Gardening time

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

Edited by Simon Stoddart, Ethan D. Aines & Caroline Malone
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with contributions from
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On the cover: Cut out reconstruction of a broch flanked by two reconstructed Nuraghi, reconsidered by Lottie Stoddart.

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

Anna Depalmas

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

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

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

In 1936, while he was still a student, he published his first work on Su Nuraxi di Barumini. This was his birthplace, and throughout his life he maintained a close and almost embodied connection with the village. This also led him to carry out his most important archaeological work in the landscape of his birth. Indeed, between 1951 and 1956, he worked on excavating an artificial hill there, which was found to cover the nuragic complex of Su Nuraxi di Barumini. This was the first excavation conducted in Sardinia using a stratigraphic methodology to establish a time-line for the nuragic period, and it became a benchmark for later investigations and chronological research. His work at Barumini formed the basis for a series of fundamental papers on Sardinian proto-history, from I nuraghi. Torri preistoriche di Sardegna (The Nuraghi, prehistoric towers of Sardinia) in 1962 to Civiltà nuragica (Nuragic civilization) in 1982.

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

At the beginning of the 1960s, he published his wide-ranging synthesis of Sardinia, La civiltà dei Sardi dal Neolitico all’età dei nuraghi (1963) (Sardinian Civilization from the Neolithic period to the nuragic
Sardinia and of progressive positions which were initiatives which promoted the independence of Christian Democrats and later as a supporter of also involved in politics, first as a member of the drafting the Special Statute of Autonomy. He was in a way which was never dull but rather vigilant taking on civic responsibilities, which he fulfilled of interest to laymen.

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

He showed a total but clear love for his land by taking on civic responsibilities, which he fulfilled in a way which was never dull but rather vigilant and acute, despite his soft tone. As a cultured man, he worked for the Regional Council of Sardinia, drafting the Special Statute of Autonomy. He was also involved in politics, first as a member of the Christian Democrats and later as a supporter of initiatives which promoted the independence of Sardinia and of progressive positions which were close to the Centre-Left. In practice, he was active in actions which were designed to give greater value to Sardinian identity and culture.

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

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

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

I would like to end this brief and partial memorial to Giovanni Lilliu by mentioning his work as a university professor of prehistoric and proto-historic Sardinia (and not only those subjects – with great versatility he also taught Geography and Christian archaeology). What I will personally remember is his little figure in jacket and pullover (he seldom, if ever, wore a tie), typewritten sheets in hand, and always punctual. He never postponed a lesson and was never
absent. As an examiner he was always courteous and understanding. But you had to be very well prepared for his exams. The end of the course every year was the moment that we all waited for. Then there were the one or two day excursions that he led us on to various parts of Sardinia. We students would present our explanations of the monuments and he would listen with great attention as if it were his first visit, and then sometimes add some of his own memories, making it ever more clear how he was the creator of our view of prehistoric Sardinia.

He really was the memory of Sardinian history.
Tributes to Dr David Trump, FSA, UOM (1931–2016), and Dr Euan MacKie, FSA (1936–2020)

Caroline Malone & Simon Stoddart

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

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

After Malta, Trump held the post of Staff Tutor in Archaeology at the University’s Board of Extra-Mural Studies until retirement in 1997, when he was succeeded by Caroline Malone. He not only contributed to the teaching of Mediterranean Prehistory in the Department of Archaeology, but also had a large following in the wider, continuing education community, engaging mature students in all aspects of Archaeology in the region and beyond. It was during this period that he made a major contribution to the archaeology of Sardinia, uncovering once again unsuspected phases of prehistory at Grotta Filiestru (Trump 1983) and completing the survey of Bonu Ighinu. At Grotta Filiestru, he characteristically invested all the resources he could muster into constructing an effective chronology (Switsur & Trump 1983) and some of the first faunal studies undertaken in Sardinia (Levine 1983). This work was, in its way, as equally pioneering as his work on the island of Malta. The Grotta Filiestru produced a new scientifically dated sequence of Sardinian prehistory, identifying the fifth-millennium BC Filiestru Neolithic phase for the first time. In earlier fieldwork he also excavated the cave site of Sa ‘uca de su Tintirriolu (Loria & Trump 1978). His work around Bonu Ighinu (Trump 1990) is, however, closest to the theme of this volume since, in typical energetic style, Trump also provided one of the earliest studies of a nuragic landscape, once again demonstrating a pioneering role, now followed by many others.
Euan MacKie was a central figure in the study of brochs, as is shown by the very high level of citation in this volume (Mackie 1965 ... 2008). In several ways the contribution of David Trump and Euan MacKie run in parallel, one journeying south, the other journeying north also from Cambridge beginnings, both Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of London, engaged in seminal fieldwork, on a shoe string generally with volunteers, providing the first chronological foundations for monuments in the landscape and addressing synthesis of the results. Both were pioneers of their generation who retained their own intellectual independence in museums (both) and in continuing education (Trump), rather than a department of archaeology or a heritage organization.

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

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

He ventured far and wide in his more interpretative work. Some of his interpretations of broch builders and their monuments are no longer widely held and the chronologies are currently being reconsidered, but his stimulating approach to ideas endures. He was passionate about many other subjects including his seminal work in prehistoric metrology and archaeoastronomy. The volume Science and Society in Prehistoric Britain (1977) was a central work for Glyn Daniel’s teaching in Cambridge, and he made the valid point that the sophistication of prehistory is not to be underestimated. His interest in ethnography, no doubt drawing on his Arch and Anth undergraduate career at Cambridge, gave him a great respect for other ways of thinking and for the architectural and political achievements of prehistoric Britain, most notably for the builders of the brochs themselves in the Iron Age.
The association of the Garden with Time was inspired by the island of Lismore which has been linked to the translation of the Gaelic Lios Mòr, or ‘great garden’ (Fraser 2004, 244–5). As mentioned in the introduction, horticulture also brings with it a particular sense of cultivated, cyclical time that seemed doubly appropriate. In modern times, different gardens have different levels of structure. In the romantic British tradition, it is tactically placed monuments that give fixed points to an otherwise ‘natural’ landscape. Could the monuments of Sardinia, Scotland and indeed Lismore respond to the same concept?

As mentioned in the introduction, Richard Bradley (1993; 2002) has provided seminal analysis of the way in which attention to the past by prehistoric societies can be read from the spatial disposition of different monuments. In the case of Lismore, these are not focused into particular parts of the landscape such as in the case of Tara that Bradley cites extensively and which provides an excellent example of the growth of a monument micro-landscape. The aim of this chapter is to show how the placing of monuments forms a series of cycles of time differentially placed across the landscape and recalled in later periods (cf. Stoddart 2013, comparing Tara and Tarxien).

Historians may be sceptical about the extent to which archaeologists can reconstruct the memories of landscape, and even be doubtful about the degree to which there was intentionality even in the placing of historical monuments next to the prehistoric (Meredith Lobay 2009). However, analysis done by two of us (Garden and Fitzjohn) has provided invaluable information on how the current islanders react to archaeology. This is an ethnography of heritage similar to the work of Chapman (1971) whose seminal work (only written up long after the fieldwork in the 1930s), deciphered the strata of time defined by the people of Milocca on the larger island of Sicily. Archaeological sites were exiled to a time of the Saracens, while modernity emerged after ‘48, that major political threshold in the development of Europe (Stoddart 1998). We could argue that the archaeological sites of Lismore have been exiled to Celticity, whilst ‘45 and later clearances in the nineteenth century (http://www.isleoflismore.com/history/baligrundle/baligrundle.shtml) provided an equally important threshold in the island’s political development.

The island of Lismore (Fig. 21.1) lies like a long ship setting sail for Mull from the southern shore of the Great Glen, a geological fault-line that metamorphoses...
selected parts of other representative sites that had been identified during the broader survey. The final year of work entailed the consolidation of the broch in 2008, in collaboration with the local community who had by then opened their museum, supported by Historic Scotland and Forward Scotland.

**Cycles of time**

The programme of work identified five major cycles of time which will now be outlined and interpreted. The first entailing the likely colonization of the islands in c. 8000 BC, involving a complex interrelationship between rising sea level and rising land (released of the weight of ice) (Saville 2004, 17) was not directly investigated by the project; although a pollen sequence was recovered from one of the lochs by Rupert Housley (as we revise this article the loch is under new investigation by the Royal Holloway geographers (Matthews et al. 2021)) that from the limited dating and pilot analysis appears to reach back to this early period. This first period can, therefore, only be inferred from the very

southwestwards into Loch Linhe. It is a mere 2.5 km wide and 15 km long, unusually, within Argyll and more broadly Scotland, dominated by a Dalradian limestone geology which gave it a different character, including fertility compared with nearby areas.

The Island of Lismore was the subject of a Historic Scotland and McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research Cambridge sponsored programme of landscape investigation between 2000 and 2008. The programme started by flying the Cambridge aeroplane with overlapping aerial (1:6,000) photography in 2000, accompanied by a desktop assessment by one of us (Redhouse) using the information readily available in Canmore (https://canmore.org.uk/) and then integrated with Digimap. This was followed by a survey of the major broch monument of Tirefuir, including registration of its deterioration. A more general condition survey was undertaken of the whole island and a more detailed study of the central portion by Paul Pattison, accompanied by geophysics. Two major fieldwork years then followed in 2004–5 that included the excavation of the outer parts and entrance of Tirefuir and

Figure 21.2. *Aerial view of Tirefuir (Tirefour) under excavation.*

Figure 21.2. *Aerial view of Tirefuir (Tirefour) under excavation.*
limited records of Lethbridge (1950) who worked on
the offshore island middens and by comparison with
discoveries in the Western Isles (Gregory et al. 2005).
The nearest evidence to Lismore is from MacArthur
cafe and Druimvargie Rockshelter in Oban which,
though originally discovered in the 1890s (Anderson
1895, 1898), have now been dated to 7400 bc (Saville
2004, 19). The second relates to the prominent burial
cairns (Fig. 21.1) that define the upland spine of
the island from northeast to southwest, casting a compre-
hensive viewshed 360 degrees around the island. The
only available information on these derives from the
Royal Commission volume (Royal Commission on the
Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland 1975)
and excavated sites from outside the island (Saville
2004, 200) from which it can be inferred that time has
moved on 4,000 years to c. 4000 bc. The third phase dat-
ing provisionally to 300 bc onwards was investigated
by the current work in much more detail, adding a new
richness to the evidence in hand and will be reported
in more detail below. This comprises the construction
of the two candidates for the nomenclature broch (Fig.
21.2–3) and the accompanying complexity of other
types of Argyll monuments from this time onwards.
This memory cycle arguably morphs into the early
historical period when memories are supported by
documentary records, including those associated with
the advent of the local saint St. Moluaig, whose monu-
mental centre emerges out of the prehistoric landscape,
marked by a more inland construction of place. It is
a matter of how memory is constructed whether this
third phase should be seen as an emergence or a new
beginning, a question investigated in more detail else-
where (Meredith Lobay 2009). A fourth phase is clearly
distinct, when the viewsheds of the newly constructed
fourteenth century castles, inserted by outsiders, were
deliberately placed to face out into the deep water of
the loch (Fig. 21.4), a radical break with the palimpsest
of the previous period. In this cycle, a number of these
monuments emerged as cartographic landmarks in the
course of time. The final fifth phase of memory is the
response of the modern inhabitants, reacting to the
question of how they treat these different elements that
they have now chosen to place as visual memories in
the repository of the community museum.

**Interrogating the third cycle**

The monument of Tirefuur provides the focal point
of knowledge of the third cycle outlined above. It is a
monument that was consistently recognized by con-
temporary and later society, but interpreted in varying
ways. It is accepted as one of the most upstanding
monuments in Argyll and thus acknowledged as a
proven example of a complex round house (Armit 2004, 52) or broch depending on the terminological tradition. The dating of the site by radiocarbon (Kaljee 2021) shows a bridging of the third and the fourth cycle during its history (300 BC–AD 1600), providing a scale against which other developments can be calibrated, in a way that is not solely a product of the bias of research. The site’s involvement in earlier memories of the second cycle was limited to the discovery of a residual arrowhead, demonstrating nevertheless a tantalizing glimpse of a range of Neolithic activity that went beyond the celebration of death.

The site of Tirefuir was not investigated inside or under its walls during the current campaign for reasons of ethics and conservation. Some caution thus needs to be applied to the fact that the earliest date for the monument so far derives from the lower part of the midden terrace deposits which built up in the yard in front of the entrance of the structure. If this date is to be considered at least a working hypothesis for the date of construction of the monument, then this cycle of monument construction began at c. 300 BC. It does seem a reasonable hypothesis that midden deposits represent fairly the activities inside the monument, perhaps even more precisely than any deposits that might later be found to be dominant in the interior, which was probably thoroughly reworked (see Romankiewicz & Ralston this volume). These deposits show a mixed economy of cattle, sheep/goat and pig, as well as barley. As remarked in the endnote, middens are part of the memorialization and celebration of the monument itself, an apparently intentional strategy.

The ‘altering of the earth’ in Bradleyan terms was relatively limited on the site of Tirefuir, but the central monument was not only shrouded on its southwestern side by a yard supported by an earlier midden, but also received the insertion of a later adjunct structure. This structure seems to have been in use during the early centuries AD, but rests on a fill dating to c. 50 BC.

The most active long term focus of the main monument was its entrance. Some very interesting detail of the door pivot and the adjoining paving was uncovered, providing vivid details of the habitual workings of the monument. In this main thoroughfare, any earlier deposits contemporary with the external midden appear to have been removed, leaving traces that only dated back to 100 BC. At the other end of the spectrum, the later stratigraphic deposits in the entrance date to c. AD 1600, unsurprisingly showing how fundamental this same thoroughfare was for the continued employment of the internal space. The entrance court where deposits date from AD 100 until 700 seems also to have been subject to the same constraints. Earlier deposits appear to have been removed or not encountered; these same early deposits seem to have been deliberately marked by the placing of a distinctive Roman Head stud fibula (Hull type 149B), also known from Newstead. The evidence from the micro fauna in the upper fills of the entrance and bank suggest that structure was latterly a roost for owls, a species not particularly tolerant of human presence, and indicative of the later deployment of the site more as a memory than for directly practical uses.

One further important ‘altering of the earth’ was the construction of an outer bank to the monument in AD 700. This provided an extra defence, or at least boundary, to the entrance. The use of the monument at about this date may also be related to the discovery of a decorated pin, broadly contemporary on stylistic grounds to this period, even if its context was unstratified. These latter periods are, of course, closely related to the early Christian activity (see Meredith Lobay 2009) which shifted inland to the clachan next to one of the largest Neolithic burial mounds.

The fourth cycle

Evidence for the fourth cycle, the construction of the two castles of Coeffin and Achanduin, formed a major shift in the orientation of the island, taking into consideration the very different maritime connectivity of this later period, when deeper hulled ships no longer hugged the coast, but confidently headed for deeper water on a more regular basis. This temporal cycle has been the subject of investigation by the late Denis Turner whose results have now been published (Turner 1998; Caldwell 2017). Although only Achanduin has been systematically investigated, both appear to have substantially modified in the 1290s in response to different political orientations and authority. Archanduin is a 22 m square rectangular enclosure castle roughly orientated on the compass, a tower at the eastern corner and entrances in the northeastern and northwestern sides. The interior had both a masonry and wooden range. The builders (contra received wisdom) were probably local lords, in all probability the MacDougalls of Lorn, responding to the wider political context, in the same way as that which motivated the construction of similar castles such as Duart on Mull, Castle Roy on the Spey on the northeastern approaches to the Great Glen, Skipness on the east coast of Kintyre to the south, and Portencross also to the south in Ayrshire. Oram (2008) sees an earlier ancestry drawn from Castle Sween on Loch Sween to the southwest. In this way, Archanduin was a typical node in a network of political memory. Their visibility, depending on the prevailing weather conditions, may have been enhanced by whitewashing, providing a
considerable gaze across the loch, particularly across the loch towards Mull.

A coda to this cycle of memory is found in the cartography of the island. At first in the sixteenth century it is only the island itself that is recognized (e.g. Nicolas de Nicolay Paris 1583), a level of detail that depends partly on scale (only the island is shown in the Mount and Page London map of 1715 which only shows Castle Duart). Enabled by increased detail of scale Tyr Fouir (as shown by Blau’s map of 1654 from Amsterdam) begins to emerge as an important maritime landmark along with other features from the sea, as clearly demonstrated by the British Admiralty maps dating to the 1860s. The site was sufficiently notable to be sketched by one of the most famous British Artists of the nineteenth century, Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775 – 1851), on his tour of Scotland.

The fifth cycle

The fifth cycle relates to the reception by the contemporary and near contemporary world. A series of interviews undertaken by two of us (Fitzjohn and Garden) informs us of the relative clouding of deeper time in the public imagination (Fig. 21.5). The intangible modern heritage (sheep and cattle) register more highly than the recent built environment such as the church and the community hall. The broch is equally weighted with the liminal lighthouse, albeit above the level of the one shop on the island and the ferry quay. External money has been brought into the island to foster community memory by the construction of a museum and archive, but it is the active community life, while altogether more transitory, that is all the more closely related to the sense of island identity. Even though the project left the broch more consolidated than we found it, it does not register as high in the public imagination and memory as the external archaeologist might suspect. It belongs to another world as Liz Pratt (2020) found during similar studies in the west of England.

Conclusion

The example of Lismore provides a salutary lesson that the monuments which archaeologists consider so important do not feature so prominently in the minds of the local modern inhabitants. It is possible that Tirefuir may have grown in the memory of the local people, now that a trail has been constructed to the site. However, memories even of those who most recently investigated the site have been readjusted to the political present in a way that recalls the Tiv rather than modern literate society. Perhaps the imminent full publication of the project will provide another literate layer in the fertile layers of memory.
Gardening may seem worlds away from Nuraghi and brochs, but tending a garden is a long process involving patience, accretion and memory. Scholars argue that memories are also cultured, developed and regained. The monuments in Scotland and Sardinia are testament to the importance of memory and its role in maintaining social relations.

This collection of twenty-one papers addresses the theme of memory anchored to the enduring presence of monuments, mainly from Scotland and Sardinia, but also from Central Europe and the Balkans.

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