Stone people: monuments and identities in the Channel Islands

Chris Scarre

Abstract

This paper deals with two intersecting issues of identity: the special identity of communities living on the Channel Islands off the coast of northwest France in the 5th and 4th millennium BC, as expressed through monuments; and the identity that seems to have been attributed to the megalithic blocks of stone themselves. Insular identity is a well-worn theme but in the case of the Channel Island monuments leads directly to questions concerning the particular character of blocks shaped or carved with human characteristics. The Câtel statue-menhir of Guernsey provides the starting point for consideration of the relationship of this unequivocally anthropomorphic representation to the disembodied female breasts found in chambered tombs of mainland France. The paper also discusses how the megalithic monuments of the Channel Islands are both comparable to yet different from those of adjacent regions, a circumstance that emphasises how these and similar island groups may have been places of encounter but also of communities expressing specific social and cultural identities.

Zusammenfassung

Dieser Artikel beschäftigt sich mit zwei sich überschneidenden Aspekten von Identität: die spezielle Identität der Gesellschaften, die im 5. und 4. Jahrtausend v. Chr. auf den Kanalinseln nahe der französischen Küste lebten, wie sie durch Monumente ausgedrückt werden; weiterhin geht es um die Identität, die offenbar den megalithischen Einzelsteinen selbst zuerkannt wurde. Insulare Identität ist ein vielbeachtetes Thema, aber der Fall der Kanalinseln ist insofern speziell, als er direkt zur Erörterung der speziellen Eigenschaften von Steinen führt, die durch Formgebung oder Verzierung mit menschlichen Attributen versehen wurden. Der „Câtel statue"–Menhir von Guernsey ist der Ausgangspunkt für eine Diskussion des Verhältnisses dieser eindeutig anthropomorphen Darstellung zu den entkörperlosen Darstellungen weiblicher Brüste, die aus Grabanlagen des französischen Festlandes bekannt sind. Schließlich folgt eine Diskussion über die Unterschiede der Megalithen der Kanalinseln gegenüber denen der angrenzenden Regionen, um damit der Frage nachzugehen, wie diese und andere Inselgruppen als Begegnungsplätze oder als Foci spezifischer sozialer und kultureller Identität gedient haben könnten.

Introduction

There has been considerable discussion in archaeology in recent years about the nature of insularity and the relevance or coherence

island	no. monuments	land area km^2	density/km^2
Rügen	254	935	0.2
Orkney	70	971	0.07
Arran	21	430	0.04
Scilly	87	16	5.4
Channel Islands	92	196	0.47

Tab. 1. The density of monuments on islands mentioned in the text.

Tab. 1. Vergleich der Monumente auf den im Text behandelten Inseln.

of 'islands' as a category in prehistory. Are islands really isolates, as the biogeographical studies of the 1960's might have us believe, or are they nodes in a web of maritime connections that linked communities as closely or even more closely than those overland? The answer must of course vary depending on the character of the island or islands in question, their size, topography and separation from each other and the mainland, and on the cultural context of the place and time in question. Over the past decade or so, archaeologists have increasingly begun to consider islands as elements of seascapes, and in this context, to think in terms of maritime communities, those people living on coasts and islands who regard the sea not as some kind of barrier but as an arena of routine, everyday activity (Rainbird 2007).

Islands should not, then, be studied in isolation from their surrounding seas, nor should they be regarded as fundamentally different from other coastal communities whose livelihoods depend on boats. It is also clear, however, that while islands share characteristics with adjacent continental coastlines, there is often also a quality of difference. This is apparent, for example, in the density of Neolithic monuments (megalithic and otherwise) on several west European islands (tab. 1). Thus in Sprockhoff's study of 1938, he noted that the Baltic island of Rügen had 229 recorded monuments within an area of 935 km^2 (0.25 monuments per km^2), a figure increased to 254 by Ewald Schuldt (Schuldt 1972,16; Midgley 2008, 30). The small Danish islands of Bogø and Møn still have 119 recorded megalithic tombs, out of an original total of as many as 300-400 (Midgley 2008, 35). The island of Arran off southwest Scotland has 21 monuments in 430 km^2 (0. 04 per km^2) and Scilly, 87 monuments in 16 km^2 (5.4 per km^2) (Hughes 1988; Robinson 2007). The Channel Islands as a whole have a comparable density of monuments (92 in 196 km^2) (Kinnes 1988; Patton 1995).

The higher densities of island monuments may in part result from their remoteness and the reduced pressure of medieval and post-medieval agricultural exploitation. Other studies suggest that the higher densities instead relate to the special status of islands, which attracted ceremonial and funerary activity through their character of places set apart. Thus it has been suggested that the island of Arran served as a preferred burial place for Neolithic communities most of whom lived on the adjacent mainland: with its prominent mountains and sought-after glassy pitchstone, it may have become an island of the dead (Hughes 1988; though see Murray 1991 for an alternative view).

Alternatively, the emphasis can be placed on ritual attraction, the elaboration of ceremonial practices and the monuments that are as-

sociated with it in order to encourage visitors (including pilgrims) and to secure the island's position at the heart of a web of maritime connections. This concept has been developed in particular by Paul Rainbird, who has suggests that the island of Pohnpei in Micronesia, whose inhabitants did not build and use ocean-going canoes, may have attracted other islanders to come to them through sacred prestige conveyed by the large coastal tombs (Rainbird 2007, 99–109). A similar argument can be extended to other islands, such as Malta, and could help to explain the elaborate monumentality of the Maltese islands (ibid. 68–89).

How may these perspectives inform our understanding of the megalithic monuments of the Channel Islands? Historically, the islands have been both marginal and central. They have been marginal in the sense of their political separation from the adjacent French mainland and of their position as relatively isolated outposts of the British Crown. At the same time, they have played a central role in certain maritime exchanges, at least from the later Iron Age when Guernsey in particular became a stopping off point for sailing vessels. The deep water Little Russell channel provides a safe maritime seaway down the eastern coast of Guernsey with access to the excellent natural harbour of St Peter Port. The Gallo-Roman trading vessel of the 3rd century AD whose wreck was discovered in St Peter Port harbour (Sebire 2005, 122–123, 159–161) bears eloquent testimony to the maritime importance of Guernsey as a staging post during the Roman period.

Whether it was a stepping stone to the Neolithic colonization of southern Britain, as some have supposed, is more open to question. Both Guernsey and Jersey have material attributable to the Villeneuve-Saint-Germain group of northern France, dating to the early centuries of the 5th millennium BC. At this period, Jersey may still have been connected to the mainland, at least at low tide, though it was shortly to be separated by rising sea level (Pailler et al. 2008, 99–100; Sebire 2005, 16). Guernsey, by contrast, had become an island several centuries before, and domestic crops and livestock, together perhaps with farming populations, must have travelled there by boat (Sebire 2005, 54). Yet there is no conclusive evidence of cross-Channel contact during the 5th millennium BC (Pailler/Sheridan 2009, 29). During the earlier Neolithic, therefore, the Channel Islands may not have been nodes in a maritime network of cross-Channel routes but relatively remote places to be visited not en route to other destinations but principally for what they themselves had to offer. This may have included material for polished stone axe production (Patton 1991; 1995, 61–63, 129–134). It was during the middle and later centuries of the 5th millennium BC, too, that megalithic monuments began to be constructed.

Neolithic colonists, assuming they came from the western Cotentin, would have found themselves in a land geologically not unlike that they had left. It was however a land dominated by stone, just as much if not more so than the Normandy mainland. Constant erosion by winds and waves have produced rock-strewn shorelines and craggy islets (fig. 1). The builders of the great Jersey passage grave of La Hougue Bie in the late 5th millennium BC drew upon these wave-worn stones. Geologist Arthur Mourant noted that fifteen of the blocks from La Hougue Bie were visibly wave-worn, and others too were rounded; only 15 of the 65 blocks were angular, and though these must have been "in a broad sense" quarried, Mourant adds that they too may have been obtained from rocks on the foreshore (Mourant 1933). The surfaces of the islands provided other sources of stone. Millennia of field clearance and quarrying have radically altered the appearance of the Channel Islands but (like much of north-

Fig. 1. The rocky shorelines of the Channels Islands. View from the small island of Longue Pierre looking south towards Herm (Photo: Chris Scarre).

Abb. 1. Die felsige Küste der Kanalinseln. Blick von der kleinen Insel Longue Pierre südwärts nach Herm (Foto: Chris Scarre).

west France and southwest Britain, or like parts of Iberia today) they were very likely covered by scatters of granite blocks.

We may envisage then that the first megalithic monuments on the Channel Islands were constructed within landscapes much rockier than those that we see today. In some cases, indeed, the first step in constructing a megalithic monument may have been to clear the site of existing boulders, a point that has been made also in connection with Stonehenge and Avebury in the sarsen-strewn chalklands of southern Britain (Field 2005). The clearances have continued up to the present day. Not only have they removed natural boulders, but also megalithic monuments. Many of the chambered tombs of Herm were damaged by quarrymen in the 1830´s; it was indeed in the course of that quarrying that they came to the attention of the Lukis family (Oliver 1870, 57).

The destruction of Channel Island monuments has been considered by Hibbs (1986) and more briefly by Kinnes (1988, 17–25). Hibbs compares site distributions both to place name evidence and early land-use maps of Jersey (1795) and Guernsey (1785). On Guernsey, place name evidence indicates 68 megalithic sites and 39 menhirs, and Hibbs suggests that Jersey and Guernsey each lost some 40–50 sites in the period from the late 18th up to the end of the 19th century, as compared with the 30 or so monuments that survive on each of the islands today. It is also clear that destruction has been very uneven, and that sites survive mainly on marginal land, where they have been incorporated into field boundaries, or where their size alone has made demolition and removal impracticable. He concludes that "The surviving megalithic monuments in the Channel Islands represent the eroded remains of a far denser and more complex ritual landscape" of which the best surviving parts are currently preserved beneath sand dunes such as L'Ancresse Common on Guernsey and Les Blanches Banques on Jersey (Hibbs 1986, 208, 213). Kinnes observes that the loss of sites from the upland plateaux may be even greater than the place name evidence suggests, as these are prime arable areas (Kinnes 1988, 22).

It is difficult to draw direct comparison between site survival and side density on the Channel Islands and adjacent parts of the French mainland, but Hibbs concludes that "the Breton, and to a lesser extent the Norman distributions, are far less distorted than those of the Channel Islands" (Hibbs 1986, 221). Before pursuing this comparison, however, let us briefly consider how closely Channel Island megalithic monuments compare morphologically with their Breton and Norman equivalents. Are they merely isolated parts of a general northwest French tradition, or do they project a specifically insular identity?

Typologies and morphologies

Recent studies of the Channel Islands Neolithic have identified 15-20 passage graves (including five doubtful examples), 13–16 cists-in-circles, 2 or 3 gallery graves, and a number of megalithic cists and menhirs (Kinnes 1988; Patton 1995, 52–53, 84). Some of the specific identifications must be considered doubtful, and in some cases there are divergent interpretations of individual sites. Thus Kinnes considers Les Pourciaux North the remains of a passage grave whereas Patton identifies it as a gallery grave. Much of the ambiguity results from reliance on 19th century descriptions of monuments now destroyed or overgrown, or never extensively explored. Very few of the Channel Islands monuments have in fact been the subject of recent excavations.

Comparison with monument forms of mainland France must hence proceed on the premise that our existing information is not in all cases reliable. Close parallels nonetheless exist, and given the proximity of the French coast these should scarcely occasion surprise.

Patton seeks to align the Channel Islands monuments very closely to the Breton series. Thus he assigns the dry-stone passage grave with circular chamber of La Sergenté on Jersey to the category of 'dolmens à couloir avec chambre simple entièrement en pierres sèches' defined by L'Helgouach in the Brittany tomb series (L'Helgouach 1965, 35–38). Patton compares five further Channel Islands passage graves (La Hougue Bie, Les Monts Grantez, Le Mont Ubé, La Varde and Le Creux-ès-Faies) to the Kerdro-Vihan group, and two more (Le Déhus/Herm 12) to the Quelvezin type (Patton 1995, 37; L'Helgouach 1965, 56–60). At a detailed level some of these proposed parallels are open to question. Thus one of the principal features of Le Déhus and Les Monts Grantez–the presence of additional side cells or chambers entered through narrow openings–is absent in the case of the Breton examples.

If we are searching for mainland parallels, a better place to start should be the Neolithic monuments of western Normandy. This may be particularly appropriate in the case of the earliest Neolithic monuments of Jersey, since the island may only have been separated from the Cotentin peninsula by rising sea level a few centuries before the first passage graves were built (Sebire 2005, 54). While Patton attached La Sergenté to L'Helgouach's Breton monument typology, Hibbs & Shute drew attention to detailed parallels at dry-stone passage graves of western Normandy such as Vierville and La Hoguette (Hibbs / Shute 1984). As Kinnes remarked, „we might reasonably place La Sergenté at the head of the insular series and, interestingly, it is the only island structure with visibly close affinities on the mainland" (Kinnes 1988, 33).

Thus the first Jersey passage graves fall unproblematically within the mainland series, whereas the later passage graves are more difficult to furnish with close mainland parallels. These include the subsidiary side-cells found at Le Déhus and Les Monts Grantez, but still more striking differences are represented by Le Mont de la Ville and La Pouquelaye de Faldouet. Faldouet consists of an orthostatic chamber and passage, which are preceded by an oval unroofed courtyard around the edges of which five or six separate cists are arranged. At least two of the cists had separate capstones (Hibbs 1985, 67). Still more unusual was Le Mont de la Ville. The plan at first sight resembles that of a passage grave with circular chamber and internal subdivisions, but the chamber is too large ever to have been roofed in stone, and here again the burial spaces appear to have taken the from of a series of separate megalithic cists arranged around its inner edge (Hibbs 1985). Neither site has any continental parallels, and the

argument that they are an insular derivation from a passage grave tradition is plausible.

Insular identity may also be expressed in the major category of Late Neolithic funerary monument, the cists-in-circles. They are particularly numerous in the Guernsey archipelago, with 16 or so examples on Guernsey and Herm, as compared with only two on Jersey (Kinnes 1988; Patton 1995, 78). This might be interpreted as a feature of increasing insularity as the more distant Guernsey separated itself from the mainland monumental traditions.

It would be wrong to conclude, however, that the Channel Islands became completely separated from mainland monument traditions as the Neolithic progressed, since 'gallery graves' equivalent to the 'allées couvertes' of Brittany and western Normandy were built there during the Late Neolithic. It may be significant that the two confirmed ‚gallery graves' are both found on Jersey, closer to the French coast, comparable to sites such as Bois de la Plesse on the Cotentin peninsula (Edeine 1971). The argument that cists-in-circles, concentrated mainly on Guernsey, reflect the greater insularity of tradition in the most distant island must however be weighed against the discovery of two cists-in-circles on the îles Chausey, the closest of all the Channel Islands to the Normandy coast (Chancerel 2007).

In a general sense, then, the first monuments of the Channel Islands (such as La Sergenté) seem to represent the implantation of external ideas or ideology. Islands and mainland then appear to drift gradually apart until the development of the open chamber monuments and the cists-in-circles which represent „a distinctively insular process" (Kinnes 1988, 39). Insular identities become more strongly marked in the emergence of novel monument forms. At the same time, Jersey at least still shares in mainland monument traditions such as the allée couvertes down to the end of the Neolithic. What does this tell us about maritime connections?

Images and Interactions

If there are grounds for believing that the insular identities became stronger during the 4th and 3rd millennia BC, this in no way implies that the islands were isolated, or that maritime traffic was less frequent than before. The traffic in polished stone axes suggests a pattern of continued contact, including as it does a number of *haches à bouton* of Plussulien dolerite, a type usually attributed to the Late Neolithic (Patton 1995, 133; Le Roux 1999, 137). Beaker material also testifies to the continuing integration of the Channel Islands in interregional connections during the 3rd millennium, along with Beaker wristguards and a small number of copper artefacts (Salanova 2000; Sebire 2005, 90).

There may nothing remarkable in these interactions. The Channel Islands are relatively small land masses and being easily within sight of each other and of the French coast maritime voyaging will very probably have been an everyday occurrence. But is interesting to ask what may have drawn people to visit the islands; did they have something special to offer?

Guernsey possesses three prehistoric carved stones which are among the most remarkable to have been found in northwest Europe. The most striking is the granite slab reused as a capstone in the Déhus passage grave (fig. 2). This bears on its underside the carving of an archer equipped with bow, arrows and belt fittings (Kinnes / Hibbs 1989). The face, with its eyebrows, nose, eyes and mouth is particularly evocative. Although the original shape of the stone is unclear there is no sign that it has been modified and the image is essential-

Fig. 2. Detail of the carved human figure on the underside of the capstone of Le Déhus passage grave, Guernsey (Photo: Chris Scarre).

Abb. 2. Detail der geritzten mesnchlichen Gestalt auf der Unterseite des Decksteins des Ganggrabes Le Déhus, Guernsey (Foto: Chris Scarre).

ly that of a human figure carved on a two-dimensional background. It is hence a decorated stele not a statue-menhir, and the context of discovery is comparable to that of many decorated stones found in the passage graves of Brittany: a standing stone that has been taken down and re-used to build a tomb (L'Helgouach 1983, 1997). Recent radiocarbon dates for human remains from the Déhus passage grave indicate a terminus ante quem for construction of c. 4100–3900 cal BC, suggesting that this carving dates probably to the 5th millennium BC (Schulting et al. 2010).

The Déhus figure is only one of three stones from Guernsey that carry human representations, but the other two are different in character, and potentially more recent in age although their date is difficult to establish. The Câtel menhir was discovered in 1878 buried beneath the floor of the Câtel church (fig. 3). Kendrick's description of 1928 conveys something of the ambiguity of the piece, which is carved in the round but not so far as to free itself entirely from the natural form of the granite support: „The stone is a boulder of the local granite with a carefully flattened front bearing sculpture in relief; moreover, an attempt has been made to give it some suggestion of human form by carving at the sides of the block until two shoulders and an attenuated and conical upper part with a low dome-shaped top were produced." (Kendrick 1928, 26). The presence of a belt in raised relief demonstrates that the back of the figure has been carved, yet in side view the flat front and curved back of the stone suggest a block that has been levered up from the bedrock leaving a planar extraction face contrasting with a rounded weathered upper surface (cf. Mens 2008 for weathered and unweathered faces of megalithic blocks from southern Brittany).

The final stone in this trio of Guernsey human forms is the pillar like figure from the churchyard of the parish church of St Martin. The paired bosses like those on the Câtel menhir appear to represent human breasts. The curious style of the St Martin menhir is attributed to the recarving to which the original Neolithic stone was subjected at some period between the Gallo-Roman and the Medieval (Shee Twohig 1981, 201).

The Câtel and St Martin menhir are not unique but finds parallels in two fragmentary stone figures of similar type from Laniscar and Kermené in Brittany. None of the four has a secure Neolithic context although the Kermené fragments were found re-used in the revetment walling of a circular tumulus that may be of Neolithic date (Giot 1960). The Câtel stone in particular however does bear striking resemblance to Late Neolithic human representations carved in the

Fig. 3. The menhir of Le Câtel, Guernsey, discovered buried beneath the chancel of the church in 1878 (Photo: Chris Scarre).

Abb. 3. Der Menhir von Le Câtel, Guernsey, der 1878 entdeckt wurde, begraben unter der Kanzel der Kirche (Foto: Chris Scarre).

Fig. 4. Pairs of breasts carved in relief on the orthostats of the lateral entry grave of Kergüntuil (Côtes-d'Armor, Brittany) (Photo: Chris Scarre).

Abb. 4. Paare von Brüsten, reliefiert an den Orthostaten des Grabes von Kergüntuil (Côtes-d'Armor, Bretange) (Foto: Chris Scarre).

chalk walls of the Marne hypogées, and the paired breasts that are a feature of all four of these stones occur on the orthostats of Late Neolithic megalithic tombs in both the Paris basin and Brittany (Kinnes 1989; Villes 1998) (fig. 4). They clearly form part of the same repertoire of representation. That is confirmed by details such as the position of the necklace (if that is what it is) below the breasts on the Laniscar figure, exactly as shown at tombs in northern Brittany (Crec'h Quillé, Kergüntuil, Tressé/Prajou Menhir: Shee Twohig 1981 fig. 149, 151, 153, 160).

These parallels allow us to propose date in the later 4th or early 3rd millennium BC for Câtel and St Martin stones, a chronology that would separate them by at least a millennium from the Déhus slab. They also demonstrate that, striking though they are, the Guernsey statue-menhirs are not a uniquely insular manifestation, but form part of a much wider geographical tradition. The presence of two such stones on Guernsey might suggest however that the island had tombs or sanctuaries with human representations of an elaborate form that was not unknown but was relatively unusual elsewhere. They are insufficient in themselves to suggest that the island had a special sacred or ceremonial character during the later Neolithic. Nor do the ample indications that there were once many more standing stones on Guernsey and adjacent islands allow us to conclude without question that these were places with an unusually high density of monuments. Yet it should be noted that the unusual human representations come from Guernsey, which is the most remote from the Normandy mainland, and to that extent potentially more 'insular' in character than Jersey or Alderney. The insular character may have found expression in ceremonial practices that drew in outsiders and helped to maintain the island's position in a network of active maritime connections.

The human representations we have just described do however raise another issue about identity, and that relates to the identity of the blocks themselves. It has been remarked on several occasions how the construction of La Hougue Bie on Jersey involved the bringing together of materials from different parts of the island (Mourant 1933; Kinnes 1988; Patton 1992). This contrasts with the evidence from the smaller Jersey tombs, or those on Guernsey, which used materials of local origin (Bukach 2003). Thus within the selection of the blocks there is a mixture of both local and (in one case) island-wide identities. It has been observed that whatever their dis-

tance, the places from which the stones were drawn may themselves have been significant, related not only to concepts of identity, but that the specific rock types may have been used by these societies to represent their community and their local mythologies (Bukach 2003).

It is possible however that it was not the rock types but the individual stones that were significant, and that these carried their own concepts of identity. We may compare for example the pairs of breasts carved in Brittany tombs and the breasts on the Câtel or Laniscar blocks. The latter demonstrate the wish to represent an unambiguous human form, albeit schematically. Neither, however, succeeds entirely in freeing itself from the natural shape of the block. The Câtel menhir demonstrates the distinctive opposition of a curved weathered back and a relatively flat front, the later corresponding probably to a natural fracture plane. The Laniscar stone has been carefully shaped, but as Giot observed the back is only slightly worked and retains its natural smooth surface[1] (Giot 1973, 421). A parallel can be found further afield in the statue menhirs of Rouergue in southern France (D'Anna 1977; Serres 1997; Philippon 2002). Here again the human forms appear to have been fitted into the form of the block, although in these cases the blocks themselves have been shaped to a much greater degree. Despite that difference, the same question arises. Are these representations of people in stone or of stones as people?

If these may be considered human forms not entirely freed from their matrix, the same is even more so in the case of the paired disembodied breasts carved on the walls of Late Neolithic tombs in northwest France. These appear to have been carved in situ, and may have been connected with concepts of nurture and rebirth. In the context of Câtel and Laniscar, however, we may also be struck by the fact that these two are effectively blocks of stone endowed with human features. They stand, in that sense, in a continuity of representation with the statue-menhirs. It is tempting in this context to suggest an animistic reading of the blocks, that by carving them with human attributes they were in some way being activated or brought to life. Is the block of stone being transformed into the schematic image of a human individual, living or dead, or was the addition of carved human attributes intended to bring the block of stone to life, or to make it animate in some way? Ethnographic accounts provide vivid testimony of the rituals frequently associated with such carved images that are designed to activate them. Such rituals address the figurations as if they were animate images able to see, to hear, to accept offerings, and to respond (e.g. Gell 1998).

If that was true of the megalithic blocks carved with human features, might it not also have been true of megalithic blocks more generally? Could that explain the careful selection to which many of these blocks were subject, and the decision to use such massive blocks of stone, with their individual textures, shapes and colours, in the first place?

Conclusion

I have dealt here with two kinds of identities bound up in the megalithic monuments of the Channel Islands. In the first, and at greater length, I have discussed the evidence that the monument provide for a specifically insular identity. Some monument forms, especially the earlier ones, are closely analogous to monuments of adjacent parts of mainland France. As the centuries progress, these relationships changed in character and Channel Island communities devel-

1 „Le dos paraît presque lisse et doit représenter une surface naturelle à pierre régularisée; par contre toutes les autres surfaces (moins la cassure de base) sont travaillées et portent très nettement les traces d'un bouchardage intensif." (Giot 1973, 421).

oped their own forms of monuments, such as the cists-in-circles, that lack mainland parallels. The divergence of monument forms in no way represents a process of increasing isolation, however, and Late Neo-lithic Guernsey may well have developed a special sacred or ceremoni-al distinctiveness which served to attract visitors to its shores. The stat-ue menhirs may be part of that distinctiveness, although the scale of destruction of such monuments both on the islands and the mainland is hard to assess. They may have been more numerous and more wide-spread than we currently believe. As I hope to have shown, howev-er, the statue menhirs raise other issues of identity–the identities that were being inscribed onto the blocks themselves–bringing qualities associated people and stone into direct, intriguing and symbolically powerful conjunction.

Acknowledgements

References

Bukach 2003: D. Bukach, Exploring identity and place: an analysis of the provenance of passage grave stones on Guernsey and Jersey in the Mid-dle Neolithic. Oxford Journal of Archaeology 22, 23–33.

Chancerel 2007: A. Chancerel, Le mégalithisme des îles Chausey. In: C. Marci-gny, E. Ghesquière / J. Desloges (eds.), La Hache et la Meule, les premiers paysans du Néolithique en Normandie (6000–2000 avant notre ère) (Le Havre 2007) 148.

D'Anna 1977: A. D'Anna, Les statues-menhirs et stèles anthropomorphes du midi méditerranéen (Paris 1977).

Edeine 1971: B. Edeine, L'allée couverte du Bois de la Plesse à Lithaire (Man-che). Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Française 68, 20–5.

Field 2005: D. Field, Some observations on perception, consolidation and change in a land of stones. In: G. Brown / D. Field / D. McOmish (eds.), The Avebury Landscape. Aspects of the field archaeology of the Marlbor-ough Downs (Oxford 2005) 87–94.

Gell 1998: A. Gell, Art and Agency. An anthropological theory (Oxford 1998).

Giot 1960: P.-R. Giot, Une statue–menhir en Bretagne (ou le mystère archéologique de la femme coupée en morceaux). Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Française 57, 317–30.

Giot 1973: P. R. Giot, Circonscription de Bretagne. Gallia Préhistoire 16, 401-26.

Hibbs 1985: J. Hibbs, Little Master Stonehenge: a study of the megalithic monument from Le Mont de la Ville, Saint Helier. Annual Bulletin of the Société Jersiaise 110, 49–74.

Hibbs 1986: Hibbs, Post depositional transforms and the megalithic distri-butions of the Channel Islands. In: P. Johnston (ed.), The Archaeology of the Channel Islands (Chichester 1986) 207–24.

Hibbs / Shute 1984: J. Hibbs / Shute, A re-examination of the La Sergenté passage grave, St Brelade, Jersey. Annual Bulletin of the Société Jersiaise 23, 525–31.

Hughes 1988: I. Hughes, Megaliths: space, time and the landscape–a view from the Clyde. Scottish Archaeological Review 5, 41–56.

Kendrick 1928: T.D. Kendrick, The Archaeology of the Channel Islands. Vol-ume I: The Bailiwick of Guernsey (London 1928).

Kinnes 1988: I. Kinnes, Megaliths in action: some aspects of the Neolithic period in the Channel Islands. Archaeological Journal 145, 13–59.

Kinnes/Hibbs 1989: I. Kinnes/J. Hibbs, Le Gardien du Tombeau: further reflections on the initial Neolithic. Oxford Journal of Archaeology 8, 159–66.

L'Helgouach 1965: J. L'Helgouach, Les Sépultures Mégalithiques en Armorique (Rennes 1965).

L'Helgouach 1983: J. L'Helgouach, Les idoles qu'on abat (ou les vicissitudes des grandes stèles de Locmariaquer). Bulletin de la Société Polymatique du Morbihan 110, 57–68.

Le Roux 1999: C.-T. Le Roux, L'outillage de pierre polie en métadolérite du type A: les ateliers de Plussulien (Côtes-d'Armor): production et diffusion au Néolithique dans la France de l'ouest et au delà (Rennes 1999).

Mens 2008: E. Mens, Refitting megaliths in western France. Antiquity 82, 25–36.

Midgley 2008: M. Midgley, The Megaliths of Northern Europe. (London 2008)

Mourant 1933: A.E. Mourant, Dolmen de la Hougue Bie. Nature and provenance of materials. Bulletin Annual of the Société Jersiaise 12, 217–20.

Murray 1991: J. Murray, Megaliths again-a view from the Solway. Scottish Archaeological Review 8, 26–31.

Oliver 1870: S.P. Oliver, Report on the present state and condition of prehistoric remains in the Channel Islands. Journal of the Ethnological Society of London 2, 45–73.

Pailler et al. 2008: Y. Pailler/G. Marchand/S. Blanchet/J.-N. Guyodo/G. Hamon, Le Villeneuve-Saint-Germain dans la péninsule Armoricaine: les débuts d'une enquête. In: L. Burnez-Lanotte/M. Ilett/P. Allard (eds.), Fin des Traditions Danubiennes dans le Néolithique du Bassin Parisien et de la Belgique (5100–4700 av. J.-C.) (Paris 2008) 91–111.

Pailler/Sheridan 2009: Y. Pailler/A. Sheridan, Everything you always wanted to know about la néolithisation de la Grande-Bretagne et de l'Irlande. Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Française 106, 25–56.

Patton 1991: M. Patton, M., Stone axes of the Channel Islands: Neolithic exchange in an insular context. Oxford Journal of Archaeology 10, 33–43.

Patton 1992: M. Patton, Megalithic transport and territorial markers: evidence from the Channel Islands. Antiquity 66, 392–5.

Patton 1995: M. Patton, Neolithic Communities of the Channel Islands (Oxford 1995).

Philippon 2002: A. Philippon (ed.), Statues-Menhirs: des énigmes de pierre venues du fond des âges (Rodez 2002).

Rainbird 2007: P. Rainbird, The Archaeology of Islands. (Cambridge 2007).

Robinson 2007: G. Robinson, The Prehistoric Island Landscape of Scilly (Oxford 2007).

Salanova 2000: L. Salanova, La question du Campaniforme en France et dans les îles anglo-normandes. Productions, chronologies et rôles d'un standard céramique (Paris 2000).

Schuldt 1972: E. Schuldt, Die mecklenburgischen Megalithgräber. Untersuchungen zur ihrer Architektur und Funktion (Berlin 1972).

Schuldting et al. 2010: R.J. Schulting/H. Sebire/J. E. Robb, On the road to Paradis: new insights from AMS dates and stable isotopes at Le Déhus, Guernsey, and the Channel Islands Middle Neolithic. Oxford Journal of Archaeology 29, 143–79.

Sebire 2005: H. Sebire, The Archaeology and Early History of the Channel Islands (Stroud 2005).

Serres 1997: J.-P. Serres, Les statues-menhirs du groupe rouergat (Rodez 1997).

Shee Twohig 1981: E. Shee Twohig, The Megalithic Art of Western Europe (Oxford).

Sprockhoff 1938: E. Sprockhoff, Die nordische Megalithkultur. Handbuch der Urgeschichte Deutschlands, Bd. 3 (Berlin/Leipzig 1938).

Villes 1998: A. Villes, Les figurations néolithiques de la Marne, dans le contexte du Bassin parisien. Bulletin de la Société Archéologique Champenoise 91, 7–45.

Chris Scarre
Durham University
Department of Archaeology
South Road, Durham
DH1 3LE
UK
chris.scarre@durham.ac.uk