). This grave was unaccompanied, but part of this grave which could have contained items was machined away (Lucy et al. 2009a, 108).

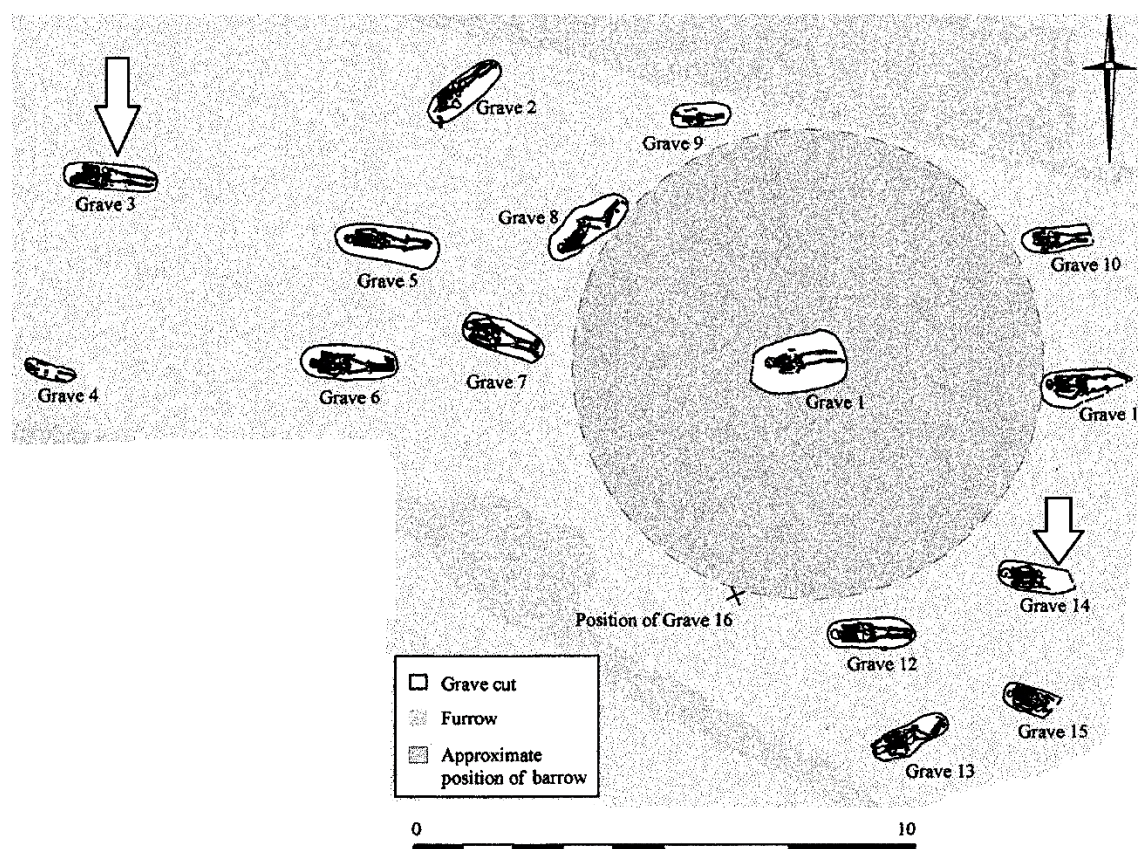


Fig. 8.10 Cemetery plan of Westfield Farm, Ely, Cambridgeshire (after Lucy et al. 2009a, fig. 2)

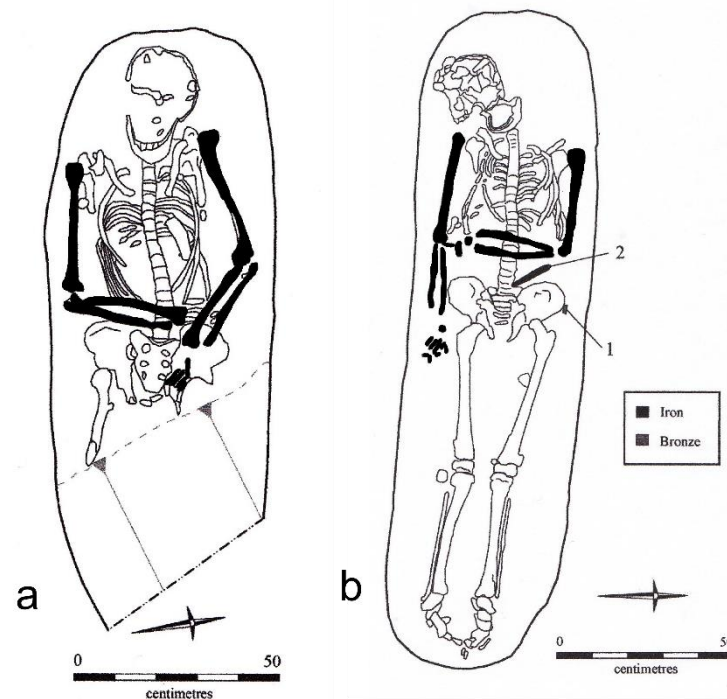


Fig. 8.11 Graves from Westfield Farm with skeletons positioned with a gripping-arm posture (a) grave 14 of a male adult (after Lucy et al. 2009a, fig.13) (b) grave 3 of an adult female (after Lucy et al. 2009a, fig.5).

Interestingly, left hand gripping the right arm is largely a female posture and the reverse is represented more frequently in male graves. The right hand gripping posture in female graves only appears in the sixth century, but male corpses are arranged in this posture during the late sixth to seventh centuries. This pattern is also reflected in the cemetery at Buckland in Kent. The right hand gripping the left arm is represented in two sixth-century female graves and in one mid-seventh to mid-eighth century male grave (grave 148). While the left hand gripping the right arm is predominantly found in female graves dating to the late fifth to early sixth centuries (graves 46, 261, 266, 427A) and two graves (male and female) that have not been dated (graves 202, 252).

Hand on Chest and Waist

Both types of postures were found in male and female graves of varied ages, but there are distinguishing factors when we consider each cemetery. At Cleatham cemetery there is a clear gender distinction between graves with this posture, but there is a lack of grave goods. At this cemetery, a 26 year-old female grave favoured the left hand on the chest and the right on the waist posture, which dated to about the seventh century. While the reversed arrangement of this posture can be found in two male graves, an adolescent (grave 27), dating to the late fifth to early sixth century through the grave goods and a young adult (grave 56) that cannot be dated because there were no grave goods. However, Cleatham is a mixed rite cemetery, with cremation being the predominate rite. This might, therefore, cause some discrepancies. At Castledyke, only one individual dating to the sixth century was positioned in this posture (grave 53), this individual was female, aged 35-45 and was interred with a rich assemblage, including annular and pennanular brooches, beads, rings, a bag, a buckle and a knife with a horn handle. By the seventh century a total of 9 individuals were arranged with this gesture. Two males and two females were arranged with their right hand on their chest and left on their waist; and three males and two females were arranged in the reversed position. These individuals were buried with an assortment of grave goods including buckles, knives, a latchlifter, beads, a seax and animal bones. It is debateable if these objects reflect a 'rich' assemblage, but the high frequency of this bodily

arrangement might represent a shared symbolic social expression that might not be reflected in the survived artefactual evidence.

At Edix Hill, for example, the two corpses (graves 12 and 83) that were arranged with their left hand on the chest and the left on the waist were of a similar age, the male aged 20-24 and the female aged 25. Both were buried with an assemblage that might be interpreted as rich individuals in the sixth to seventh centuries. At Trumpington in Cambridgeshire, a female corpse was laid out with the left hand on the chest and right on the pelvis. This is a high-status seventh- to eighth- century bed-burial grave, which was constituted by a gold and garnet cross, an iron knife and a purse of glass beads (Dickens and Lucy 2012). A possible female grave at Carlton Colville dating to the seventh to eighth centuries was arranged in a similar posture as the female corpse interred within the Trumpington bed burial grave (Fig. 8.12a-b). Although this grave at Carlton Colville did not contain any grave goods, again we cannot dismiss the notion altogether that organic objects might have furnished the grave.

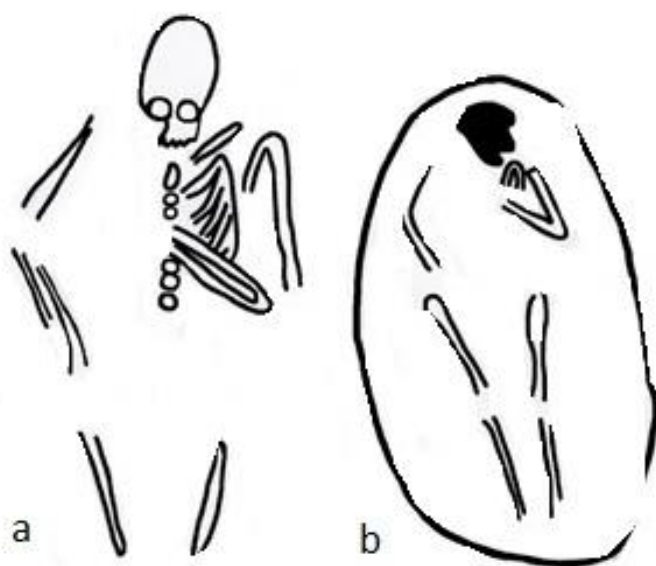


Fig. 8.12 Skeletons arranged with a hand on the chest posture (a) Trumpington (after Evans 2011) and (b) Carlton Colville (after Lucy et al 2009). Not to scale.

Hands on Pelvis/ waist

This posture was used in both male and female graves and there is a notable peak in frequency in the late sixth to early seventh centuries. In the male arena the hands-across-the-waist corpse posture was used from the late fifth to early sixth century into the late seventh century. Within female graves this posture seemed to have peaked in the late sixth to early seventh century graves. There is a similar picture at the Buckland cemetery. At Buckland this type of arrangement was used by male and female corpses from the late fifth to early sixth century. However, in the female sphere this type of posture was used up to the mid-seventh to mid-eighth century, whereas this practice ceased for male corpses in the late sixth to early seventh century. Within the cemeteries in East Anglia, there appears to be no apparent correlation between age and corpse posture, but out of the five corpses that were arranged with this posture within the cemeteries in Lincolnshire (Cleatham and Castledyke) there is a distinct age range from adolescent to 25-35. This finding correlates with the Buckland cemetery. The majority of corpses at Buckland arranged with this posture are also aged below 30 – the youngest is aged 16-18 (grave 418).

In terms of grave assemblages, the male and female grave goods vary across the cemeteries. At Melbourn, from the six graves that demonstrate this type of posture only two graves contain what could be described as high-status objects. The female

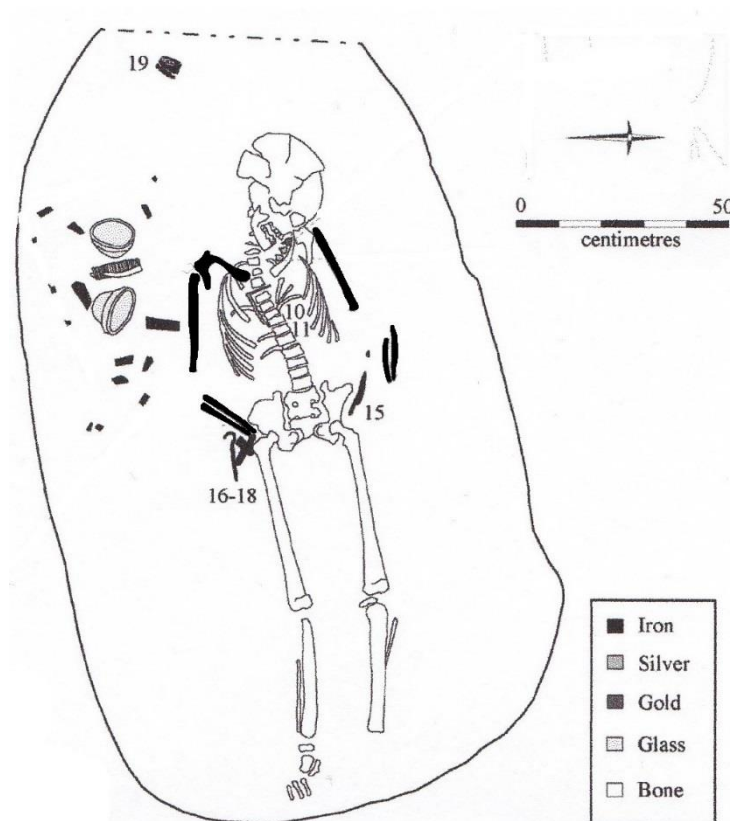


Fig. 8.13 Grave 1 from Westfield Farm, skeleton with hands positioned on the pelvis (after Lucy et al. 2009, 85, fig. 3).

grave 1227 has a particularly rich assemblage and the female grave 1175 contains a silver split-knot ring. The male graves, however, contain buckles and knives. At Edix Hill cemetery, from the seven graves only four demonstrate a rich assemblage (a female grave – no.53; and three male graves – no.46, 36 and 2C). At Cleatham, only one of the three graves with this posture demonstrates a rich assemblage; this grave contained a hanging bowl and an annular brooch (grave 20). A female buried in grave 1 (a possible barrow burial) at Westfield Farm is likely to have been positioned with her hands on her waist (Fig. 8.13). As discussed above, this grave represents a high-status individual based on her rich grave goods and the position of this grave in the cemetery. The corpse, however, in Grave 7 is positioned in a similar way and this female older middle/ mature adult and the grave assemblage only included a single blue glass bead (Lucy et al. 2009a, 99). Grave 10 also contains a skeleton positioned with their hands resting on the pelvis, this female adult was buried with an antler comb and iron knife (Lucy et al. 2009a, 102) and grave 15, a male young adult was positioned with its ‘hands resting on the sacrum’ – but no surviving grave goods (Lucy et al. 2009a, 108). At Buckland, the corpses that were arranged with this posture were generally of rich assemblages, only three of these contained few or none grave goods (female graves 142, 25, 418, 201). However, this paucity of grave goods might be due to a seventh-century date.

Discussion

All of these postures are relevant here as they have resonances with early Anglo-Saxon and European gestural art. As the four graphs illustrate in Figs. 8.14-8.17, the investigation identified that the majority of these corpses were positioned with their left hand gripping the right forearm or arm. The hands on the pelvis or waist arrangement was the second most frequent position, third in frequency is the right-hand-gripping-the-left-forearm, matched by the right/ left hand on chest and the other hand across the waist.

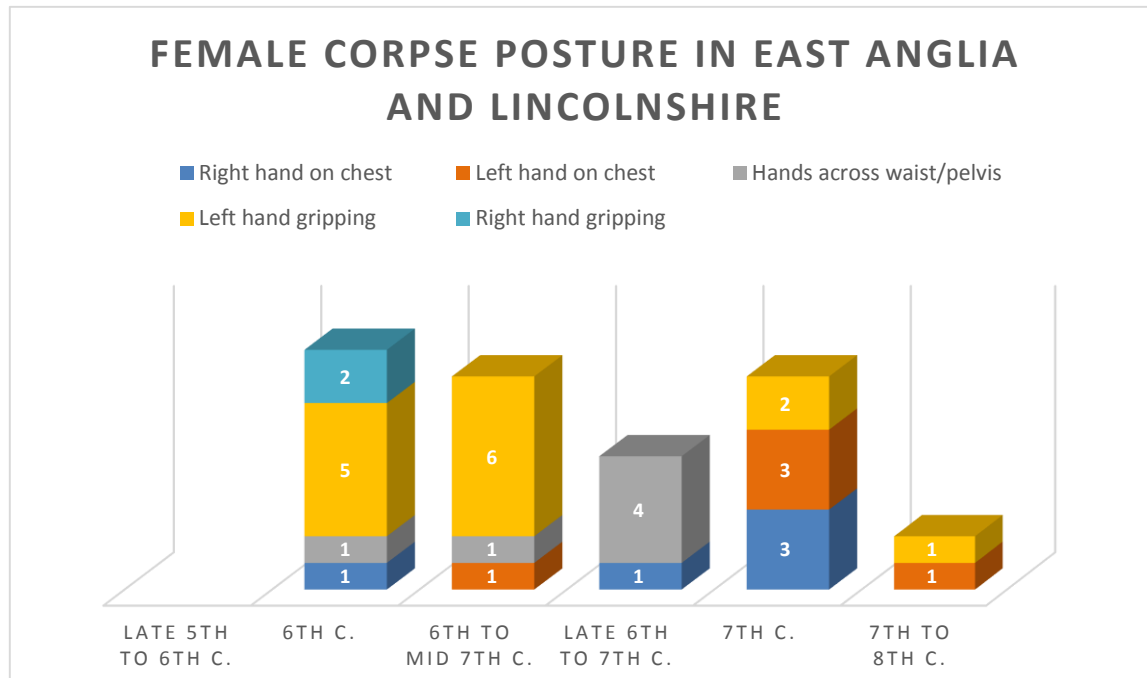


Fig. 8.14 Graph showing the frequency of female corpse bodily postures in East Anglia and Lincolnshire.

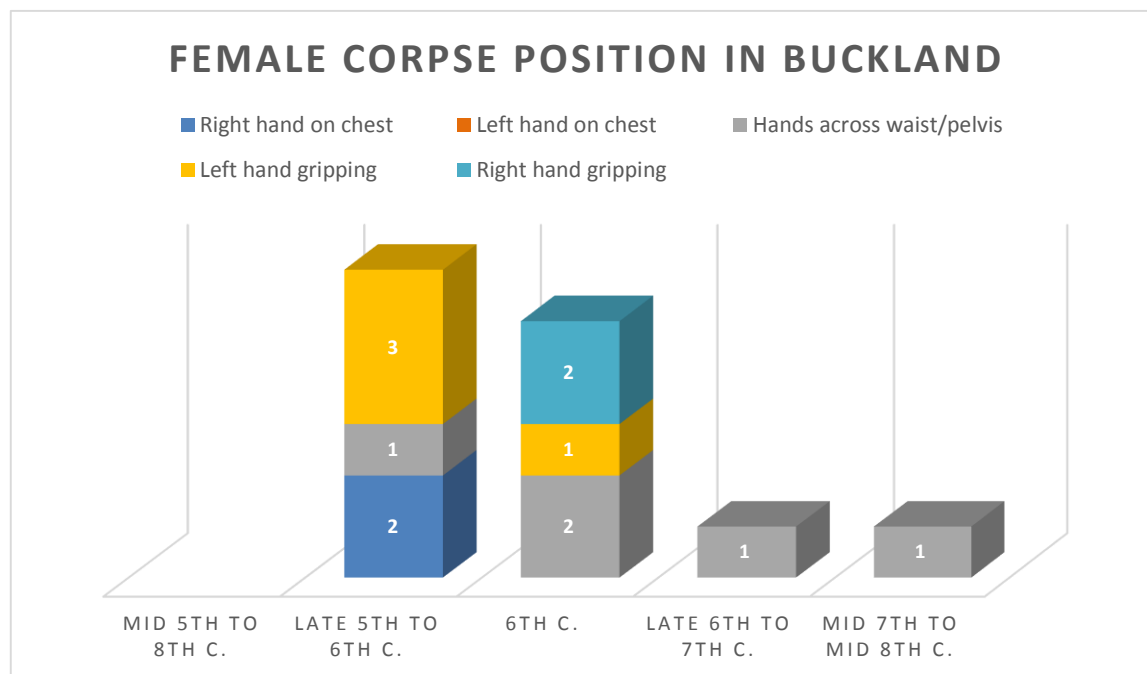


Fig. 8.15 Graph showing the frequency of female corpse bodily postures in Buckland (Kent).

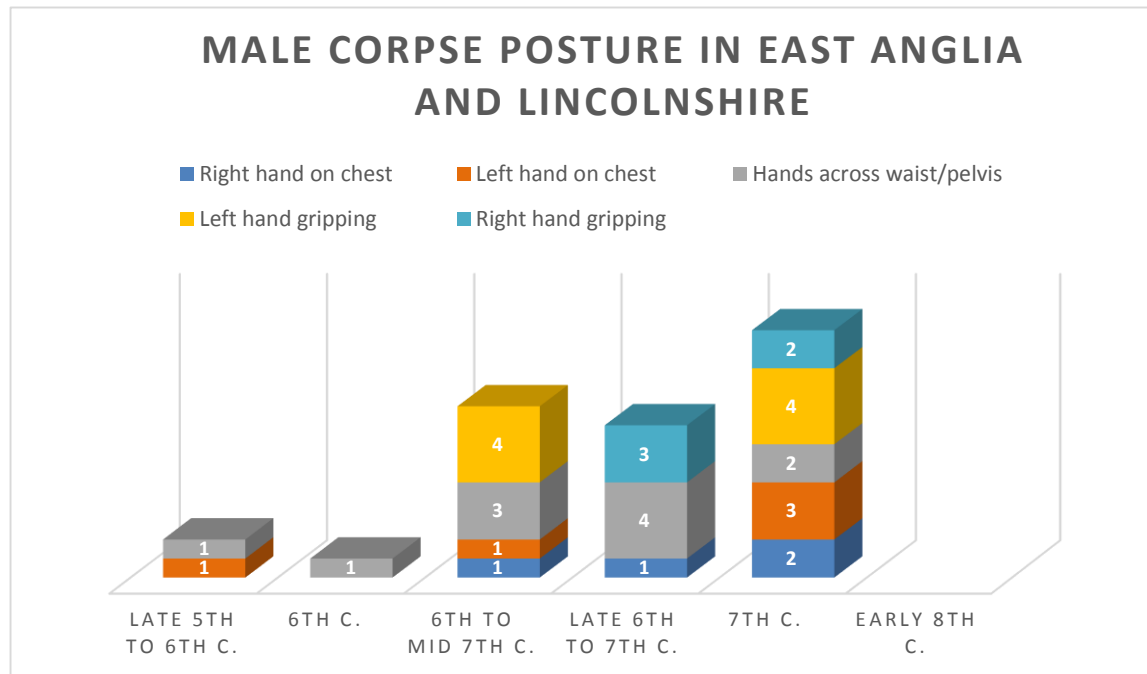


Fig. 8.16 Graph showing the frequency of male corpse bodily postures in East Anglia and Lincolnshire

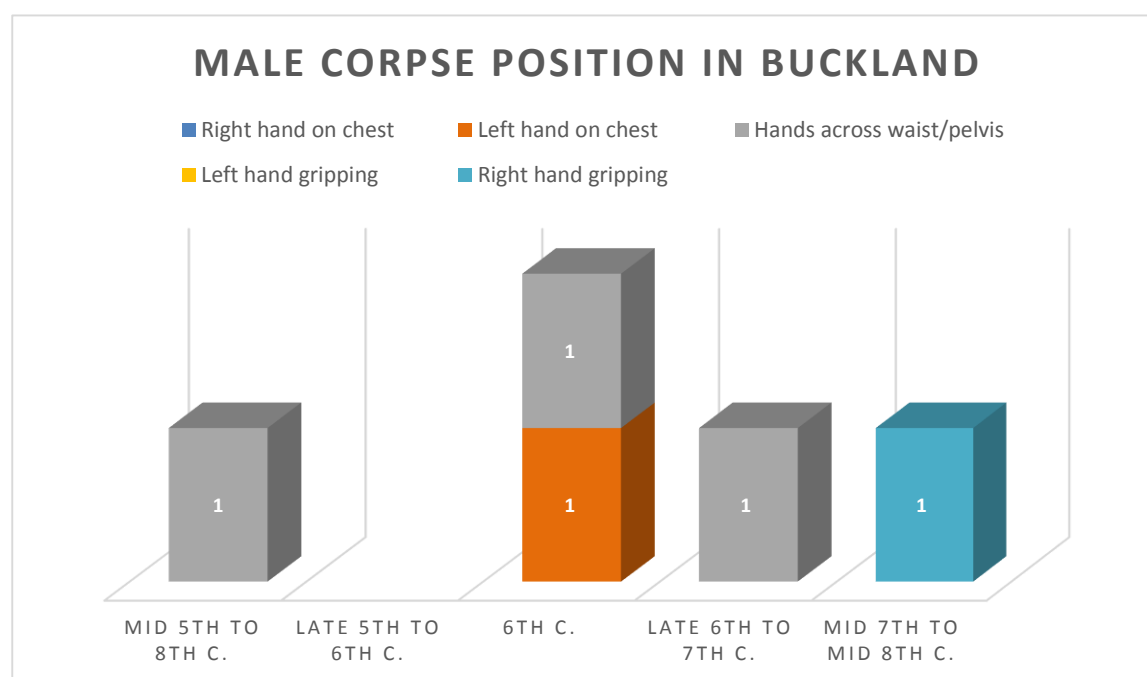


Fig. 8.17 Graph showing the frequency of male corpse bodily postures in Buckland (Kent).

There are points of interest regarding gender, age and grave assemblage in terms of the gripping-arm posture:

- there is a clear gender distinction. The left-hand gripping the right-arm/ forearm is more often the preserve of the female sphere, while the reversed posture is often found within the male sphere.
- the corpses that are arranged in this posture more often contain rich assemblages.

For the chest and waist posture, each cemetery has its own nuanced connection between age, gender and bodily gesture. It is apparent that the hand on chest and waist is age dependent at Edix Hill and is found in burials of individuals in their twenties. At Cleatham there is a gender distinction between the right and left hand on the chest – the right being favoured by males and the left a female. However, across the general spectrum both male and female corpses were arranged in this posture. A recent

study investigating corpse bodily postures in North-East England has shown a comparable preference for older males positioned with their right hand on the chest (Mui 2013, 50). This suggests that corpse gestures are likely to have been something more widely important than just an East Anglian or Lincolnshire tradition. In Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire the hand on chest and waist posture was in use in the sixth to seventh centuries, but in Lincolnshire this corpse arrangement seems to have been predominantly used in the seventh century. Comparatively, at the Buckland cemetery corpses were arranged in this posture by at least the mid-fifth to early sixth century. This position is thus represented in cemeteries in East Anglia and Buckland at least by the sixth century and was predominantly used in Lincolnshire in the seventh century. By the seventh century the hand-on-chest-and-waist posture had been adopted by a high-status female bed burial in East Anglia at Trumpington and a possible high-status female grave at Carlton Colville. The repeated pattern of corpse bodily postures and nuanced social connections might represent cultural significance rather than an aesthetic or situational significance. Although, there might not be a coherent meaning attached to each bodily posture, the corpse gestures might reflect a semiotic implication for gestural expressions in representational art.

8.4 CONCLUSIONS: EMERGENCE OF GESTURES

This chapter has raised several key points regarding gesture and its possible stylistic influences and meaningful significance in the early Anglo-Saxon world. While it is likely that there were leitmotifs across the pagan Germanic world that were emblematic of elite individuals and groups, it is worth following the development of gestural designs in the Roman to Byzantine world in order to explore possible meaningful significance of gesture in the period under study. Despite the sheer variety of gestural expressions that articulated social and political identities in the Roman and Byzantine worlds, the funerary gestures appear to have a clear resonance with early Anglo-Saxon hand arrangements. Scholarship on figural art of the Roman and Byzantine worlds have clearly established that there were particular bodily gestures that were portrayed to express sorrow and grief (for example see Brilliant 1963; Corbeill 2004). Gestures in the late fifth to sixth century can be closely associated with these mourning expressions. It is likely that the orans and the gripping gestures might also relate to stylistic parallels in Roman, Byzantine and medieval art that can be connected to divine epiphany or an expression of adoration and the concept of incapacity.

Some gestural motifs found in early Anglo-Saxon art may have been influenced by Roman funerary art. The rider-and-fallen warrior design upon the Sutton Hoo helmet, for example, was probably modelled on the sixth-century Alamannic artists' impression of Roman gravestones that were located in towns along the Rhine (Speidel 2004, 163). It is equally possible, however, that this bracteate was not directly influenced by Roman gravestones or imperial medallions, but through the art of Lombardic brooch prototypes (Hubert et al. 1969, 273). Horse and man burials are found in cemeteries in early Anglo-Saxon England and such inhumation graves are largely associated with 'male martial elites' (Fern 2005, 2007, 99). These types of graves may have been staged as part of the drama and narrative of the cemetery (Price 2010, 40-1). The 'horse and rider' design and the 'horse and man' graves are semiotic motifs that transcend art and practice. Other motifs rendered on early Anglo-Saxon objects associate with gestures of reverence illustrated in medieval manuscripts. The Sutton Hoo ceremonial figures with crossed wrists share iconicity with cross-wristed individuals woven onto the ninth-century Oseberg tapestry and sculptured on the ninth-century Lindisfarne grave marker. In the *Sachsenspiegel* this gesture is a variant of the incapacity gesture and is used as an expression of homage, showing special honour or respect shown publicly (Amira 1905, 232-233). The Sutton Hoo helmet thus carries symbolic motifs that associate with particular choreographed, elite burials and gestural expressions of reverence. In this sense, it can be suggested that the designs are a pastiche of earlier Style I human motifs that are connected to the orans and mourning gestures.

Even though the raised hand and orans gestures are the most frequently depicted gestures, there is no clear correspondence between these gestures and corpse bodily posture. The only sixth-century object carrying a gestural design that might relate to corpse bodily arrangement is the gripping gesture. Interestingly, there are connections between this gesture and gender. The left hand gripping the right arm is largely associated with female graves while the reverse features in male graves. This gesture is also predominantly found in female graves in the sixth to seventh century, but equally represented in male and female graves by the seventh to eighth centuries. The strong association between this posture and the female sphere in the sixth century raises a question over why this gesture is only carried on one masculine item. In contrast, this gripping design is found on a variety of brooches and a sword fitting in Scandinavia. Although largely absent on metalwork in early Anglo-Saxon England, the posture clearly played a role in mortuary ritual, but there are male and female distinctions in terms of which arm was gripped.

By the seventh century, a new range of bodily gestures for portable objects emerged with 3-dimensional, full-bodied figural representation. Two key postures are represented on these objects: the hand on chest and waist and the hands folded at the waist. The gestures were new for portable metalwork, but these bodily postures were already in use in the grave. In the seventh century there is a peak in their use that seems to correspond with the development of the figurines. This emergence of specific body gestures in representational art and the grave might thus hint at an unexplored repertoire of symbolic gestures in early Anglo-Saxon England. The corpse bodily posture of the right or left hand gripping the other arm clearly signals a gender distinction. A clear connection between the figure upon the sword pommel mount and this gripping posture cannot be clearly suggested as the figure might be gripping his body or facial hair. Both male and female individuals were buried in these gestural postures in the seventh century. In this period it is more difficult to assume if the lack of grave goods in the grave represents a low status. However, some graves such as the seventh-century bed-burial at Trumpington (Cambridgeshire) signal a high-status female individual. It is possible that the occurrence of the hand on chest and waist gesture within contemporary high-status religious contexts in Merovingian and Lombardic worlds might signal that this hand posture associated with an expression of authority that might have associated with secular bodily expressions.

Key social developments in trade and exchange in seventh-century England may have enhanced or developed connections between elites within the North Sea Littoral (Scull et al. 2009, 316). Helmbrecht argued that human figures, which are largely from *emporia* and aristocratic settlement sites in Vendel Period Scandinavia should be interpreted as a precipitate of trade and production (Helmbrecht 2011, 403).¹⁷ Parallel to this, Pestell has recently proposed that the distribution of early Anglo-Saxon human figurines along the eastern seaboard could associate with ‘Anglo-Saxon settlement and exchanges of ideas’ (forthcoming). The production of a new repertoire of human imagery and their close proximity to Ipswich would suggest a response to the development of the ‘special purpose site’ (i.e. the settlement and *wic* at Ipswich) and its hinterland with the ‘production’ site at Coddendam.

These developments ‘functioning under royal oversight’ (Scull et al. 2009, 316) seem to have influenced a response from the male *and* female elite. The female figurines were represented with similar gestural expressions as the male counterparts. We might speculate that the development of both male and female figurines indicates a similar desire to produce a gendered expression. Might this imply that the users and wearers of these objects were both male and female? Certainly, at least one of the eleven figurines in early Anglo-Saxon England – a female figurine – was found in a female burial context (Meaney 1981, 231; Webster 2002b, 15). Both comparable objects that carry similar bodily posture – the Merovingian reliquary and the Lombardic altar – were probably gifted by a secular elite. The altar, we know from the inscription was a gift given by King

¹⁷ ‘Die wenigen Funde mit Menschendarstellungen dürften hier wohl am besten als Niederschlag von Handel und Produktion gedeutet werden’ (Helmbrecht 2011, 403)

Ratchis, but the reliquary is more ambiguous and might have been patronized by a male or female called Mumma. However, what can be suggested from the evidence is that elite females were engaged in performative roles in conjunction with male elites within Anglo-Saxon society. Perhaps both of these archaeologies – representational art and corpse arrangements hint at the shifting interplay between male and female expression and identity in the conversion period. It might be valid to suggest that the emergence of new bodily gestures might have formed part of a wider narrative of the reformation of gendered expressions in an altering world and in an era of kingship and power.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

This thesis has investigated the repertoire of human representation carried on early Anglo-Saxon metalwork from eastern England. It has collated and analysed the types of representation, the types of archaeological contexts these image-carrying items are found in, the frequency and distribution of designs, changes in imagery and changes in context and distribution over time. This thesis does not adopt a chronological format. The dating of material can be imprecise (see discussion on pp. 84-85 and see below). The material has been studied together but chronological variation over time has been drawn from the corpus where close dating allowed.

Based upon the relevant questions and themes identified in the review of past literature and relevant theory in Chapter 2, the thesis was structured around the presentation of data in full in the appendices, a series of in-depth initial analyses in Chapters 4 and 5, followed by three chapters in which emergent themes were discussed within a wider context and framework (Chapters 6, 7 and 8). Contextual discussion in these chapters concerning the development of human representational art, has enabled exploration of the role of this imagery in identity creation. This thesis is thus structured in a way that is intended to facilitate an exploration of distinct themes: the interplay between user, object and imagery; changing portrayal of human representation over time; and the emergence of bodily gestures. In sum, this thesis has identified new roles for human imagery in early Anglo-Saxon England and revealed how a major change took place in the late sixth and seventh centuries in the way the human form was portrayed. The shift from female individuals being the 'bearers' of tradition and passing on representational art to male elites, is too simplistic as an explanation for these changes. It overlooks key social information and a new body of data. Evidence suggests that there is a complete reworking of the role and perception of the body in an era of expanding territories governed by emerging elite groups. The changes in imagery in this era may reflect the management and increasing control over the individual by these elites, as indicated in settlement, mortuary and judicial archaeology, and the first law codes. This chapter now completes the thesis by summarising key findings, and suggestions are made for further avenues of research.

Chapter 2 - Human Imagery, Embodiment and Performance

Theoretical approaches in early medieval mortuary archaeology have recognised that the layout and assemblage of graves and the relationship of graves within a cemetery, may not reflect real ethnic identities and even kin groups. Recent literature has focussed on the importance of why an object was made and who the makers and wearers were. The object biography and how it ended up being deposited in a burial context (Lucy and Reynolds 2002b). This shift in approach has stimulated discussion on the idea of ritual performances and the use of funerary activities as a means of facilitating and mediating individual and group identities (Price 2010, Carver 2005, Williams 2002, 2006, Semple 2013). The staging of mortuary displays, including the deposition of objects with the deceased or the dress assemblage, is now largely accepted as the product of mourners providing gifts to the dead and/or creating a memorable mortuary event, perhaps aimed at transforming or fixing the deceased in long-term memory as an ancestor or high-status figure. Approaches to early Anglo-Saxon art have only recently engaged with these ideas of visual display and theatre. Style I and II are often considered as badges that denote an affiliation with a perceived, real or mythical socio-political group. Rarely is imagery of this era considered as an active and animate component of identity. In

response, this study steps beyond traditional observations of Style I and has investigated the types of human faces and bodies portrayed on early Anglo-Saxon objects, and considered what these portrayals – for example ectoplasmic forms, fragmented heads, human-animal motifs etc. – might indicate about bodily perception and conception in this era

Recent literature in archaeology has argued that there is a need to develop and advance the study of embodiment or the role of the individual in archaeological narratives (Crossland 2010, 390) – that is the examination of engagements and interactions with people, place and objects, which are created through sensory perceptions and bodily behaviour. Questioning bodily boundaries i.e. human-machine and human-animal, archaeologists can avoid modern subject-object distinctions (Crossland 2010, 391-2, 405). To reformulate our views of the link between human and non-human in the past we need to question and problematize bodily surfaces and boundaries (Crossland 2010, 404-405). In early Anglo-Saxon mortuary archaeology, this has been explored through the notion that the grave represents a series of social connections that link the living and the dead through gestures of curation, transportation and deposition of the dead (Williams 2006; Devlin 2007). Another means of examining bodily surfaces and boundaries is to examine the human form in art by exposing and assessing the interrelationships between human, animal and other designs on the decorated object. Taking influence from recent assertions that performances and drama were choreographed at the early medieval graveside (Williams 2006, Price 2010), this thesis speculates on how the imagery and image-carrying objects enhanced or affected funerary performance and the visual impact of the wearer in life or death, and how such motifs and their display were linked into the processes of identity creation.

Chapters 3, 4 & 5 - The Data

Four regions in eastern England were investigated here (Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk). These were chosen on the basis of excellent surviving data sets: cemeteries, individual metalwork finds, good secondary literature on the early Anglo-Saxon era and excellent survival of relevant historical source material for the development of these areas in political and religious terms. These counties, together represent the wider region of East Anglia, recognised as part of the kingdom/s of Wuffingas in the second or third quarters of the sixth century (Yorke 1990, 61). This is an area of England where archaeological material has long been considered to signal early connections with Scandinavia from the fifth century (Hines 1984).

In post-Roman Britain, there was little political cohesion, but by the late sixth century historical evidence suggests that leaders of small communities were fashioning themselves as kings. By the seventh century, the major kingdoms of East Angles and Lindsey and smaller provinces in the East Midlands are recognised in historical literature (York 1990, 13). Burial grounds such as Sutton Hoo embody the shifting political inter-regional dynamics between this region and parts of Scandinavia and Christian Merovingia (Carver 2005, 306). Recent developments in radiocarbon dating and artefact analysis have provided new dates for the cessation of furnished burial, now argued to have been abandoned in the late 660s (Bayliss et al. 2013, 464, 479). The chronological parameters of this study AD 400-750, were chosen to encompass this period of full furnished burial and the window of time in which furnished rites disappeared and new varied methods of burial were experimented with (Geake 1997).

Human heads are the dominant motif in human representational art and were included within Style I and II, from the fifth to the seventh centuries. Human heads, however, as this thesis shows, are not homogenous. Rather, heads were deployed in a number of visual scenes that included a close interrelationship with animal figures and in some instances, in a way that informed the structural layout of the object. Key transformations in the representation of the human form in the seventh century can also be identified. These changes include the emergence of new gestural expressions, full-bodied imagery, 3-dimensional full-bodied humans, biologically-defined sex, hair, headdress and garments.

Much of the material under discussion derives from cemetery excavations (29%), but a large proportion is also without a context: 28% from HER offices, 22% from the PAS online database and 15% from other sources (i.e. museum catalogues and county-based journals that identify stray or casual finds). A total of 393 objects were found to carry human representation. The graves containing such items were predominantly from mixed rite cemeteries. Large cemeteries more frequently contained burials accompanied by items bearing human representation (e.g. Spong Hill, Morningthorpe and Little Wilbraham). Even so, the frequency of graves which contained representational art is still significantly low. Morning Thorpe, for example, is constituted by c. 365 inhumations, yet only six graves contain objects sporting human imagery. Human representation was significantly rare compared to the number of graves that just contained metalwork in general. Animal motifs are much more frequent. When human imagery is found, it is predominant on two object types: brooches and wrist-clasps. Two types of brooches carry the majority of images – cruciform (64 items) and GSHBs (65 items). Florid cruciform brooches (32 items), wrist-clasps (23 items) and mounts (22 items) constitute the second largest group of object types that carry human images. The rarer object types in this region that are rendered with the human form, include button brooches, bucket mounts, belts, a helmet, a purse, harness mounts, ear scoop, drinking horns and die stamps, among others. The rarity of some object types seems to be dependent on context (i.e. restricted usage in high-status barrow burials), or regional specificity (i.e. button brooches are largely found in region south of the Thames). Brooches considered in this study were often deposited in a worn or repaired condition, implying objects with these types of motif may have retained some value. In some instances (e.g. a GSHB from grave 11 at Holywell Row, Suffolk), objects carrying human representation displayed evidence of reuse and recycling. Repair and reuse was not always executed with the greatest of care (e.g. the bucket mount from Loveden Hill), suggesting that the imagery in some instances was not revered, but the display of the human motif remained an important aesthetic. It cannot be determined if the brooches were repaired immediately before interring the body or several years before death.

The positioning of cemeteries nearby key routes of communication could reflect social distinctions (Scull et al. 2009, 302) and the distribution of 3-dimensional figurines has been suggested to relate to Anglo-Saxon settlements along the eastern seaboard and ‘exchanges of ideas’ (Pestell, *forthcoming*). Human imagery, however, has not been discussed in regards to the location of cemeteries. Despite the caveats outlined in previous chapters (pp.89-132), such as antiquarian digging, deep ploughing in the fenlands for potato crops, industrial developments and the geological causing a bias in the survival of metalwork, several regional variations in the distribution of cemeteries with human representation can be identified. Predominantly, the cemeteries containing human representation are grouped along the fen edge and the escarpment (i.e. long, steep slope) in north-west Suffolk and north-west and south Cambridgeshire. These cemeteries are largely located in a corridor between the fenlands and dense forest cover. Cemeteries in Lincolnshire are largely clustered around key navigable rivers. Parallel to this, cemeteries in Suffolk are also located near interconnecting rivers and prehistoric earthworks. This positioning of these cemeteries indicates they were designed to be seen and perhaps ‘watch over’ places of communication and resource. Although the distribution pattern of graves containing items with human images or designs largely reflects the areas which host the largest density of cemeteries, this distribution remains interesting because the display and usage of human representation in funerary ritual could reflect a social distinction within and between cemeteries. Performative burials, created as theatrical displays, to enhance the memory of the event and the individual in the generations to follow, might it seems, have frequently involved human-image-carrying objects. These graves signal social distinction with the cemetery and it is possible they formed part of the wider ‘narrative’ within the ‘wider drama’ of the cemetery (Price 2010, 40-1) – thus signalling distinction from other cemeteries.

The positioning of items carrying human imagery in the grave has been considered in some depth in this study and gender distinctions have been identified. In male mortuary displays, human imagery was positioned near high-status fittings such as Mound One, Sutton Hoo and Loveden Hill and horse fixtures like Caenby and Mound Seventeen at Sutton Hoo. It

seems the human image was important for aesthetic spectacles. In female graves, however, there is a greater specificity to their use, sometimes brooches were positioned under the body, pinned to or concealed within a bag or pocket, often positioned near the legs or at the feet. Brooch fragments found in the fill of these graves could indicate an earlier cremation plot, but it is possible that they could represent a ritualised scattering of burnt metalwork. Largely, brooches formed part of the female mortuary costume, displayed on the outer garment (the cloak), making the object a highly visible part of the mortuary costume.

In response to this, I have argued that these brooches in some graves played a significant role in the active display of the funerary process. In each cemetery in the regions under study, where human representation is found, only a few graves contain image-carrying objects, and these graves so far, only appear, as one per group of graves. Human image-carrying objects were buried with or worn largely by female adults, with the exception of some 10-12 year old female individuals. At least in one case, a 10-12 year old was buried with a 'rich' assemblage that is generally associated with adult female individual. This extravagant display, included a GSHB and a rare weaving batten, and could represent a response to an emotive event like the loss of a young individual in the community, or the investment by mourners in an event intended to commemorate and transform the deceased into an ancestor or mythical figure through heavy investment in the grave and the reworking of the individual through objects and dress, into a character who would be remembered in the decades to come.

In some examples, these graves represented the first act in a consecutive sequence of interments. At Morning Thorpe and Linton Heath for example, the first interment of a kind of sequence was deposited with a 'rich' assemblage, implying investment in an elaborate burial that included objects carrying human representation. Such an event, involving the dressing of the corpse in rare objects and regalia and investment in the laying out of a rich array of goods, is likely to have created a memorable scene and perhaps in this way created a sense of place for later interments.

Chapter 6 - Image, Object and the User

The investigation in this thesis of the ways in which the human head and body was portrayed and what kind of social context this imagery had, has enabled speculation on the symbolic role and agency of art and human representation in early Anglo-Saxon England. A series of interrelationships have been identified between non-human and human designs, for example needle-like motifs can be identified within designs, positioned in such a way that they appear to penetrate human heads. Clasp motifs are also present that appear to 'bind' together designs; and structural frames and ribs are evident in the shape and design of objects that both fragment and bind human heads and animal designs. These structuring elements clearly have a role to play in the technological process in terms of facilitating the flow of metal within a mould (see Chapter 6). However, historical sources and archaeological evidence together indicate that needles, textiles and the metaphor of binding are often associated with female individuals (see discussions in Chapters 6 and 7). I have argued here that these non-human motifs/elements, largely found on brooches and wrist-clasps, may be closely associate with the female sphere. Previous discussions on early Anglo-Saxon art have focussed on human representation and its role in the male or the masculine world (before the seventh century). These discussions have considered the 'maleness' faces, which sport facial hair and sometimes helmets (Martin 2011, 376; Williams 2006, 91). If, as Martin suggests, 'women wore such symbols in order to appropriate the concept of dominance' (Martin 2013, 10) – then the non-human motifs that are structurally intimate to human depictions, may also have conveyed concepts appropriate to the female sphere. Martin assumes that women 'benefited from their association with this masculine power structure through displaying these gifted objects' (2011, 376; 2013, 10-11). Even though he suggests that women were not passive in this, the notion of the female body as a display for masculine power is perhaps rooted in a traditional androcentric interpretation in which female individuals take a subordinate role. I argue however, that archaeological and historical evidence suggests that some females held leading roles in early medieval society – evident especially in the conversion period when elite, female bed burials feature and when texts record major intellectual and political figures such as

Hild – it is highly possible that even before this, certain females may have played an important party in ceremonial performances and the socio-political stage. The predominance of human imagery carried on female dress fittings, and the later development of biologically distinctive female representation, has posed questions here on how female bodily identity might have been expressed through decorated objects throughout the centuries under consideration.

The object types that predominantly carried human imagery (brooches and wrist-clasps) and the manufacturing technology, all convey concepts of binding and fastening. Even the wolf-human images identified in Chapter 4, share these concepts through their use on the clasping elements of objects. The wolf of course, as discussed on pp. 183-184, is related in the Norse Sagas to ideas of clasping and binding. These wolf-human heads can also be connected to the notion of transformation. These motifs in several instances are carried on wrist-clasps, and through the clasping process. They transform from a frontal face human head to a pair of beaked heads represented in profile. The act of clasping them together, transforms one image into another and signals the idea of making and unmaking the body.

The structural components of an object (i.e. the ribs and frames), act like arteries, spreading the molten metal around the object. The manufacturing techniques of brooches and wrist-clasps therefore take on a bodily metaphorical association. The molten metal could have been perceived as a life force, flowing in to create the object and hardening to give skeletal-like structure. The human heads might have also have acted as features that assisted in the distribution of molten metal. The human faces may have caused the fluid substance to ‘pool’ and distribute around the object. This association between human heads and structural components, parallels the iconography of a needle-like form, weaving in and out of the object, perhaps stitching the faces to the object. It is possible that reworking the human image in metal could have prompted people to think in new ways about the body and its creation?

Late Anglo-Saxon literature describes how weaving was a powerful metaphor. It was associated with metalworking and the production of high status pieces and one of the roles of women was ‘peace-weaving’ and ‘peace-making’ in socio-political arenas. While brooches and wrist-clasps were largely associated with mature adult women, in some instances young individuals were buried with these too, implying that status was not always secured through adulthood. Grave 11 at Eriswell, Holywell Row (Suffolk), for example, was buried with a weaving baton and a great square-headed brooch, among other items, reinforcing the connection with textile manufacture. Similar to this, some individuals buried with image-carrying objects were the first interments of multiple, consecutive graves. The ornate objects placed with the newly deceased may have been intended to be seen, perhaps to create a memorable scene in the commemoration of the deceased, signalling the wealth and power of the family or social group. These staged burials commemorated the deceased, but also perhaps played a crucial role in memory creation and the creation of an ancestor within the ‘wider drama’ of the cemetery. Individuals buried with image-carrying objects were, at least in the data assessed here, limited to one per burial plot, implying that such items were heirlooms and were inherited until finally removed from circulation.

This interpretation does not refute the suggestions proposed by Webster – that brooches signified ‘particular status and affiliation, both social and religious’ and that they would have been worn during ‘special occasions including feasts and religious ceremonies’ (2012a, 17). It does, however, contest the notion that there was a generic belief-system centred on animal-human relationships as suggested by Pluskowski (2010). The interrelationship between human and non-human designs signals perceptions of the cosmos that encompassed other relationships, such as image-object and image-object-structural components. The rarity of representational art within each cemetery signifies these women out as a visually distinct elite group. It is possible that the wearers, given their elaborate costumes and assemblages, also held performative roles in life involving ceremonial enactment. These women may have participated or were even leading figures within social performance and perhaps ‘female specialists’ in funerary rites (Geake 2005). Even though these motifs ceased in tandem with the cessation of the

deposition of cruciform and great square-headed brooches, the concept of fastening and binding continued in use in Style II interlacing designs.

Chapter 7 - Changing portrayal of the human form

Cruciform brooches were widely used in early Anglo-Saxon England and typological analyses indicate that there are key shifts in the types of representation portrayed (Martin 2011). The inclusion of human heads in representational animal art and the eventual prevalence of anthropomorphic designs in the visual expression in Eastern England is perhaps indicative of transformations in belief systems (discussed in Chapter 7). The widespread horse-head design could reflect a belief in a Germanic origin myth (Fern 2010), but this does not explain the inclusion of the human head. I identified that the human head replaced the flaring nostrils of the horse head – anthropomorphic heads with schematic scroll-like motifs either side of the head could be a survival of the earlier flaring nostril. If these horse heads associate with a pre-Christian form of divination as described in historical sources, the increasing dominance of human heads on the cruciform and florid cruciform brooches could signal a shift in ideology towards the human body and its bodily substances as symbols of prophecy. This interpretation does not offset the suggestion that forms that appear to be exuding from the nose or mouth could symbolically relate to the management of speech. In Norse Sagas, Egil is described as using vomit as a way of communicating *and* preventing speech – he responds to an inhospitable farmer by vomiting on the farmer, the vomit ‘exists from the hero’s mouth, affects the speech-organs of the rival and goes into his interior’ (Waugh 1995, 373). Speech and the concept of prophesy are not dissimilar.

The full-bodied human image took on a unique importance in the seventh century (see discussions in Chapters 6-8). These motifs emerged during a time of increased deposition of receptacles associated with protection and healing. I argued that this could signal an intellectualising of the body and its bodily boundaries and the conceptualisation of bodily integrity and wholeness (see Chapter 6). I identified that human and animal forms in the seventh century were less ambiguous and the animals are also presented as if they are controlled by human figures: they are being ridden, fended off, attacked, or gripped by humans. Perhaps in response (or concurrent) to this shift in human-animal imagery, there are a series of figures that are not represented with any animal – but are single, independent figures. These figures are portrayed with recognisable sexual bodily parts – a crucial development in representational imagery of this time period. The first biologically-defined female is portrayed. Male figures were also produced with genitalia. I argued that the rendering of genitalia thus creates two distinct categories: male and female, which contrasts with the hybrid creatures, embedded within Style I, which can be divided instead into animal and human (see discussion in Chapter 7). The presence of sexual organs has been argued in previous literature to have associated with ‘ideas about fertility’ and Anglo-Saxon gods (Webster and Minter 2007). There is, however, no obvious characteristic evidence in these designs that supports a connection to the gods described in Norse mythology.

I proposed that the importance of this development should not be overlooked however, and this new realism could be cross-compared with parallels from Scandinavian and Continental material. I identified that images of the naked body or even covered genitalia were extremely rare on the Continent *and* in early Anglo-Saxon England, while some parallels can be found in Scandinavia. The image of the female individual with genitalia is even rarer.

In his thesis on the body in the early Christian world, Peter Brown (1991) provides a useful analogical study on the development of the treatment and perceptions of the body. Brown implied that shifts in perception of the body were part of the complex changes in North West Europe and the Mediterranean in the late Antique. He argued that the increasing presence of the church changed how individuals viewed their own bodies and the way in which high-status individuals presented themselves in art and in the flesh. Webster has also suggested that the Church could have had an impact on the presentation of the body in early Anglo-Saxon societies and the 3-dimensional figurines were a response to the new religion (Webster 2011, 474). In my examination of this shift in the portrayal of the human form, I explored it as a product of other social

transformations (see discussion in Chapter 7). I identified that broadly concurrent with the adoption of full-bodied art (and perhaps the remodelling of bodily metaphor), archaeological and historical evidence indicate the development of judicial bodily punishment and execution. I argued that there is a striking paradox between the emergence and usage of full-bodied human representation in terms of the portrayal of the exposed and clothed human form and the reality of bodily punishment and mutilation evident in designated contexts – execution cemeteries.

Howard Williams has suggested that post-cremation rituals of collecting cremated remains has metaphorical associations with a ‘unified whole or body’ and the urns in which the remains were disposed of perhaps relates to a ‘skin’ or ‘second body’ in the fifth to sixth centuries (2004b, 277). By the seventh century, cremation was restricted to the elite of society (Bayliss et al 2013, 526). I have proposed that this ‘remaking of the body’ may have been appropriated at this time by the higher echelons of society, at the same time in which full-bodied imagery emerged, largely on high-status objects and within elite graves (see discussion in Chapter 7). The development of full-bodied imagery, reflecting associations with bodily integrity and wholeness, can be linked to an elite appropriation of a ritual in the seventh century that embodies notions of the ‘unified whole or body’. Taking this one step further, I proposed that the metaphorical associations of bodily integrity and unified wholeness could have been precipitated via the development of trading ports – like the *wic* in Ipswich. In Christian Merovingia, the preservation of the corpse was a prime concern for the mourners (Effros 2002). It is possible that this concept – bodily preservation – influenced the production of full-bodied figures, the increased deposition of workboxes and other items that are related to healing, bodily wholeness and integrity and perhaps even the elite appropriation of cremation rite. Burial practices in this era align with Merovingia (Welch 2011, 267) and it is possible that other concepts were also acculturated, confirming Pestell’s suggestion that the distribution of three-dimensional figurines is associated with the ‘exchange of ideas’ that burgeoned out of the development of more structured continental exchange networks (Pestell, forthcoming).

Chapter 8 - Emergence of new bodily gestures

The portrayal of biologically-defined male and female seems to have been closely connected to the emergence of a repertoire of new gestural expressions (see discussion in Chapters 7-8). I recognised that there is a paucity of research on human bodily gestures in early Anglo-Saxon England, despite a recent inundation of published research on early Anglo-Saxon art (e.g. Cramp 2008; Dickinson 2009; Pollington et al. 2010; Karkov 2011; Webster 2012a). I also highlighted recent compelling arguments that question the validity of associating Roman Emperor Art to human figures with a splayed thumb (Capelle 2003, 40-41). I confirmed this important critique and identified that there are a variety of ways in which the raised-hand gesture is portrayed: the orans-like gesture, hand touching the face/cheeks, hand covering the mouth, hand in-front of face with thumb point forward and the hand covering the eye (see discussion in Chapter 8). I questioned if these motifs were symbolically similar or they might represent local adaptations of Emperor Art or reflect stylistic influences from different sources? Recent literature has recognised a remarkable link between gestural expressions in Migration Period art and thirteenth-century medieval manuscript illuminations (Ratke and Simek 2006). Although there is a large time gap between Migration period and the thirteenth century, it has been noted that the conservative nature of the legal procedure could result in laws and legal behaviour remaining fairly static over the *longue durée* (Simek 2002, 107). I argued that it is important to not dismiss the possibility that gestures survived in secular contexts or even re-emerged in later tradition. I interrogated pictorial and textual sources in the Roman and medieval eras and identified that the early Anglo-Saxon gestures of covering the mouth or eyes and touching the cheeks have close parallels with gestures in Roman and Byzantine art. Grieving men and women were portrayed with a hand raised to the face (Maguire 2007, 139). Textual accounts from the Roman world describe how female mourners wept, tore at their hair, scratched at their faces and beat their chests as explicit grieving gestural expressions (Corbeill 2004, 83). This gesture is found largely on female accessories, although it is found on the drinking horn mounts from Taplow (Buckinghamshire).

Other gestures – such as the Orans posture – has parallels both in pre-Christian and Christian iconography. It is possible that this gesture, even though it is rare, formed part of a repertoire of gestures used in daily practice or ritual expression relevant for the secular elite or a few officials (Watt 2004, 204). Finally, I explored the hand-on-chest-and-waist posture which is rendered on five figurines from Suffolk and Kent. In Anglo-Saxon literature, the chest was described as having some symbolic significance, acting as a site of mental capacity: ‘mental activity happens in enclosed bodily spaces, usually localised in or around the *heorte*, or in the *breost*’ (Lockett 2011, 63). The hand postures that are positioned near the chest could have an association with these later perceptions of the body and the location of thought and wisdom. Stylistic parallels were explored to gain a better perspective on how this gesture came into being. Recent literature on the gestures of these figurines has found that there is a stronger connection between Merovingian Christian figuration than Migration Period Scandinavian figurines (Brundle 2013). Since this publication, other artefacts and imagery have come to light, which confirms and enhances the argument and suggests a wider scale of usage. Similar to other gestural motifs, this posture has parallels in Roman and Byzantine art. It has recently been proposed by Tim Pestell (*pers. Comm.*) that this gesture could represent the *Venus Pudica* position (i.e. a nude covering her breast and pubic area with her hands). There are Romano-British figurines rendered in such a bodily arrangement and these could have influenced the Anglo-Saxon human imagery under discussion. A distinctly male figurine, however, is also rendered in this posture. It is possible that this posture, established in the Roman period, remerged in the seventh century. Other contemporary parallels from Scandinavia and Europe provide a different potential context. This gesture is portrayed on prehistoric figurines from Denmark (e.g. the Gundestrup cauldron) and bronze figurines from Denmark dated to the third- to the fourth century AD. A house-shaped reliquary from Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire in Loire (France) dates to the seventh or eighth centuries and carries several figures in a similar bodily posture. An eighth-century stone altar from Cividale (Italy) carries a scene from the adoration of the Magi and the Visitation of the Virgin – a female figure standing beside the seated Virgin and infant is portrayed in this posture. The altar was commissioned by King Ratchis and it is possible that this female figure, beside the Virgin, could represent a religious figure. Equally, however, it could represent a member of the secular elite e.g. the Duke’s Roman wife, Tassia (see discussion in Chapter 8). The house-shaped reliquary from Loire was commissioned by an individual named Mumma – the name Mumma could refer to a male or female. Of additional interest is an elephant ivory panel from Lorraine (France) dating to the late ninth century. This object carries the Adoration scene too, and again standing near the Virgin is a figure that adopts a similar bodily arrangement. This figure, however, is not female. Pre-Christian examples include the Zbruch idol from Ukraine, which carries a series of figures with varied human gestural expressions – many of which parallel early Anglo-Saxon gestures. This hand on chest and waist motif is similar to gestures used to express grief and mourning. Like the raised hand (see above) – some figurines raise one hand close to their face. This motif of one hand, raised to the face, and the other held across the waist, is represented on varied Roman objects including funerary monuments. It is also of interest that the seated figure on the urn-lid from Spong Hill shares several similarities with the figures rendered on the Roman sarcophagi art (for discussion see Chapter 8). Other gestures that are investigated include the gripping hand and crossed wrists. Again, parallels are found in Roman mourning gestures and in the *Sachsenspiegel* illuminations.

The emergence of these new bodily gestures in art – such as the hand on the chest and waist – is concurrent with seventh-century bed-burials such as Trumpington (Cambridgeshire) where the corpse has been positioned in a similar way. There is a peak in the seventh century of male and female high-status corpses arranged in this bodily posture. The occurrence of this type of gesture within contemporary high-status religious contexts in Merovingian and Lombardic worlds might just signal that this hand posture can be connected with an expression of authority. These hand postures are used by male *and* female figurines, signalling a similar meaning that was not restricted to a particular sex. There are, however, more female figurines than male figurines that are positioned with this gesture. The increased use of this gesture in representational art and corpse arrangements hints at an interplay between male and female expression and identity in the conversion period – and more clearly

conveys perhaps a shared repertoire of gestures that might have been part of elite culture. The development, however, of genitalia in human depictions, and the individualistic nature of figurines established through new costumes and headdresses, were all probably an Anglo-Saxon initiative, signalling the internal reconfiguring of gendered expressions in an era of dramatic social change.

Future Research

The exploration of bodily arrangements in the grave in Merovingian and Byzantine societies might have provided additional social information for this study. Unfortunately this was outside the scope of this thesis but future investigations of comparable bodily gesture from these worlds might prove fruitful. This study has focussed on figurative motifs of the human form and has excluded 'ambiguous' designs. There are, however, numerous motifs that could represent a human-like being, but these were not included because of the subjective nature of their identification. The cross-examination of the findings in this thesis matched with a more extensive study that incorporates the more ambiguous 'human' designs, could provide further social information regarding the interrelationship between image, object and the user.

The identification of nuanced gestural expressions emergent in the seventh century, underscores a need to explore the gestures embedded more broadly within the Migration Period Scandinavian figurative art carried on personal adornment. There is also great potential for this investigation of gestures to be extended to incorporate the imagery on Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian stone sculpture (e.g. the Lindisfarne grave marker that carries several figures bearing weapons and two with other gestural motifs). The gestures rendered on prehistoric stone sculptures in Ireland (e.g. the Tanderagee figure, Co. Armagh that holds its shoulder and the Janus figure, Boa Island, Lower Lough Erne that has crossed wrists (O'Kelly and O'Kelly 1989, 291-293) is also an area for continued research. This study has flagged a clear link between the portrayal of gesture in art and the bodily posture of some interred corpses in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, and in doing so identified gender distinctions and a peak in male and female bodily arrangements that were matched in 3-dimensional art. There is a need, therefore, for further research on the positioning of corpses in inhumation graves and debate on whether bodily arrangements are culturally or aesthetically distinct, formal or haphazard. A demand is also evident for a thorough investigation of corpse gestures and gender, age and status distinctions over time, within the cemetery and inter-regionally between cemeteries.

This period-based study has value to other periods for imagery, mortuary and living practices based on similar archaeological material. Prehistoric archaeology, for example, has noted the significance of human representation in the social and cognitive worlds (e.g. eds. Renfrew and Morley 2007) and the importance of bodily metaphor (e.g. Knappett 2011). These studies, however, often treat human imagery as a separate category. Ceramic figurines, for example, have been linked to sedentary way of life in the prehistoric world, but non-sedentary cultures also produced these objects, implying a greater complexity between the creation of figuration and the social world. The exploration of the connections between how the human form is presented in representational art and the treatment of the human body in funeral ritual (e.g. posed bodies in the grave) could further understandings on the creative process of figuration and the development of new concepts. This study also has relevance for Iron Age archaeology. Despite the extensive research on zoomorphic and geometric designs on metalwork in Iron Age Britain, anthropomorphic imagery remains underexplored. Research on the conceptual links between human imagery, the way these designs are displayed on objects and manufacturing technologies could illuminate further on the role this type of imagery performed in the construction and presentation of social identity.

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