3

THE LA TÈNE EARLY STYLES
Origins and influences

Rhineland and Champagne

The early La Tène (La Tène A) assemblage found in 1879 in the aristocratic grave at the Klein Aspergle, near Ludwigsburg in Baden-Württemberg (Pl. 3; Kimmig, 1988), which first attracted Paul Jacobsthal's attention to the study of early Celtic art in the winter of 1921, provides us with an ideal introduction to the beginnings of fifth-century La Tène art, and the problems associated with its origins. The central burial of the tumulus, one of the most impressive of a group in the near neighbourhood of the Hohenasperg fortification, had been robbed in antiquity, and the finds in question came from a subsidiary chamber that had survived the depredations of the robbers. What struck Jacobsthal so forceably was, first, the fact that a Greek cup, itself of no intrinsic quality, should be found at all in a north-alpine burial, and second, that the Greek imports were accompanied by bronze vessels of Italic form or manufacture and goldwork that displayed stylistic elements reflecting Greek forms.

The two-handled cup or *kylix* (Figure 3.1, 1) was subsequently attributed to the Amphitrite painter (formerly known as the Amymone painter), and dated to around 450 BC. It thus provides a *terminus post quem* for the grave deposit, which probably belongs to the later fifth century. Other works by the same painter are known from northern Italy, and there is thus no reason to assume that north-alpine Celts were in direct contact with Greece rather than through Greek traders in Italy or Italic intermediaries. The cup was evidently a treasured piece: not only was it embellished with gold (Figure 3.1, 2), but that embellishment concealed the repair of earlier breaks in the vessel. This red-figure cup was matched by a second, plain black cup. But these were not the only imports in the funerary assemblage. Chief among the other southern imports were a two-handled bronze jar, or *stamnos*, and a sheet-bronze, cordoned bucket, or *cista a cordoni*, both part of a high-quality wine service. Two other items from the wine service, however, are not straightforward imports, incorporating stylistic elements that are alien to the Greek or Italic traditions. One is a beaked-flagon (Greek *Oenochöe*, French *Oenochöe à bec treflé*, German *Schnabelkanne*), in origin, an Etruscan type that was produced from the mid-sixth to the later fifth century BC, of which more than sixty are known north of the Alps from eastern France to Bohemia. In this case, however, the satyr-like faces with protruding eyes, puffy cheeks and bulbous noses that adorn the rim and the escutcheon at the base of the handle (Figure 3.1, 3) proclaim the vessel to be of Celtic workmanship, adapting an Etruscan design to suit the more flamboyant taste of a Celtic patron. Less than complete at the time of discovery, it was

Figure 3.1 Details from the Klein Aspergle grave-group. 1, two-handled Attic *kylix* from above; 2, two-handled Attic *kylix* under-side; 3, satyr face on handle-escutcheon of beaked flagon; 4, terminals from drinking-horn mounts. Photos: Württembergisches Landesmuseum Stuttgart; P. Frankenstein, H. Zwietasch.

for many years reconstructed as a typically dumpy beaked flagon on the Etruscan model. A newer restoration, however, with taller, slightly concave body profile, enhances its similarity to other well-known examples of Celtic renderings of the type, like those from Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein in the Austrian Alps and from Basse-Yutz in the Moselle. The other exceptional discovery from the Klein Aspergle grave-group is a pair of gold drinking-horns, not a north-alpine or Celtic type in origin, though

examples are known from late Hallstatt contexts, most strikingly the set from the richly furnished princely tomb at Hochdorf. The principal ornamental design of the Klein Aspergle horns is a simple rope-pattern or *guilloche*, and their terminals are in the form of rams' heads (Fig 3.1, 4), for which Graeco-Etruscan models and even orientalizing influences have been invoked. Other grave-goods include a beaten bronze bowl of native manufacture and a plaque of gold on an iron base with settings for coral inlay, another indicator of the Mediterranean connection.

Whoever the anonymous dignitary buried in the Klein Aspergle tomb was, whether native or incomer, male or female (the lack of weaponry might conventionally have suggested the latter), we may at least infer that his or her authority, or that of the society he or she represented, commanded trans-alpine communications at a significant level, and that feasting and drinking on a sumptuous scale for at least ceremonial occasions are indicated by the accompanying grave-goods. To illuminate the nature of that trans-alpine activity, we can examine the distributions of some of the key imports in question.

Taking first the three key types from the Klein Aspergle tomb, it is clear that their distributions are not co-terminous north of the Alps. Stamnoi are fairly limited in number, and are restricted to the regions immediately north and west of the Alps. Cordoned buckets have a wider, though not especially dense distribution (Figure 3.2B) with the majority of examples east of the Rhine, and significantly extending into the north European plain, well beyond regions that could be claimed as Celtic. Finally, beaked flagons (Figure 3.2A) were especially popular in the middle Rhine region, with a scatter of examples in Champagne and Bohemia. This type not only prompted native copies, they also inspired imitations in pottery that are occasionally found north of the Alps. For the middle Rhine region, Frey argued that the concentrations of individual types suggest that trans-alpine imports were negotiated on a highly localized basis, with the majority of beaked flagons represented in his Rhinehessen-Palatinate and Hochwald-Nahe groups, which also include another bronze type, the two-handled basin, while the adjacent Rhein-Moselle group is characterized by yet another type, the so-called Rhein-Tessin buckets (Megaw and Megaw, 1990, Figure 25). Almost all these finds come from high-status burials, and are indicative of the importance of feasting and drinking or of the symbols of feasting and drinking in the funerary ritual, and by implication in the lives of the Celtic princes and princesses whose tombs we assume these were.

Southern imports into Celtic Europe were not, however, restricted to Mediterranean wine and prestige goods associated with the serving and drinking of wine. From late Hallstatt times, a variety of Mediterranean imports had appeared in north-alpine Europe, notably but probably not exclusively through the Greek colony of Massilia at Marseilles. In the fifth century, trans-alpine trade intensified, doubtless encouraging the movement of people too, culminating in the historically recorded migrations of Celts into northern Italy by the early fourth century BC. Among the products of this activity was the appearance of coral, ivory and silk, and the introduction of a new technology based upon rotary motion, represented by the potter's wheel and the lathe. The frequent use of coral as an adjunct to ornament on early examples of Celtic art is particularly interesting (Champion, 1976; 1985), since it was already fashionable from the late Hallstatt (Hallstatt D) phase of the sixth century, before the appearance of the early La Tène art style. It therefore represents one technical component of Celtic art
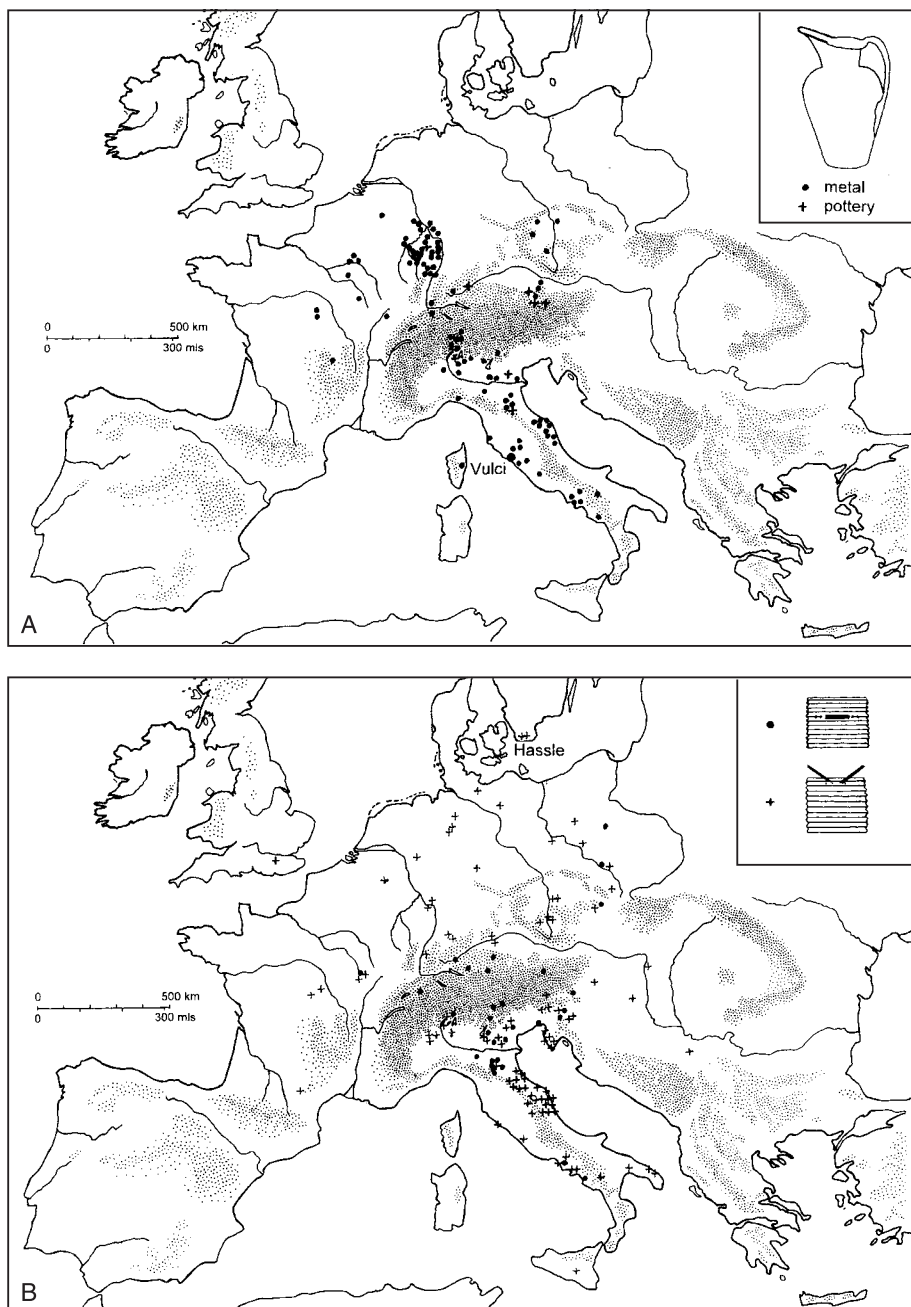
Figure 3.2 Italic imports north of the Alps. **A:** distribution of beaked flagons. Adapted from Kimmig (1988) and Vorlauf (1997). **B:** distribution of cordoned buckets. Adapted from Stjernquist (1988).

that has a history antecedent to the La Tène phase. It is, furthermore, instructive regarding the source of southern imports. The late Hallstatt distribution of coral north of the Alps covers Switzerland, the Danube, the Rhine and the Marne, but shows a marked paucity of finds in the Rhône valley or southern France. The clear implication is that coral was introduced in the sixth century via alpine routes that were evidently operational before the supposed shift away from Massilia and the Rhône-Saône route into barbarian Europe.

While the appearance of high-status goods might best be explained as diplomatic gifts, these more mundane products are surely evidence of trade or exchange on a regular basis. The question therefore naturally arises, what were the southern traders receiving in exchange? What could north-alpine Europe offer to attract the interest of Greek or Etruscan dealers? One possibility could be metal ores, another forest products, a third slaves, in effect, those exports that Strabo listed as the products that attracted the interest of the classical world several centuries later, whose reality is not susceptible to archaeological demonstration.

One outcome of the trans-alpine contacts with the Mediterranean world was to introduce the Celtic craftsman to a range of classical plant motifs that provided one of the principal stylistic influences in the development of the Early Style of early La Tène art, sometimes called the Strict Style. Two motifs derived from the classical repertory are recurrent, the *palmette* and the *lotus*. The essence of the La Tène style, however, is not the slavish imitation of classical designs, but their adaptation into a new and vibrant treatment that progressively becomes more assured and independent of any debt to the original source. This is achieved initially by breaking up the classical motifs into their component elements, and re-assembling them in a different composition. Hence the classical palmette, which is commonly rendered by the Celtic artist as a simplified three-leaved motif, may be split in half, or further reduced to individual comma-leaves, the relationship of which to the classical palmette must be regarded as secondary at best.

To understand this process of adopting and adapting the classical plant repertory, it is best to begin by examining an example in which the classical model is followed quite closely. Frey's (1976) comparison of a frieze of alternating lotuses and palmettes from Cerveteri (Caere) and the open-work gold strip from a La Tène A burial at Eigenbilzen in Belgian Limburg (Figure 3.3, 1 and 2) leaves little doubt about the Celtic artist's model, even if the palmettes have been reduced to the simple three-leaved version and the lotuses have lost some of their botanical detail. The slightly curved outline of the strip suggests that it may have been an ornamental mount from a drinking-horn. A more complex treatment is illustrated by the small open-work gold-on-bronze mounting for a wooden bowl from a La Tène A princely burial of the Hunsrück-Eifel culture at Schwarzenbach in the Saarland (Frey, 1971), dating to the later fifth century (Pl. 2b). Between the base and the frieze below the rim are two principal panels, an upper and a lower (Figure 3.3, 3). Beginning with the lower panel we may identify along its bottom half, and notwithstanding several breaks in the open-work, a series of lotuses and pendant palmettes. The lotus plants show distinct sepals, though the stamens of the Cerveteri model are missing. The pendant palmettes are again reduced to the simple, three-leafed device, but the spirals from which they spring in the model are rendered as a pair of *repoussé* circlets. Thus far the influence of the classical model is reasonably clear. The upper half of the lower panel is occupied by fragmented elements
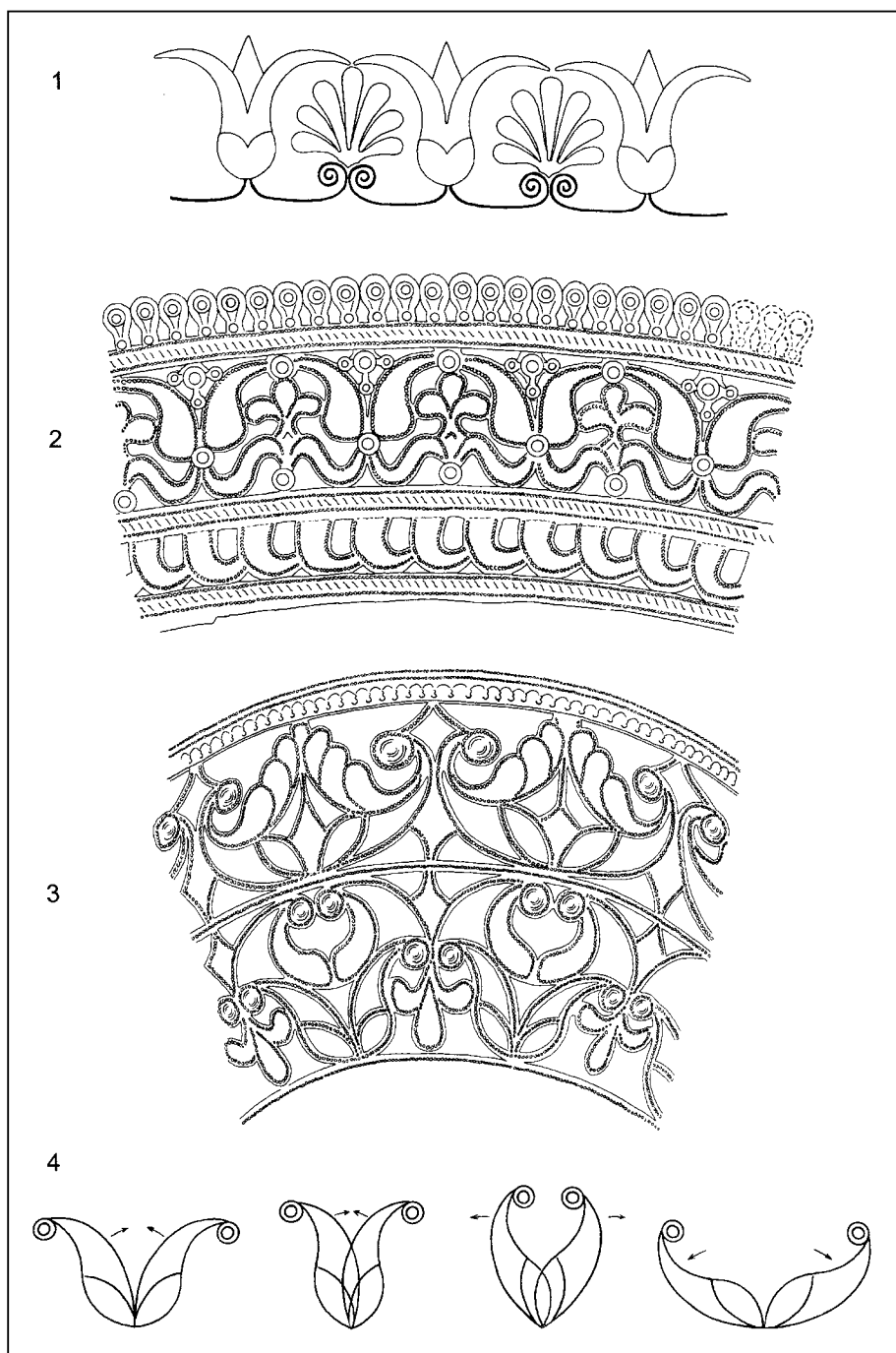
Figure 3.3 Palmette and lotus in early La Tène art. 1, the classical model: frieze on hydria from Cerveteri (Caere), adapted from Walters (1893); 2, section reconstructed of mount from Eigenbilzen, Belgium; 3, section reconstructed of Schwarzenbach bowl; 4, 'deconstruction' of lotus motif on Schwarzenbach bowl.

from the plant designs, pairs of comma-leaves alternating with truncated lotuses in which the stamens are retained. The upper panel at first sight would appear again to be an assemblage of split-palmettes and lotus-derived comma-leaves, still strictly repetitive in spite of the disjunction of the component parts. In fact, the comma-leaves that clasp the back-to-back split palmettes are lotuses in which the left petal has moved to the right, and the right has moved to the left (Figure 3.3, 4), as the position of the sepals makes clear, the stamen remaining between them. They are, of course, no longer lotuses, any more than the split palmettes are palmettes, since they are subsumed within a new and unitary composition. The base of the Schwarzenbach bowl displays another recurrent motif of early Celtic art, the triskele, here arranged as a static series of adjacent elements. The significance of this component in the development of the ensuing 'Vegetal' style will be discussed in a later chapter.

A distinctive technique that is well illustrated by the Schwarzenbach bowl is the accentuation of the decorative elements by means of *repoussé* dotting. This same technique can be seen on a series of ornamental plaques, some of which display similarities sufficient to prompt speculation that they could have been the product of a single workshop or school of craftsmen. An example from a warrior-grave at Weiskirchen on the Saar employs basically the same motifs that are characteristic of the Early or Strict Style (Megaw, 1970a, Pl. 2a). Within its central roundel, and at its four projecting terminals, were originally settings for coral inlay. Grouped around the central roundel are pairs of comma-leaves, each enclosing a small humanoid face, depicted with straight, fringe hair-style and with exaggerated eyes and twirly eyebrows. The distinctive hairstyle can be paralleled in the seventh century in northern Italy, and the same features recur in a number of similar faces disguised among the foliage of early La Tène art. Between the pairs of comma-leaves, and between them and the terminal-settings, are small, three-leaved palmettes. All the principal elements are outlined in *repoussé* dotting, and the entire composition is essentially symmetrical. With the notable exception of the miniature faces, the grouping of paired commas-leaves around a central, coral-inlaid roundel is replicated on the plaque from Schwabsburg, while essentially the same elements in a different composition can be seen on plaques from Chlum in the Czech Republic and from the Klein Aspergle tomb.

Much of the high-status metal-work that we have considered so far derives from the princely burials of the Rhineland, and in particular the Hunsrück-Eifel culture of the middle Rhine region, which for the early La Tène period achieves the same position of pre-eminence in archaeological studies as Baden-Württemberg and south-west Germany had enjoyed for the preceding late Hallstatt phase. The hallmark of these early La Tène princely burials (*Fürstengräber*) is the inclusion of a two-wheeled cart or chariot, the early La Tène counterpart of the rich four-wheeled wagon-burials of the preceding late Hallstatt era, generally contained in a sizeable wooden chamber under a barrow mound. The funerary rite is inhumation, and the grave-goods can include a wide range of weaponry, drinking service and personal ornaments. At Kärlich, near Koblenz, eight chariot burials yielded a rich assemblage of weapons, drinking vessels and ornaments (Joachim, 1968). Unfortunately, many of the classic sites were nineteenth-century discoveries, though several important sites were excavated in more recent times. Among the first sites excavated to modern standards, albeit under circumstances of rescue excavation, was the Reinheim cemetery, on the southern edge of the distribution (Keller, 1965; Echt, 1999). Subsequently, important cemeteries were excavated at

Hochscheid, between 1975 and 1977, and at Bescheid between 1977 and 1979 (Haffner, 1991). Barrow 9 at Bescheid was of particular interest, being that of a child with an unusually rich assemblages of grave-goods, including Etruscan imports. Barrow 1 at Hoppstädten, just to the south, was also a child's burial, with Etruscan flagon and a range of weaponry. Evidently children, including girls, were not excluded from these privileged burials. Bescheid is also important for its demonstration of the fact that chariot burial continued as a local tradition in the region even after the adoption of cremation, through the fourth century and down to the mid-third. A wealth of grave-goods continued to be included, piled on to the funerary pyre. In the totality of known cemeteries and burials, of course, the wealthy graves are very much a conspicuous minority. Settlement evidence, though not lacking, at least in terms of contemporary fortifications, like the Aleburg bei Befort, attracted less attention than the cemeteries with their wealth of material remains, which are more amenable to the construction of typological sequences and systems of classification than the debris of domestic occupation.

The Reinheim burial (tumulus A) is worth specific consideration here, not least because it is one of several in the Hunsrück-Eifel series that are regarded as tombs of a princess rather than a prince. We have noted earlier that attributions to gender have conventionally been made on the basis of associated grave-goods rather than anatomical analysis, the assumption being that warrior equipment implies a male burial and a preponderance of jewellery a female burial. Any study of anthropological analogues would probably advise caution before adopting such a simplistic formula, which in any case seems to presuppose that grave-goods in some sense belonged to or proclaim the identity of the deceased rather than the social office, or the requirements of the community that deposited them. The burial was inhumed within a wooden chamber under a tumulus, which was defined by a circular enclosing trench. The principal ornaments were a neck-torc of twisted, beaten gold and two arm-rings of sheet-gold, two gold finger-rings and two gold-on-iron disc brooches. A bronze brooch in the shape of a hen and another incorporating a human face in its foot were also included in the assemblage, together with more than a hundred glass and amber beads. An unusual item for a Continental La Tène grave-inventory, and one that might be taken to endorse the female stereotype, was a bronze mirror. The feasting and drinking service was represented by a pair of gold mounts for drinking-horns, a pair of bronze basins, and a gilt-bronze spouted flagon. The latter is most closely paralleled in form and decoration in the chariot-burial at Waldalgesheim, also commonly taken as a female grave on much the same evidence as Reinheim, which Jacobsthal identified as the type-site for his ensuing phase of fully developed early La Tène art. The Waldalgesheim assemblage for the most part belongs to La Tène B, but its spouted flagon was evidently old by the time it was buried.

The spouted flagon is of a distinctive type, with its flattened pedestal base, pot-belly and tubular spout, but it is not unique, individual examples having been found as widely distributed as Eigenbilzen in Belgium and the Dürrnberg in Austria, while pottery versions somewhat improbably imitate the same form. The Reinheim and Waldalgesheim flagons display several features in common (Figure 3.4). Both are ornamented at the foot of the handle with a human face, the one menacing with its lentoid eyes, the other benign and statesmanlike. Both handles are further embellished at their upper ends, at Waldalgesheim with a stylized ram's head, on the Reinheim
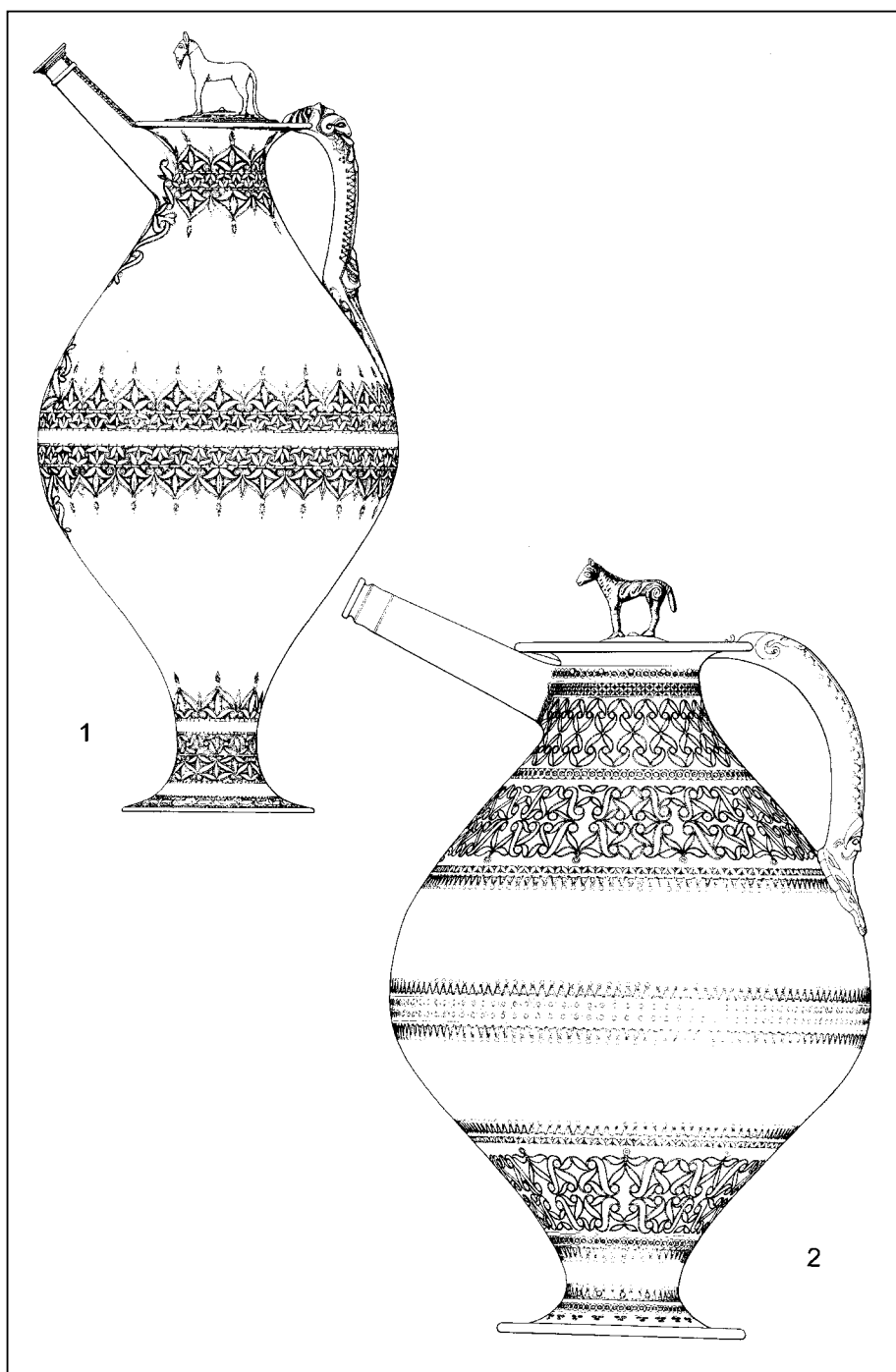
Figure 3.4 Engraved ornament on the Reinheim (1) and Waldalgesheim (2) flagons. Reproduced from Kimmig (1988) by kind permission of the Landesdenkmalamt, Stuttgart.

handle with a descending sequence of human face, with neat moustache and beard, over a ram's head resting on a three-leaved palmette. Animals feature again on the lids of both vessels, at Reinheim a centaur, at Waldalgesheim a sad-looking horse whose emaciated appearance, as we shall see later, shows eastern influences. The most significant element in common, which may even indicate they are the work of the same craftsman, or the product of the same workshop or school, is the engraved decoration of the two vessels. On the Reinheim flagon, this is restricted to three panels, around neck, girth and base, whereas at Waldalgesheim the ornament is more extensive over the body of the vessel. The technique whereby the outline of the design is executed is also different, in the former by use of a tremolo line, in the latter by fine dotting. Yet the standard repertory of motifs is common to both, including simplified lotuses, S-curving leaves, circlets, in an immensely detailed and rigorously symmetrical composition. Notwithstanding the fact that the Waldalgesheim flagon was quite old when buried, the implication of its close stylistic similarities with Reinheim should be that the latter is late within the La Tène A series, around the middle of the fourth century BC. The debate is compounded by the unsatisfactory standard of investigation of the Waldalgesheim tomb in 1869–70; indeed, the fact that the flagon and Campanian bronze bucket from Waldalgesheim were found apparently at a deeper level than the ornamented gold torc and bracelets at one stage led to the suggestion that the tomb contained two successive burials. The case nevertheless underlines the important principle that the date of manufacture is not the same as the date of deposit, and while the distinction between the two will not normally be significant or detectable in the context of domestic debris, it most certainly can be in burial contexts, especially in the accumulated wealth of high-status graves.

One of the key issues raised by the late Hallstatt to early La Tène transition is whether cultural change was coeval in different regions of Central Europe, or whether late Hallstatt and early La Tène groups overlapped in time, whether in fact they represent different regional manifestations of contemporary fashions (Frey, 1972; Pauli, 1978). Much of the debate focused upon the details of brooch typology of the Hallstatt D3 and La Tène A phases, in which there appear to be different regional sequences in the fifth century between south-west Germany, the middle Rhine and the eastern Alps, as represented by the cemetery at Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein. Similar considerations may affect the transition from La Tène A to La Tène B, the former phase apparently being absent altogether in south-west Germany. The implication for a study of the development of early La Tène art is that we should not expect a regionally uniform progression of stylistic stages as Jacobsthal's sequence might have implied. In effect, it might be argued that there is no such thing as a unitary 'Early Style', but a series of Early Styles with certain common elements or influences, a concept that is not incompatible with the idea of long-distance contacts between specialist craftsmen or their patrons, or even of mobility over long distances of craftsmen or warrior-patrons.

A second outstanding concentration of early La Tène cemeteries is located in Champagne, in the river valleys of the Aisne, Oise and Marne, where southern imports in princely tombs equally bear witness to contacts with the Mediterranean world. As in the Hunsrück-Eifel region, the great majority of known cemeteries was excavated in the nineteenth century by very mediocre standards, so that of the 10,000 or 15,000 graves uncovered, only around 2,000 are amenable to useful classification. As always, grave associations offer potential for typological seriation of artefacts, and the sequence

devised on this basis by Hatt and Roualet (1977) allows quite close chronological sub-division, at any rate for the early La Tène phase. Equally, however, the cemeteries have been studied from a social perspective by Sankot (1977) and others, basing their analyses not simply on ritual considerations, whether inhumation or cremation, the disposition and orientation of the body within the grave, or the combination and disposition of various groups within the cemetery, but upon the artefactual associations and their disposition within the burial. Several classes of burial are distinctive. Chariot-burials again have attracted attention disproportionate to their numbers, around 150 out of the many thousands of graves that have been investigated. Apart from chariot-burials, there are 'cavalier' burials, those with horse-gear though lacking a vehicle. There are 'warrior' burials, containing either sword, spear or shield fittings, on average perhaps between 10 and 25 per cent of a cemetery. And there is a rather greater number of burials containing jewellery, most commonly bracelets and brooches, but occasionally also torcs, that are generally assumed to be female burials, notwithstanding the iconographic evidence for the wearing of the torc by men, and the purely functional requirement of brooches as a fastening for clothes. The disposition of brooches and bracelets, especially where more than one is involved, could well be indicative of social or marital status. Some graves are accompanied by pottery vessels, of a variety of types. Among the earlier, angular vessels with pedestal bases (*vases caréneés*) include tall jars and bowls with lower profiles, while another variant is the straight-sided vessel resembling a saucepan (without handles!) or a lathe-turned tub. All these types may bear simple geometric, linear ornament, mainly confined to the upper half of the vessel. Overlapping the chronological currency of these, though outlasting them into the ensuing phase, are pedestal pots of more curving, pear-shaped profile (*vases piriformes*), on which the decoration occasionally aspires to more graceful curvilinear designs.

With improving standards of field recovery, there is evidence for the use of coffins, and perhaps for the existence of some superstructure over the graves. Some burials were enclosed by ditches, circular in form from the earliest phase and thereafter commonly square or rectilinear. The latter tend to enclose groups of burials rather than individual graves, and this, together with the occurrence of linear or semi-circular groups, suggests the possibility of family or kin arrangements. Grave markers do not survive, but the disposition of burials that rarely intrude one upon another suggests that such may have existed in a form that has not survived archaeologically. An intriguing feature of a number of cemeteries, notably Villeneuve-Renneville and Fère-Champenoise, is the filling of the grave with '*terre noire*', a dark deposit frequently containing fragmentary domestic debris, which could be the product of some aspect of the funerary ritual in the process of interment. On the other hand, its occurrence in cemeteries is variable, and it has been suggested that it is no more than the residue from a now-eroded former topsoil. Only in chariot-burials is its occurrence universal.

Among the most celebrated of these chariot-burials is the late fifth-century La Tène A tomb excavated in 1877 at La Gorge Meillet, Somme-Tourbe. The burial chamber was sub-rectangular or slightly trapezoidal on outline, with slots to accommodate the chariot wheels, and a raised platform at one end to support the draught pole and yoke. The interment comprised two superimposed inhumations, both regarded as male, the upper with the warrior's long sword across his left side. Grave-goods included in addition three spear-heads and a larger lance-head, and a tall, conical helmet with short

neck-guard, in effect, the classic Celtic warrior's panoply. The helmet, of a type also known in chariot-burials at Berru, Cuperly and Châlons-sur-Marne, was decorated with rectilinear zig-zag designs executed in tremolo lines. The rest of the grave assemblage included an imported Italic beaked flagon, horse-gear, coral-mounted ornaments and characteristic pedestalled pottery.

Equally prominent among the older burials is the Somme-Bionne chariot-burial, discovered in 1873. The grave pit itself was stepped, the deepest excavation being to retain the pair of wheels, while an extension of the main chamber held the draught-pole and the yoke. Nothing survived of the chassis or timber components of the chariot, but the iron tyres of the wheels indicated where they had been lowered into position. In accordance with custom in the region, no horses were buried with the dead, but bridle bits and harness equipment, including two open-work bronze plaques, were deposited in the trench that held the yoke. The burial was of an extended inhumation, again assumed to be male on account of the accompanying long iron sword in bronze and iron scabbard, suspended by its belt on the warrior's right-hand side, together with shorter iron knife at his left. At the front of the chamber were an Etruscan bronze flagon and an imported, stemless Attic red-figure cup, dating to around 420 BC, that was almost certainly quite old by the time it was incorporated into the grave. The associated grave-goods also included a fine, open-work bronze phalera and a belt-clasp depicting a pair of griffons in open-work, for which Frey, as we shall see, has cited close Italic parallels.

Open-work discs or plaques from the Champagne may also serve as an introduction to an important technical innovation in early Celtic art, the use of compasses to outline quasi-floral motifs (Frey and Schwappach, 1973). The Somme-Bionne *phalera* is a prime example (Figure 3.5). The open-work disc displays a complex geometric template based upon nine concentric circles from central disc to circumference, with innumerable intersecting arcs creating the rather rigid, quasi-floral design. A similar construction technique is deployed in an open-work disc from another Marnian chariot-burial at Cuperly. Of equal interest, however, is the second open-work mount from Cuperly, in which a nine-leaved palmette is embraced by an open-work lyre terminating in a pair of griffons-heads (Megaw and Megaw, 2001, Fig. 58).

The eastern Alps

Notwithstanding these regional concentrations in the Hunsrück-Eifel and Champagne, longer-distance contacts are attested within north-alpine Europe, as well as with the Mediterranean world. A prime example is afforded by the cemetery of Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein in the Austrian Alps (Penninger, 1972; Moosleitner *et al.*, 1974; Pauli, 1978). The Dürrnberg was evidently an important centre for the production of salt from the late Hallstatt to at least the middle La Tène period, and salt mining in fact continued in the vicinity from the Medieval period until recent times, making more difficult the task of identifying early workings. Like Hallstatt itself, a few kilometres to the south-east, the principal archaeological finds are from the cemeteries which adjoined the salt workings, overlooked from the north-east by the hillfort on the Ramsaukopf. Earlier work from the inter-war years has been supplemented by excavations from 1979–82 (Megaw, 1990; Stöllner, 2003), as a result of which more than 350 graves have now been excavated, with many more quite certainly as yet undiscovered. More recent work

Figure 3.5 The Somme-Bionne, Marne, open-work disc. © Copyright the Trustees of The British Museum.

concentrated on the mines themselves. Spoil heaps indicated where adits had been tunnelled into the mountain, from which prehistoric textiles, leather, tapers for lamps and a wealth of other material remains have been uncovered. Several Iron Age burials indicate how potentially hazardous the process of mining must have been. But it is by no means clear that the miners themselves were drawn from the local community, or that they were beneficiaries of their labours, rather than being serfs, slaves or social outcasts. The princes who controlled the production and distribution of salt evidently enjoyed considerable wealth, which enabled them to support specialist craftsmen in glass and metal-work.

Among the products interred in the Dürrnberg cemetery was the magnificent Celtic rendering of a beaked flagon from Grave 16, with its tall, slightly concave body-profile accentuated by the slender, vertical *repoussé* panels, and separately-cast handle and rim with parade of exotic beasts. The shape and execution of this vessel are now strikingly

matched by the beaked flagon from the Glauberg overlooking the Wetterau valley in Hesse, a tantalizing hint of possible long-distance links between princes or their craftsmen. Another richly furnished burial was Grave 44, a double inhumation in which the lower, earlier burial included a two-wheeled chariot and accompanying warrior's equipment (Figure 3.6). In addition to the long, iron sword, a pair of spear-heads, arrowheads and knife, the assemblage was completed by a conical helmet, not quite so tall, but otherwise of the classic Marnian type. The drinking service was equally distinguished. It comprised a high-shouldered, sheet bronze bucket, or *situla*, standing 88 centimetres in height and with a capacity around two hundred litres. Together with this was a small, bronze basin, and a Celtic copy of an Italic bronze 'pilgrim flask', a type comprising a cylindrical container with tubular spout, not unlike the shape of a western cowboy's water-bottle, but with four supporting feet in the form of human legs. Inside the situla was a plain, two-handled, stemless Attic cup of the late fifth century. Among other items in the grave was an open-work belt-plaque that itself bears similarities to the open-work mounts of the Marne, both groups having antecedents in northern Italy, and a series of sheet-bronze mounts, including a human face with 'leaf-crown' head-gear, that have been interpreted as attachments for a wooden, spouted flagon.

The decoration on the Dürrnberg pilgrim flask warrants consideration, since it is typical of the predominance of compass-drawn designs in this eastern zone of Early Style art. The repetitive designs on the neck and body of the flask comprise essentially arcs or intersecting circles, highlighted by dotted infilling. The style is more com-monly represented on pottery, the so-called 'arc and circle style' of the region east of the Rhine that Schwappach (1973; 1976) contrasted with the 'floral or plant style' of the middle Rhine and Marne. That there is a regional contrast seems clear, but it is a contrast that may have been accentuated by the dependence of the eastern distribution on examples from pottery, whereas the western distribution is predomin-antly of metal-work. The eastern arc and circle style itself is a complex phenomenon, including stamped ornament of arcs and circlets arranged in clusters rather than simply in linear friezes. This is especially notable in the interior-stamped 'Braubach' bowls of the ensuing La Tène B phase. Regarding the origins of the eastern style, in the east it may derive in part from the geometric decorative tradition of the preceding Hallstatt phase (Schwappach, 1976, 94), but some of the repetitive friezes suggest southern influences. The total effect is an independent Celtic abstract style (Frey and Schwappach, 1973, 343) to which Jacobsthal gave insufficient weight.

The human image

Among Jacobsthal's initial precepts regarding early Celtic art was that it was not representational, and did not in general represent human or animal forms realisti-cally or naturalistically. Humanoid faces, sometimes described as 'satyr-faces', with exaggerated or demoniac features, however, occur within a larger design in a variety of contexts, such as within the palmette and lotus ornament of the Weiskirchen plaque, or in specific and recurrent locations such as the top and base of flagon handles, as at Basse-Yutz or on the Dürrnberg flagon. These faces have typically large rounded eyes, which on the Basse-Yutz flagons once held coral inlay. Or the eyes may be depicted as lentoid, like the face at the base of the Reinheim flagon or that on the Rodenbach gold
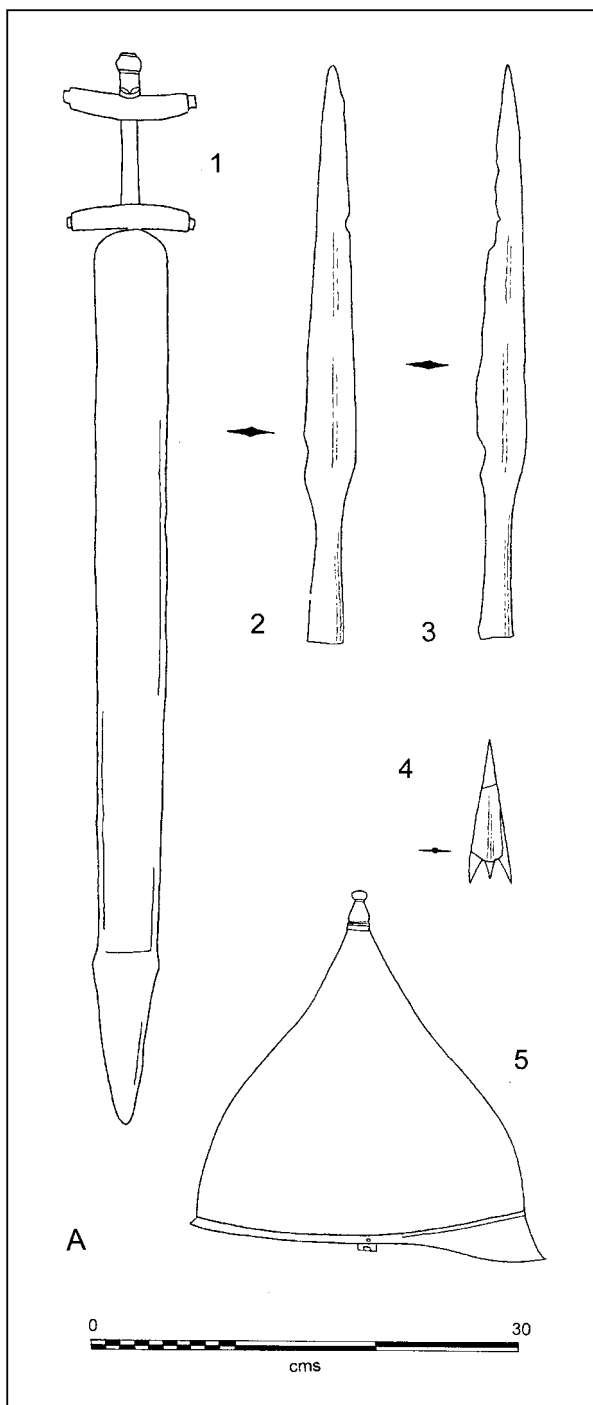
Figure 3.6 Dürrnberg bei Hallein, Grave 44/2: principal grave-goods. **A:** weaponry. **B:** drinking vessels and related items. Adapted from Penninger (1972).

1

2

3

5

B

face mask (1) scale × 2
situla (2) scale × ½

0   30

cms

Figure 3.6 Continued.

finger-ring (Figure 3.7, 1), lending them a decidedly sinister aspect. Bulbous noses and puffy cheeks give these face-masks the appearance of an impish or devilish gargoyle, like the face on the base of the Klein Aspergle flagon, an image that is echoed in the goggly-eyed faces around its rim. It is hard to resist the suspicion in such cartoon-like faces that the craftsman was offering a wry comment on the likely effects of over-indulgence on the complexion of his princely patron! Large eyebrows frequently twirl into exaggerated spiral ends. Sometimes a moustache is depicted, as on the Basse-Yutz flagons, or a moustache and beard, like the topmost head on the Reinheim flagon-handle. Frequently the hair-style is depicted as a fringe with vertical combing, well illustrated on the phalera from Hořovičky, Czech Republic, or on the Weiskirchen plaque, which Frey compared with faces from Chiusi. In fact, the models for these Celtic face-masks are both Etruscan, the clean-shaven face with fringe hair-style and the bearded 'Silenus' mask. Trans-alpine connections from at least the beginning of the fifth century BC doubtless account for the concentration of these faces in the Rhineland and southern Germany, while some of the Eastern European examples may have been influenced from these more westerly workshops.

The contexts occupied by these stylized faces tend to be recurrent. Apart from flagon-handles, they regularly are paired back-to-back on bracelets, like those from Schwarzenbach or from Bad Durkheim (Megaw, 1970a, Plates 53, 54); they are matched on the terminals of the Reinheim torc and bracelets; they appear as a central focus flanked by paired beasts on the Rodenbach arm-ring (Pl. 5a) and on the Weiskirchen belt-clasp (Figure 3.10A). On the Glauberg torc (Pl. 4a) no less than ten human face-masks dominate the ring itself, while two grotesque figures with enlarged heads flank the pendant composition. On the slightly later Waldalgesheim bracelet they are more integral and less obtrusive, their twirling eyebrows becoming S-curves within the overall flow of the composition. Face-masks continue to feature in the repertory of the Celtic artist down to the late La Tène phase, in a variety of forms and contexts, sometimes overtly and sometimes more subtly concealed among foliage in a manner which prompted Jacobsthal to refer to the 'Cheshire' style, an allusion to the elusive quality of Lewis Carroll's cat.

The meaning of these faces is not easy to read, though in some instances they could have served as apotropaic symbols. The twin faces of the Rodenbach finger-ring have sometimes been interpreted as a Janus representation, with implications of cultic significance. From the head may protrude horns or large lobes, the so-called leaf-crown, itself possibly a symbol of divinity or regal status, witnessed not only on bronzes like the mount from the Dürrnberg or on the dignified face at the base of the Waldalgesheim flagon-handle, but also rendered in sculpture on the Pfalzfeld pillar and the stone head from Heidelberg. The Pfalzfeld pillar (Figure 3.8A) is not strictly janiform, though a Janus head could have originally capped its now broken shaft, but with lobed heads on each of its four sides it suggests omniscience. Its overtly phallic form implies fertility consistent with a ritual significance. A particularly fine stone-sculpted rendering of a full-length armoured figure sporting a leaf-crown was recovered in recent years from the ditch of the early La Tène princely tomb at the Glauberg, Wetterau (Herrmann and Frey, 1996; Frey and Herrmann, 1997; Bartel et al., 1998; Frey, 1998; Weber, 2002). The warrior is depicted in armour (Figure 3.8B), with a recognizably early La Tène sword (Herrmann, 1998, Abb 19; Frey, 2004), together with miniature shield, and wearing finger, arm and neck ornaments that were presumably symbolic as much as

Figure 3.7 Face masks in early La Tène art. 1, Rodenbach finger-ring. Copyright Historisches Museum der Pfalz, Speyer (Jahr), Photo: Kurt Diehl; 2, Oberwittighausen brooch. Photo: Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe; 3, Parsberg brooch. Photo: Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg.

Figure 3.8 Sculpture in early La Tène art. **A:** the Pfalzfeld pillar. Photo: copyright Landschafts-verband Rheinland/Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn. **B:** the Glauberg stone warrior. Photo: Hessische Landesmuseum, Darmstadt.

ornamental. The neck torc in particular has pendants mirrored in the gold torc from one of the accompanying graves. The warrior's muscular thighs, like those of the Hirschlanden statue, are doubtless intended to represent strength; by comparison, the arms of both figures are relatively puny. The Glauberg warrior has a pronounced jaw, perhaps together with the thickened upper lip originally painted, as Frey (2004)

suggested, to represent beard and moustache. Finally, the figure has a cap and 'leaf-crown' lobes, a symbol of status, whether as ancestral hero or divinity is unclear. Similar figures carved in wood could well have been relatively common, but if so have simply not survived. A timber model seems to be implied in the rendering of the Holzgerlingen stone pillar figure, which is surmounted by a Janus-head, and the Heidelberg head may have been comparable. Janus heads, or more strictly double-heads, are known from the third and second centuries BC in southern Gaul, from the so-called Celto-Ligurian sanctuaries of Entremont and Roquepertuse. In fact, the basic concept, however inexpertly sculpted, has a very long currency. Insular examples include a three-faced head from Sutherland, and another from Corleck in County Cavan, while a later example still is known from Glejbjerg, Denmark, beyond the limits of the Celtic world.

One particular medium in which these stylized faces are found is on brooches, the so-called *Maskfibeln*, either embellishing the foot or the head of the bow above the spring (Megaw, 1982). Few faces could be more glum than that on the foot of the Parsberg brooch (Figure 3.7, 2), or more sombre than the bearded twins on the brooch from Oberwittighausen (Figure 3.7, 3). Others may simply convey an expression of bemusement. It is a natural inclination of the archaeologist to invoke ritual symbolism for anything that appears to deviate from his own concept of the functional or rational, but it is hard to understand why so seldom are Celtic craftsmen credited with a simple sense of fun or pleasure in evoking caricature, in much the same way that artists throughout the ages have used their art for satire or to lampoon the established order. Some of the faces on linch-pins of the late La Tène are caricatures that might well prompt such an explanation. At the same time we should beware anachronistic readings of early Celtic art: the somewhat later (third- or second-century) stone head from Mšecké Žehrovice in Bohemia (Figure 6.4; Venclová, 1998), with its bulging eyes, twirled moustache and dyspeptic expression, may remind us of the archetypal Colonel Blimp, but it is unlikely that the artist would have had quite that stereotype in mind! Some images may well have had a mythical, supernatural or apotropaic quality, and the concept of a 'cult of the head', though perhaps overstated in the literature, nevertheless has some basis in the archaeological and documentary record. We should therefore beware of simplistic explanations of human imagery in La Tène art: human representation in different styles may well have had different purposes in different regions at different periods.

It is not just human or humanoid heads that adorn the brooches, bracelets and other artefacts of the early La Tène phase. Animals and birds too are found in profusion, some realistic, like the amusing little ducks that float down the spout of the Basse-Yutz flagons, some more stylized and enigmatic as regards their species, sometimes even, as we shall see, with hints of an oriental origin. A group of torcs from the Marne region (Bretz-Mahler, 1971, Plates 60, 61, *torques à décor ornithomorphe*) in which pairs of stylized ducks flank or back the central ornamental focus, must be indicative of a local workshop or local tradition of symbolism. Equally stylized birds characterize a series of bird-headed or double-bird-headed brooches (*Vogel* and *Doppelvogelkopffibeln*), in which the eyes are sometimes enlarged and highlighted with coral inlay. For the origins of the pairing of birds and animals, Jacobsthal looked to the south and the east. But the use of bird symbolism itself has a long ancestry in north-alpine Europe, as we have seen, going back through the late Hallstatt to Urnfield traditions.

Orientalizing influences in the Early Styles

For Jacobsthal, Oriental influences were one of the three roots of early Celtic Art. Yet he was acutely aware that it was 'as easy to see the East behind the Celtic designs . . . as it was difficult to define precisely country and date of the prototypes' (1944, 156). The literature is strewn with parallels for individual traits, sometimes from Scythian art (itself largely the product of Greek craftsmen working for native patrons), sometimes from Luristan art of Persia, sometimes from the earlier Urartian style of Anatolia. Almost invariably it amounts to a single element within an artefact or assemblage that is otherwise wholly alien to anything that can be found in Celtic art, and in no instance does it point unequivocally to a single region or period from which a consistent pattern of influences might be derived. As to dating, exotic influences are not an innovation of early La Tène, but are already in evidence in the late Hallstatt period if not earlier.

The case for direct contacts with eastern artistic traditions was based largely upon the historical record of Persians in the sixth and early fifth centuries in Thrace, Macedonia and the Black Sea regions, notably under Darius and Xerxes (Sandars, 1971). Contemporary opinion tends to favour the view that orientalizing elements in early La Tène art derive instead through Graeco-Etruscan intermediaries, perhaps not least because simplistic diffusionism is very much out of favour as an agency of innovation. The first question to consider is whether there are any actual imports of oriental artefacts themselves, as opposed to nebulous 'influences', in Central or Western Europe at this period. The consensus is that there are not. Though outlying Scythian burials are known, like Vettersfelde in Berlin, even Sandars (1971, 103) conceded that 'there is no single undoubted oriental object in a celtic grave of the early period'. Imports from sources beyond Graeco-Etruscan centres are virtually non-existent – the leaf-gold drinking-horn mount dating from around 500 BC, from barrow 2 at Weiskirchen with its row of sphinxes has been cited as a possible product of an east Greek workshop (Frey in Sandars, 1976, 59–60; Frey, 1980, 78).

Much the same is true of the preceding late Hallstatt phase. From the Grafenbühl burial, for example, the two carved sphinxes (Figure 3.9, 2), one of ivory and the other of bone and amber with gilt-bronze rivets, are the work of Greek craftsmen in southern Italy; two bronze clawed feet, from a tripod for holding a cauldron, were of actual Greek manufacture, and an ivory plaque, possibly a mirror handle, could have been an import from the eastern Mediterranean. The same route is clearly a strong contender for the means of transmission of eastern images into the repertory of the early La Tène artist (Megaw, 1975). The gold torc from the princess's tomb at Vix presents a more complex case. The depiction of the winged horse (Figure 3.9, 1) is plainly exotic in late Hallstatt art, as are the quasi-filigree plinths on which the horses stand. Various sources have been suggested over the years, from Scythian to Iberian. It is now generally agreed that the torc itself is of native Hallstatt manufacture, which is not, of course, to minimize the exotic influences in its ornament, doubtless transmitted via the Mediterranean.

If individual imports are lacking, could the occurrence in early La Tène graves of a novel *class* of artefact, like the drinking horn, be regarded as a direct introduction from the east? This question has never satisfactorily been resolved. It is recognized that the drinking horn is not a Greek or Etruscan type, and that it cannot therefore readily be explained as an oriental idea brought in through Italic intermediaries
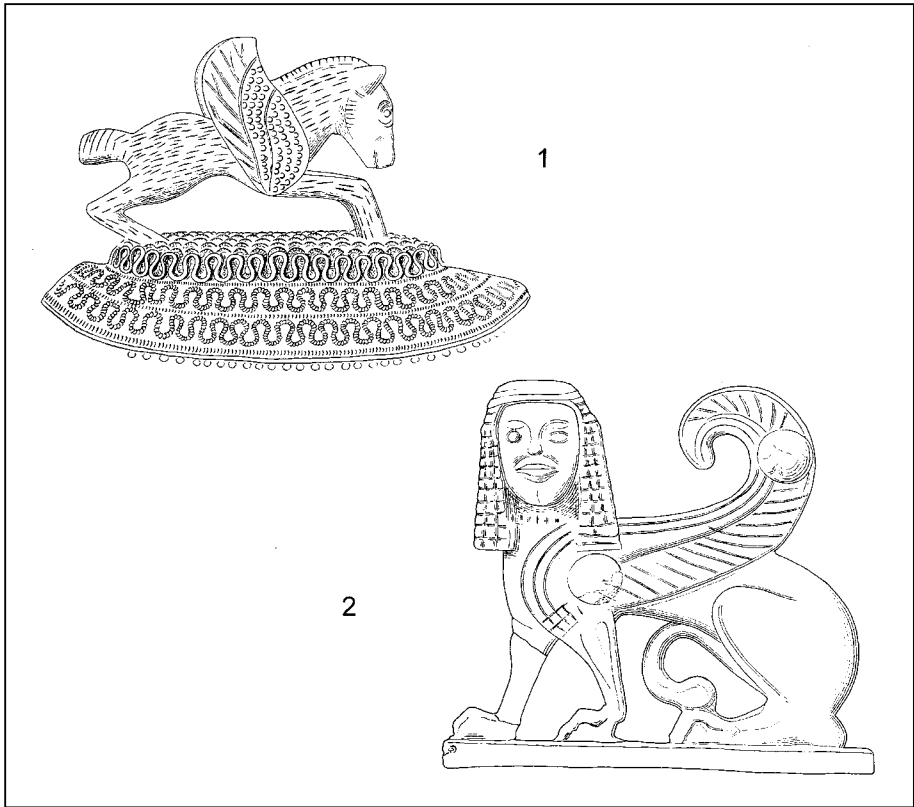
Figure 3.9 Exotic influences in late Hallstatt grave-goods. 1, Vix gold diadem, Burgundy; 2, Grafenbühl, Asperg, sphinx, Baden-Württemberg. Adapted from Rolley (2003) and various sources.

(Sandars, 1976, 42, 60). Again there is evidence from the late Hallstatt princely tomb at Hochdorf, which contained no less than nine drinking-horns, that the practice was already well established in north-alpine Europe before the early La Tène period. It is increasingly clear that a number of elements that come to prominence with the burgeoning of early La Tène art were already rooted in the antecedent Hallstatt culture, and borrowings from the east were not least among them. The mechanism for such introductions remains elusive, but the paucity of actual imports certainly suggests an indirect, rather than direct agency.

It is very largely upon the rendering of exotic beasts that claims of orientalizing influences have been based, one instance of which is the pairing of backward-looking beasts. A fine example is the belt-clasp (Figure 3.10A) from Weiskirchen barrow 1, where two pairs of backward-looking griffon-sphinx hybrids flank a humanoid head in a balanced, but not identical composition. Each pair of beasts meets at the breast, but they are not true Siamese twins in the sense of sharing common limbs, as in the Erstfeld hoard. The central head displays the usual features of bulbous eyes, twirly
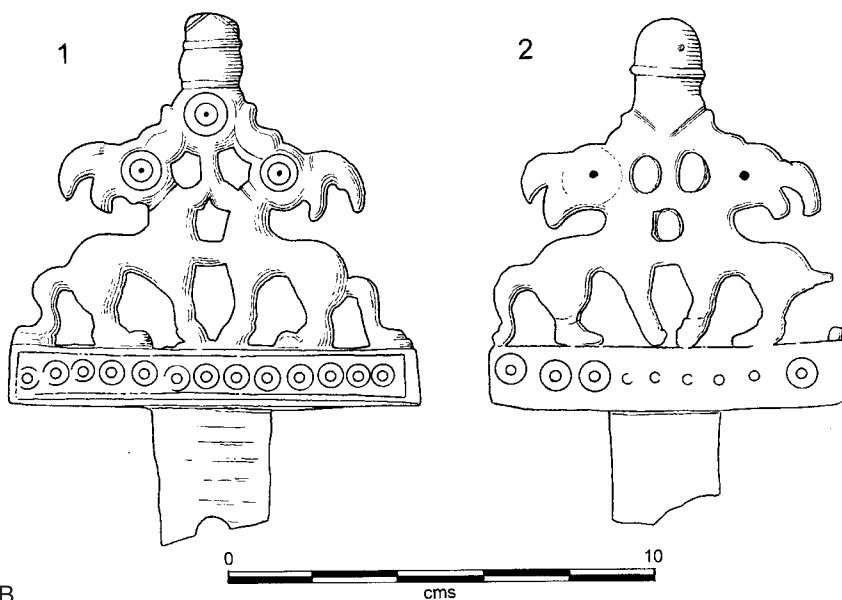
Figure 3.10 Belt attachments from north and south of the Alps. **A:** Weiskirchen, photo: Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier. **B:** 1, Somme-Bionne 'L'Homme Mort', Marne; 2, Este, Fondo Rebato gr. 152. Adapted from Megaw (1975) and Stead and Rigby (1999).

eyebrows, straight hair and neat moustache, with a leaf-crown comprising a splayed S-scroll lyre that rests on the rumps of the inner pair of beasts. The significance of this imagery is unclear, but a comparison with the trio of figures on the rim of the Glauberg beaked flagon perhaps affords a clue. Here a human figure is depicted with Mediterranean body-armour in cross-legged seated posture, flanked by two sphinxes on their haunches, with heads turned back in a bemused rather than menacing pose. Frey (1998) suggested that the scene might embody a Celtic version of the 'master of the beasts' theme, and that by extension a similar theme might be implicit in the Weiskirchen belt-clasp, the central figure being characteristically encapsulated in the Celtic head rather than the depiction of the body in full. The crossbar of the Weiskirchen belt-clasp is inlaid with coral, emphasizing the Mediterranean associations of the piece.

From the second (cremation) grave at the Glauberg the lid of a spouted flagon bears a backward-looking winged exotic beast (Pl. 4b). But even this was hardly as bizarre as a bronze brooch from the first (inhumation) grave depicting a backward-looking winged beast carrying a human head on its rump, the symbolism of which is quite opaque. Winged griffons are also depicted in engravings on the bronze plaque from Stupava, Slovakia, in a free-hand technique also exemplified on the fragmentary rim of a wire sieve from Hoppstädten in the Hunsrück-Eifel. The technique of engraving, particularly the use of stabbing and of hatched shading, suggests that these pieces could be from the same or a related group of workshops in the middle Rhine. Even if the theme of the fantastic beast is eastern, both interpretation and associations of the Stupava plaque are plainly Celtic. As Megaw has convincingly argued (1975, 22), the 'sickle' wings of all these beasts are much closer to Graeco-Etruscan models or even those on situla art than they are to the fully-stretched wings of Scythian or Persian art.

One example for which Jacobsthal saw both Persian and Scythian models was the gold arm-ring from Rodenbach (Pl. 5a), part of the rich furnishings of a warrior-grave from the Rhineland, dating to the later fifth century, which included Greek and Etruscan imports among its drinking service. The ornament comprises two pairs of backward-looking crouched animals on either side of a central face-mask, and with further faces between each pair. The central pair are rams or ibexes, the outer pair are hybrid beasts with rams' horns and predatory birds' or griffons' beaks. Along the backs of the beasts are soldered balusters, with four larger balusters over the central head. Balusters also play a prominent role in the gold torc from Besseringen in which five slender balusters are flanked by backward-looking birds. The two are not necessarily from the same workshop, but with others they suggest the existence of regional traditions manifesting themselves in specialist techniques and themes (Megaw, 1972).

Perhaps the clearest indication of the likely source of the backward-looking exotic beast theme is provided by Frey's (1995b) studies of trans-alpine connections in the early La Tène period. The belt-hook with open-work backward-looking griffons from the late fifth century Somme-Bionne chariot-burial in the Marne is almost exactly matched by one from Este (Figure 3.10B). Indeed, the distribution of belt-hooks has been taken as one possible indicator of an early phase of settlement of northern Italy that would have brought Celtic craftsmen into contact with situla art and orientalizing themes through Graeco-Etruscan intermediaries.

Most exotic of all the orientalizing personal ornaments of the early La Tène phase is the gold hoard from Erstfeld in Switzerland (Pl. 6a; Wyss, 1975), containing four torcs

and three bracelets. Three of the torcs are ornamented in an elaborate scheme of open-work, two forming an almost identical pair. On these, the central device is a small, abstract bird flanked by a pair of balusters. On either side of these, symmetrically disposed, are pairs of Siamese twins, the inner facing twin wholly human, the outer-facing having human arms and hands but with animal's ears or horns (Pl. 6b). The pair stands upon backward-looking creatures, half human, half griffon, which in turn lead to the end of the open-work and the decorative panel. The human figures wear shoes with upturned toe-caps in the style depicted in situla art, but also seen on bronze brooches from the Dürrnberg and from Manětiń-Hŕadek in Bohemia. If the interpret-ation of the pieces of gold-leaf from the Hochdorf burial as embellishment for shoes is correct, then this fashion was possibly in vogue north of the Alps already in late Hallstatt times. More puzzling is the use of cross-hatching on the trunk of the Siamese twins, in a chequer-pattern that Sandars (1971, 109) paralleled in the Ziwiyeh ivories. As with most of such attempts to establish direct oriental links, no single eastern source can be determined that consistently manifests a number of common motifs or techniques. One smaller bracelet from the Erstfeld group, which is generally assumed to have been the product of a single workshop, shows a series of distinctive ornamental devices that convinced Megaw (1972) that they were the work of the same Rhenish school of craftsmen that was responsible for the Bad Durkheim gold bracelet, and perhaps those from Rodenbach and Reinheim too. Why the hoard was buried at Erstfeld is unclear. Switzerland is marginal to the main distribution of Early Style artefacts. Furthermore, though trans-alpine links between the goldsmiths of the middle Rhine and their north Italian neighbours are well attested, the find-spot, just north of the St Gothard Pass, is on a route that was not extensively exploited until the Middle Ages (Pauli, 1991).

Another class of artefact upon which orientalizing themes are displayed are flagons from the aristocratic wine service. One of the more tantalizing examples of the oriental connection is the animal on the lid of the Waldalgesheim flagon (Figure 3.4, 2), which Fischer (1988), following Jacobsthal, compared to the golden deer from the Oxus treasure. The rendering of ribs and spiral accentuation of the rear pelvic joint of the Waldalgesheim beast unmistakably mirrors the features of the model, even if the latter's noble posture is translated into a dejected and wooden imitation. Among earl-ier flagons, the Basse-Yutz pair might be regarded *prima facie* as displaying oriental features in the pack of pointed-eared dogs that guard their lids, and warrant closer examination (Megaw and Megaw, 1990). The first thing to be remarked is that the Basse-Yutz flagons depart from the standard, rounded body-profile of their Etruscan models in favour of a much more slender, almost concave form, matched most closely among Celtic flagons by the example from the Dürrnberg, or by the more recent example from the Glauberg. It need not follow that these were the products of the same craftsman or a single workshop, but they are at any rate among the more innova-tive pieces of early Celtic metal-work. Particularly innovative on the Basse-Yutz flagons is the extensive use of coral inlay, on the ornamental plates around the base, at the throat and around the rim and spout of the flagons. Mediterranean coral was extensively in use in north-alpine Europe from Hallstatt C until middle La Tène, and from its distribution (Champion, 1976) appears to have been imported via trans-alpine routes from the late Hallstatt period, pre-empting the intensification of reciprocal connections of the early La Tène phase. Its use on the Basse-Yutz flagons transcends the

simple application of studs for eyes to include the more unusual use of oblong setttings, the comparanda for which has led to suggestions that a middle Rhenish workshop could have been responsible for the flagons. The Basse-Yutz flagons also testify to the early use of red glass inlay, commonly but erroneously referred to as red 'enamel', here used in the stopper and as filling in grooves of rim and the handle animal's mane. It is, in fact, the animals that have prompted debate regarding orientalizing influences. In particular, a succession of scholars since Jacobsthal have detected oriental influence in the stabbed rendering of the animals' pelts and in the spiral device depicting the shoulder joint of the fore-limbs, which has its closest parallel on the pair of backward-facing beasts on the Parsberg brooch. In fact, close parallels from Scythian art are hardly abundant, and even if they were, it remains in dispute whether such influences were transmitted directly via the Danube route or indirectly through Graeco-Etruscan inter-mediaries. The closest parallel for the shoulder-spiral as well as the stabbed pelts on early La Tène metal-work is in fact the winged beast on the terminals of the Vix torc, so that these techniques were already present in Western Europe in late Hallstatt times.

One further element of the Basse-Yutz handles should be considered. Fischer (1988) pointed out that the animal-handles of the Basse-Yutz, Borsch and Dürrnberg flagons all rose above the rim of the vessel, rather than resting directly upon it in the Etruscan manner. For this variation he cited Achaemenid sources, a comparison that might carry greater conviction if any other element from these exotic vessels had been imitated by the Celtic flagons. In the case of the Dürrnberg flagon, the swollen-cheeked and goggly-eyed handle-beast rests its chin directly upon a human head. Jacobsthal took this, and the representations on the rim of the vessel, to be instances of the 'voracious beast' theme. Whether or not these examples are persuasive, the voracious beast was evidently part of the Celtic artistic nightmare, as other examples in metal-working and sculpture indicate. Foremost among these is the fragmentary torc from the Glauberg (Figure 3.11). It features three Janus heads, two standing above the third, which is clasped by the wide-open jaws of two flanking lions, stretched at full length with their hind quarters extending along the torc. The faces themselves are readily paralleled among Celtic faces, though their flat caps are certainly unusual, and have been taken as an indication that they were intended to retain balusters (Rolley, C. (ed.), 2003, Fig. 139b). Jacobsthal was tempted by the possibility that this was the work of an eastern artist employed by the Celts. He also cited, however, the parallel of an Etruscan flagon from Perugia (1944, Pl. 223) in which the handle-beast is plainly grasping a severed human head, so that voracious beast imagery was certainly part of the repertory of the Etruscan artist. Equally at the head of the Adriatic, situla art by the fifth century could have provided a rich source of fantastic beasts, like that on the lowest panel of the Vače situla, or the winged lion on the lowest panel of the Certosa situla from Bologna, both of which are depicted devouring a well-shaped human leg.

In sum, the imagery of early La Tène art certainly includes exotic elements for which the term 'orientalizing' is not inappropriate. The balance of evidence, however, argues that this derived from the pool of Graeco-Etruscan imagery that was available to north-alpine Celtic artists at least from the late Hallstatt phase, even if their aristocratic or warrior patrons were familiar with its significance from longer-distance political or diplomatic contacts. That these Mediterranean and further contacts continued to influence La Tène art in north-alpine Europe will become apparent in the next phase of development.
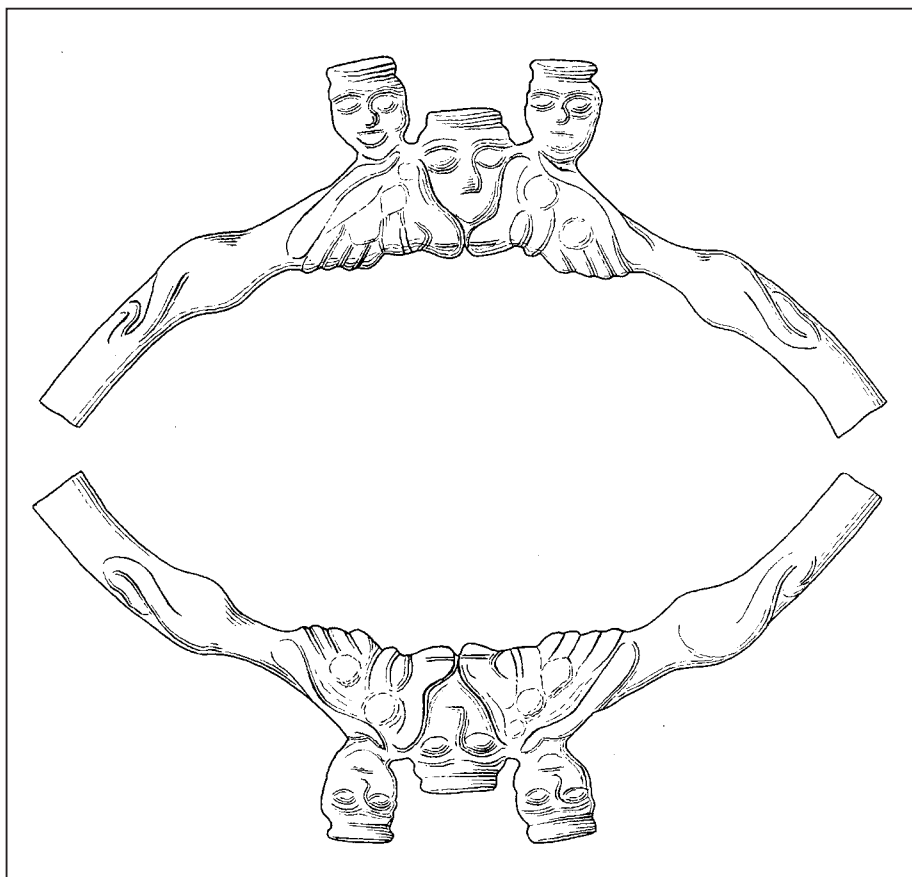
*Figure 3.11* The Glauberg bronze torc. Interpretative drawing adapted from various photographic sources.

4

THE LA TÈNE
DEVELOPED STYLES

In later examples of La Tène Early Style ornament around the end of the fifth century, Celtic artists reveal a restless aspiration to imbue their work with a sense of movement, manifesting itself in what the Megaws have called a 'transformation of static into continuous design' (Megaw and Megaw, 2001, 103). This trend can be seen even within a classic Early Style assemblage like the Schwarzenbach grave-group, the open-work gold bowl from which was examined in detail earlier. A novel element of the base design (Figure 4.1A, 1) is the triskele, or three-cornered whorl, each corner ending in a circlet and the whole defining a curving-sided triangle. These are ordered nevertheless as independent elements, sharing no common sides or corners with the next triskele. Integration of the design is achieved by additional curves between the circlets of adjacent triskeles to create a simple lotus plant that does then share part of its outline with its neighbours. As if to stress the pedigree of the lotus, a stamen is inserted between its base and the border of the design. In the alternate spaces, the sides of the triskeles face each other almost as an opposed pair of S-spirals. As Jacobsthal (1944, 78) observed, therefore, the base design can be alternatively read as a chain of triskeles, or as a series of lotuses and lyres, depending on whether foreground or background is dominant. But in essence, the bowl base remains firmly a product of the Early Style.

Also part of the Schwarzenbach assemblage, however, and doubtless the product of the same workshop, are two other gold discs, possibly from drinking-horn caps, one of which in particular (Figure 4.1A, 2) displays similar motifs to the bowl base, but executed in a fashion which anticipates the free-flowing effect of the subsequent Waldalgesheim Style. Here pairs of triskeles are joined by a common S-curve and terminal circlets, and to the next pair by sharing the third circlet. The continuous effect is enhanced by the alternate use of a connecting outer loop. Even in a classic Early Style workshop in the Rhineland, therefore, a restless process of experimentation was taking place at the end of the fifth century, which would shortly lead to the creation of new fashions.

Champagne and the *premier style continu*

Nowhere is this process of experimentation better illustrated than in the Champagne, where in addition to palmette and lotus, the lyre or lyre-palmette were among those motifs adapted from classical sources through Italic intermediaries into the Celtic artist's repertory, most frequently appearing either as opposed pairs of S-scrolls
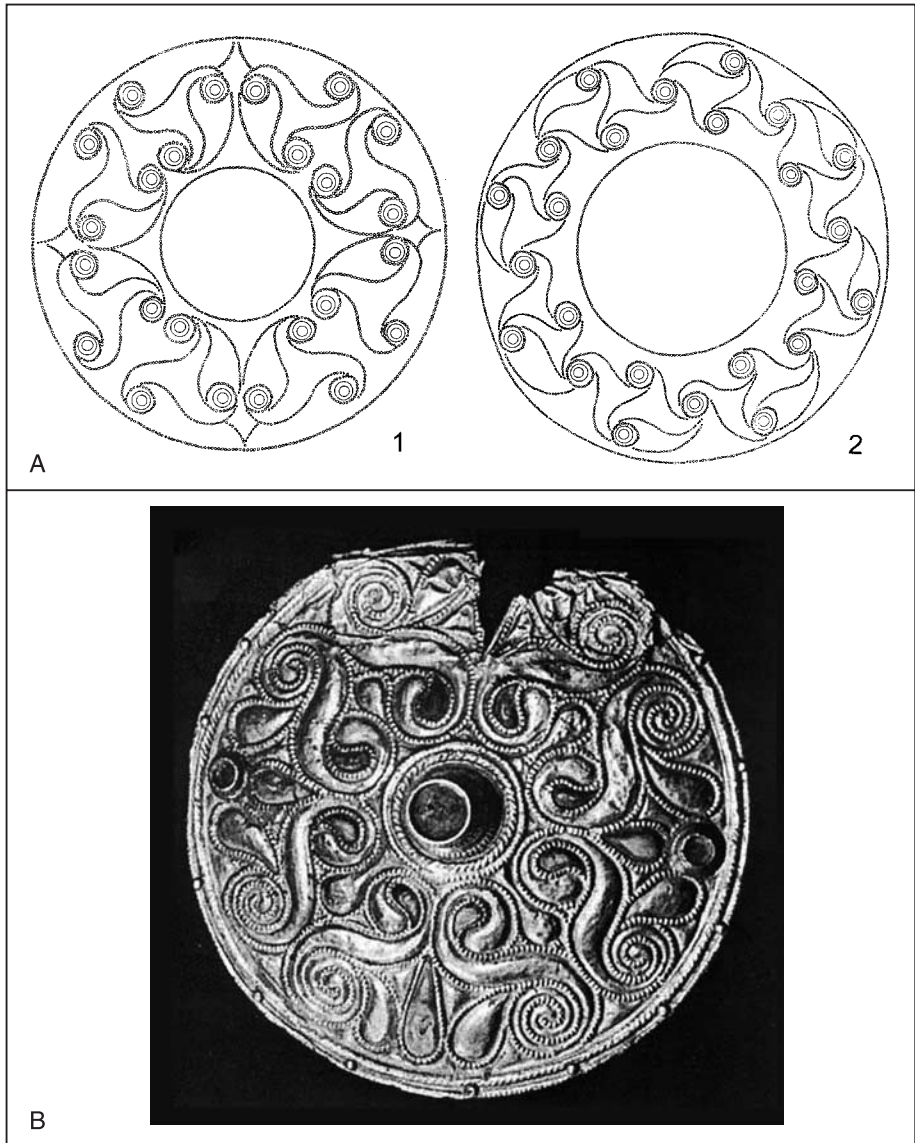
Figure 4.1 Transition towards the Developed La Tène Styles. **A:** 1, base design of the Schwarzenbach bowl; 2, design of drinking horn cap from Schwarzenbach. Adapted from Jacobsthal (1944): not to scale. **B:** the Auvers disc. Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

enclosing a palmette, or in a continuous vertical sequence. An especially fine example is the gold-covered bronze disc, possibly also a drinking-horn lid, from Auvers-sur-Oise (Figure 4.1B), in which the lyre-scrolls, highlighted by *repoussé* dotting in the manner

Figure 4.2 Phalerae with open-work borders from St Jean-sur-Tourbe. Museé des Antiquités Nationales. Photo: RMN, Paris © Loïc Hamon.

of fifth-century Early Style pieces, flow into three-leaved palmettes, while fragmented palmette or lotus leaves fill the outer spaces between the lyres. In fact, the component motifs are still essentially independent, though sharing in places a common dotted outline. What lends the composition its sense of incipient movement is the fact that it can be viewed either from the centre outwards or from the outer edge inwards, the former reading giving a fleshy but unmistakable series of lyre-palmettes, the latter offering a more enigmatic image in which eyes, nose and 'judicial wig' anticipate the 'Cheshire Style' figures of the ensuing Waldalgesheim or Vegetal Style of La Tène art.

The sequence of stacked lyres or lyre-chains is well represented in the Marne region, notably in the border open-work of the coral-inlaid bronze disc from the chariot burial at Saint-Jean-sur-Tourbe (Figure 4.2). The open-work lyres run into each other to form a continuous movement in the design by means of interlocking waves, and are accentuated by simple incised lining in a manner that also characterizes the insular example from Wisbech in Cambridgeshire. The open-work chariot-mounts from La Bouvandeau at Somme-Tourbe illustrate the experimental nature of this process. Not an identical pair, they both use S-motifs, single, paired or opposed as lyres, upright or inverted. In the example with terminal palmette, the design at the broader end is effectively continuous, with subsidiary tendrils enhancing the sinuous quality of the design. For the most part, however, the lyre elements are stacked rather than truly interlocking (Figure 4.3). The idea of conjoined lyres was not unique to the Champagne, though the impression of restless movement is distinctive of this western group. On the gold strip from Klein Aspergle or on the handle of the Dürrnberg flagon, for example, where a
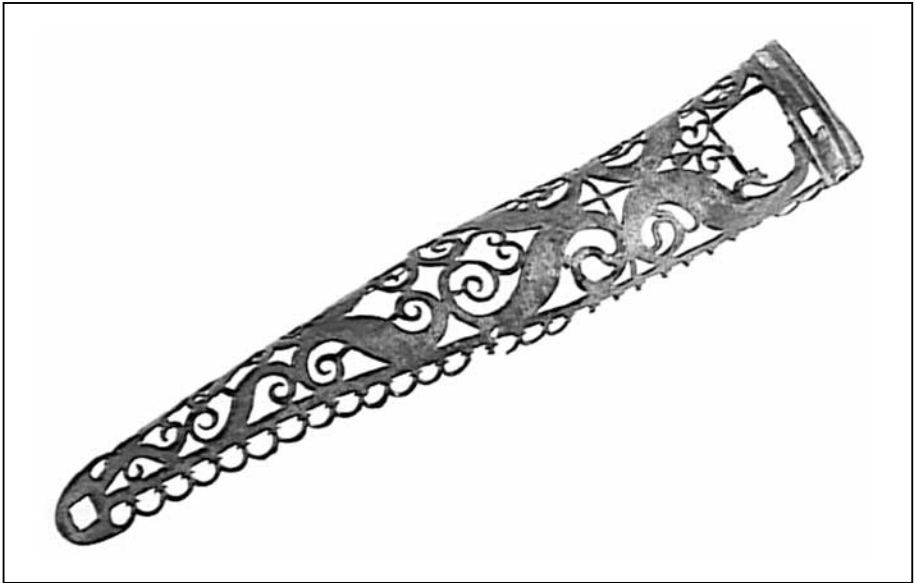
Figure 4.3 Open-work mount from La Bouvandeau. Museé des Antiquités Nationales. Photo: RMN, Paris © Gérard Blot.

similar design is in both instances combined with palmettes, the lyres are linked by a series of circlets rather than in a continuous movement.

These tentative steps towards a more fluid rendering of classical models reach a culmination in a series of objects, the distribution of which is centred in the Champagne region, and which Verger (1987), developing earlier work by Paul-Marie Duval and V. Kruta, categorized as a *Premier Style Continu*, that is, a slightly later development of the strict Early Style or *Premier Style Classique*, embodying the new trends described above. Most lavishly ornamented of these pieces is the unprovenanced beaked flagon in the museum at Besançon (Figure 4.4; Frey, 1955). It was undoubtedly of Italic manufacture, but was subsequently embellished by a Celtic artist from neck to base with a series of panels that transform classical imagery into sinuous, fleshy designs in which the sense of restless movement is pervasive. The ornament on the neck of the flagon has regularly been compared to an Etruscan flagon in the British Museum (Figure 4.4, 1; Jacobsthal and Langsdorff, 1929), on which the classical design of central palmette with flanking scrolls could almost have served as the model for the Besançon artist. Here the scrolls comprise lush, interlocking leaves, the spines of which are highlighted by wavy lines with alternating dotting. Leaves, similarly depicted, link a series of alternately upright and pendant palmettes on the shoulder of the vessel; the palmettes are reduced to three disconnected leaves within a semi-circular panel, and have been seen by Frey as antecedents of the fan-motif that is archetypal in the ensuing Waldalgesheim Style. The main panel, which occupies most of the vessel's body, elaborates on these themes, but with the leaf-scrolls flowing not into simple palmettes, but into interlocking yin-yangs supported by a peltate frame in which palmette-leaves have
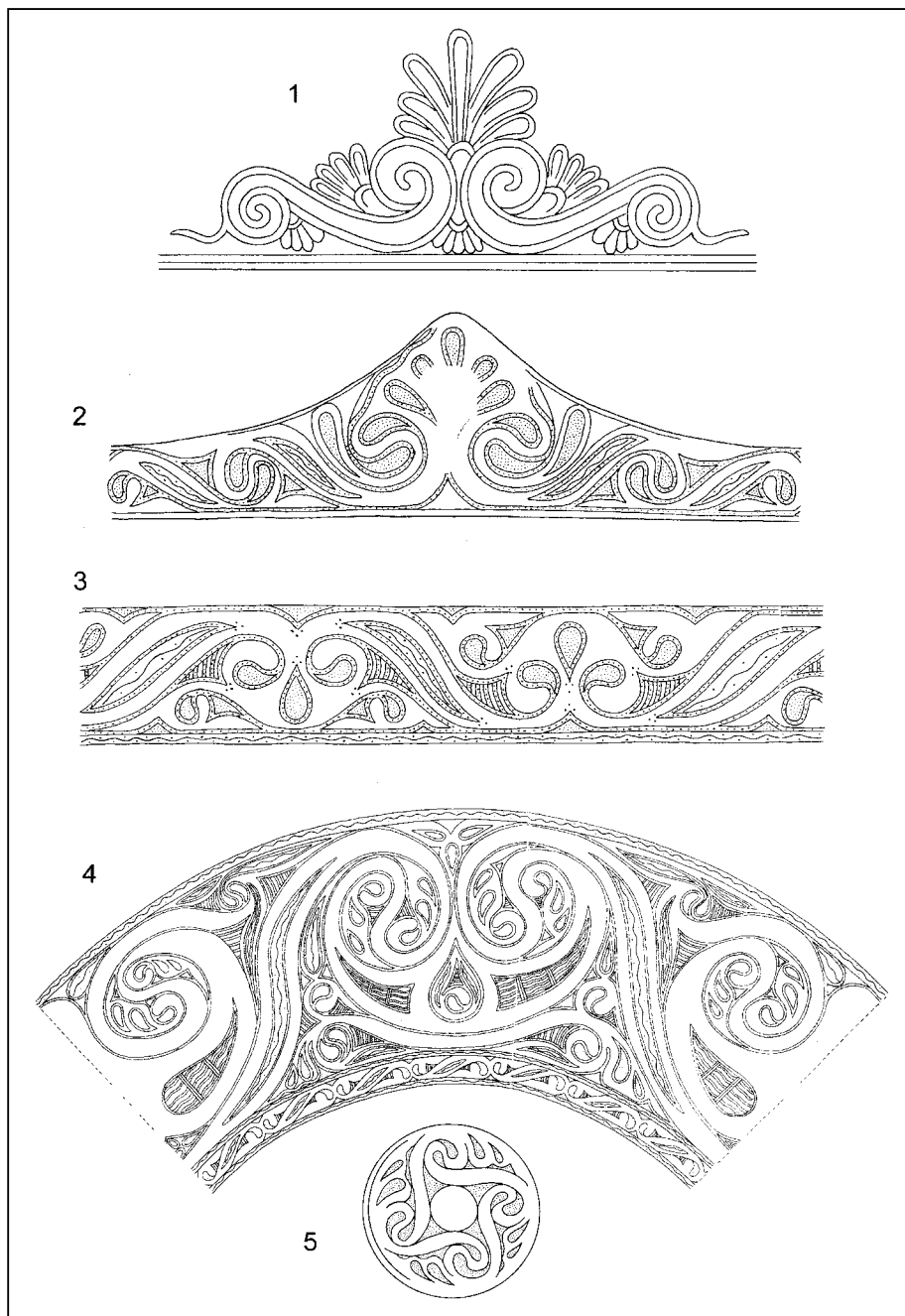
Figure 4.4 Engraved decoration of the Besançon bronze flagon. 1, design on unprovenanced bronze flagon in Brtitish Museum; 2–5, Besançon: 2, neck; 3, shoulder; 4, girth; 5, base. Panels not to same scale. 1 adapted from Jacobsthal and Langsdorff (1929), 2–5 adapted from Frey (1955).

disintegrated to form fillers together with curved-sided triangles. Below, a narrow band of slender leaves is again highlighted and enclosed with wavy line and dotting. Finally, the base is decorated with a four-cornered whorl, a variant on the commoner three-cornered whorl, made up of leaf-scrolls linking in a yin-yang, from which spring fragmented half-palmettes. This combination of leaf-scrolls, yin-yang and fragmented half-palmettes is closely replicated in a three-cornered whorl on the innermost panel of decoration on the interior of the bronze basin from Les Saulces-Champenoises, a chariot-burial in the Ardennes (Figure 4.5, 2).

In fact, notwithstanding its uncertain provenance, the Besançon flagon belongs stylistically with a group of metal-work from north-eastern France, which includes the Berru helmet (Figure 4.5, 1) and the bronze discs or phalerae from Écury-sur-Coole (Figure 4.5, 3 and 4), both in the Marne. Closest in design to the shoulder panel of Besançon are two sections of the Berru helmet, both displaying what Jacobsthal called 'intermittent wave tendrils' linking fans containing simplified palmettes, one having supplementary leaves to fill the spaces between tendril and fan. The composition on the larger Écury-sur-Coole disc is broadly symmetrical, and composed of four fan-like devices linked by slender leaf-tendrils. The fans in outline resemble an opposed pair of comma-leaves, but with the disarticulated leaves of palmettes unifying their component parts and the leaf-tendrils. The whole design is again contained within a border of wavy line with dotting. Some of the technical devices of the Champagne group, including the use of wavy line with dotting, are also found on key examples of insular La Tène art, like the Witham and Wandsworth shields, though rendered rather differently. In terms of stylistic similarities, however, the Cerrig-y-Drudion fragments and the Wisbech scabbard show closest affinity with the Continental series.

The combination of motifs into recurrent themes and similarities in technical detail argue positively for the emergence early in the fourth century in the Champagne region of an innovative group of Celtic artists whose luxury products combined elements from the preceding phase of the Early Style with new and imaginative rendering of classical vegetal models. Some of the key motifs that distinguish these innovative works are those that Jacobsthal used to define his Waldalgesheim Style, but the examples from the western group are not stylistically the same as those from the Rhenish type-site or elsewhere. In fact, our examination of the La Tène Early Style or series of Early Styles would not lead us to expect a unitary expression of this developed phase either, still less to assume the need for a single point of origin.

The Waldalgesheim Style

The Waldalgesheim Style, named by Jacobsthal after a princely burial in the middle Rhine (Aus'm Werth, 1870; Joachim, 1995), notwithstanding its continuing debt to classical plant prototypes, displays an independence of interpretation and confidence in execution that marks the culmination of achievement of the early La Tène period. Modern commentators are divided regarding the regional origins of this developed style, and the Rhineland is not obviously a focal point in its north-alpine distribution. In consequence, the descriptive term 'Vegetal' has been proposed in place of Jacobsthal's type-site to denote the new style, reflecting in particular its use of plant-derived tendril motifs. It should be noted, however, that this label too has its limitations; the new style is not characterized exclusively by vegetal motifs, nor are vegetal motifs exclusive to it,
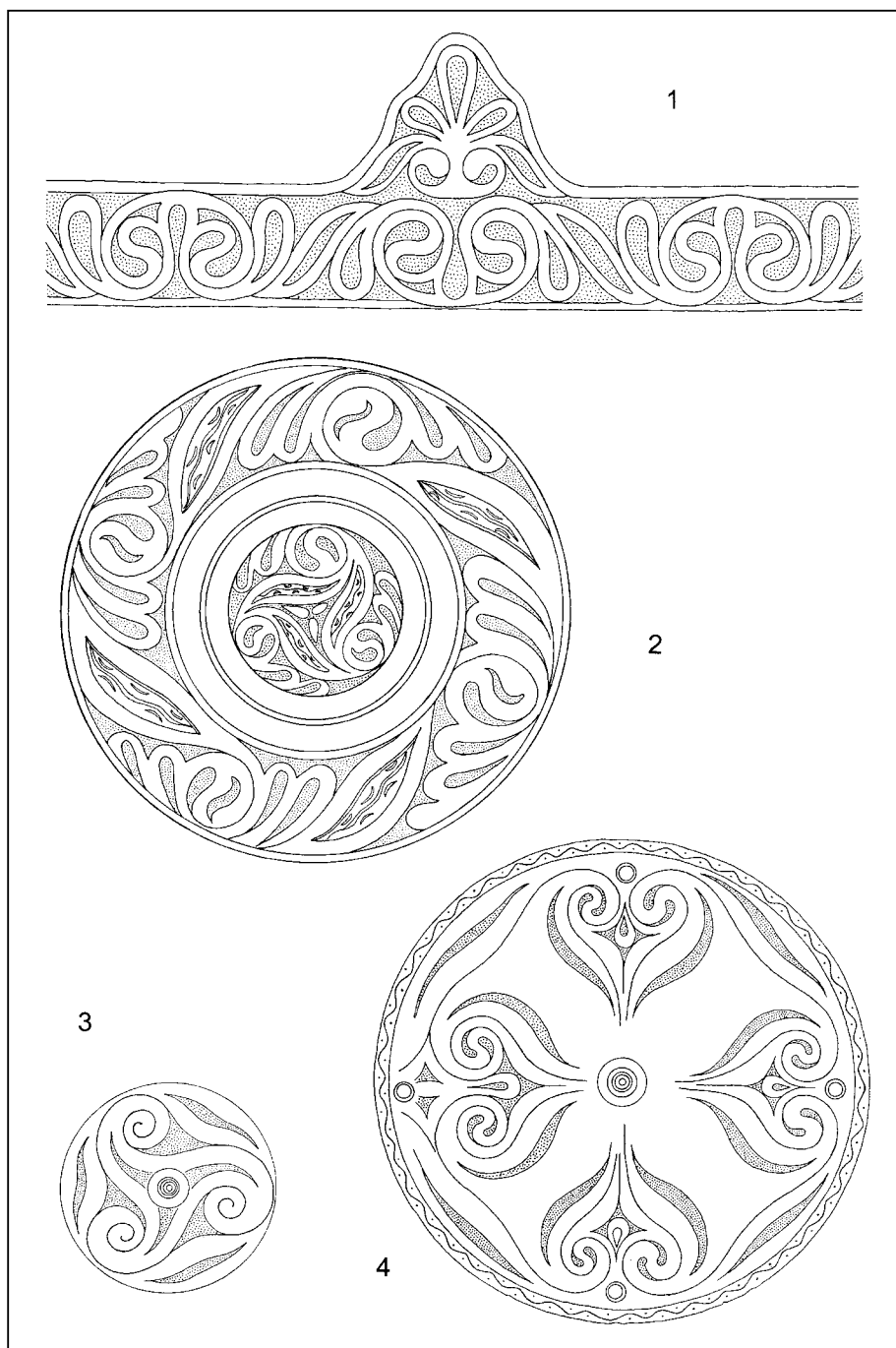
Figure 4.5 Developed Style in the Champagne. 1, Berru helmet; 2, Les Saulces Champénoise dish; 3 and 4, Écury-sur-Marne *phalerae*. Not to scale. Adapted from Déchelette (1914) and Jacobsthal (1944).

since vegetal models of classical derivation were plainly an important component of the preceding phase. Accordingly, some scholars have preferred to retain the now-conventional name, while recognizing its limitations. Confusing as this may appear, it signals the significant fact that the new Waldalgesheim or Vegetal Style is in part the product of both continuing and renewed contact with classical artistic impulses from south of the Alps, and should not be regarded as an independent development divorced from the progressive sequence of regional styles that contributed to its genesis, and which it in turn subsequently influenced. Waldalgesheim and Besançon both reveal particular traits or 'facets' (Jope, 1971a, 178 and footnote 51) among various manifestations of the developed phase of early Celtic art, rather than representing a consistent new 'style'. In terms of absolute chronology, these developed styles were the product of the fourth century BC, but their appearance may well have been synchronous with the local or regional continuation of earlier styles. Indeed, Frey (1976) stressed the apparent disparity of distribution between artefacts with Waldagesheim Style ornament and those of the Early Style, the only significant area of overlap between the two being in the Marne region of north-eastern France, so that the later style should not in general be regarded simply as a development of the earlier.

Waldalgesheim lies in the middle Rhine, west of its confluence with the Nahe river. Here a grave, assumed from the rich inventory of grave-goods to have been that of a Celtic princess, was excavated in 1869–70. It comprised a wooden chamber beneath a barrow mound, to one side of which were the fragmentary remains of a two-wheeled chariot. Among the rich and varied artefacts from the tomb were the vehicle fittings, a drinking service and personal ornaments, but no weapons. Finest among the personal ornaments were a gold torc, an arm-ring and two bracelets (Pl. 5b), the torc and bracelets all ornamented with low relief designs in the style that Jacobsthal identified with the site. Harness and belt attachments (Figure 4.6) display a similar style of ornament in open-work, and are a too-often neglected component of the grave-group, indicating that the gold ornaments, however distinctive, cannot be explained in isolation. The drinking service includes two contrasting pieces, the older being a locally-made spouted flagon (Figure 3.4, 2), which has been discussed earlier in the context of the engraved ornament on its body and the emaciated animal on its lid, and a younger import, a Campanian bronze bucket, probably made in or shortly after the second quarter of the fourth century BC, but deposited in the grave a couple of generations later. Both these items were found at a greater depth in the tomb than the torc and bracelets, leading at one point to the suggestion that there may have been two separate and successive burials in the tomb. The grave-goods evidently included items that were made at different times and treasured until buried together in the later fourth century. The spouted flagon is thus an heirloom, the Campanian bucket a more recent acquisition.

An initial problem in discussing the Waldalgesheim Style lies in its definition. We may speak generally of its sinuous, fleshy curvilinear tendrils and scrolls or its asymmetrical plant spirals, or in a more flippant vein we may use evocative terms like 'spaghetti-ornament' or 'sweet-pea ornament' to describe its over-and-under low-relief compositions. In more abstract mode, its vigorous, confident and yet subtly experimental quality is perhaps best summarized by Megaw's allusion (1970a, 89) in the context of another piece to the 'assured irrationality' of its ornamental style. At one level, all these descriptions serve their purpose, but to recognize the style we must
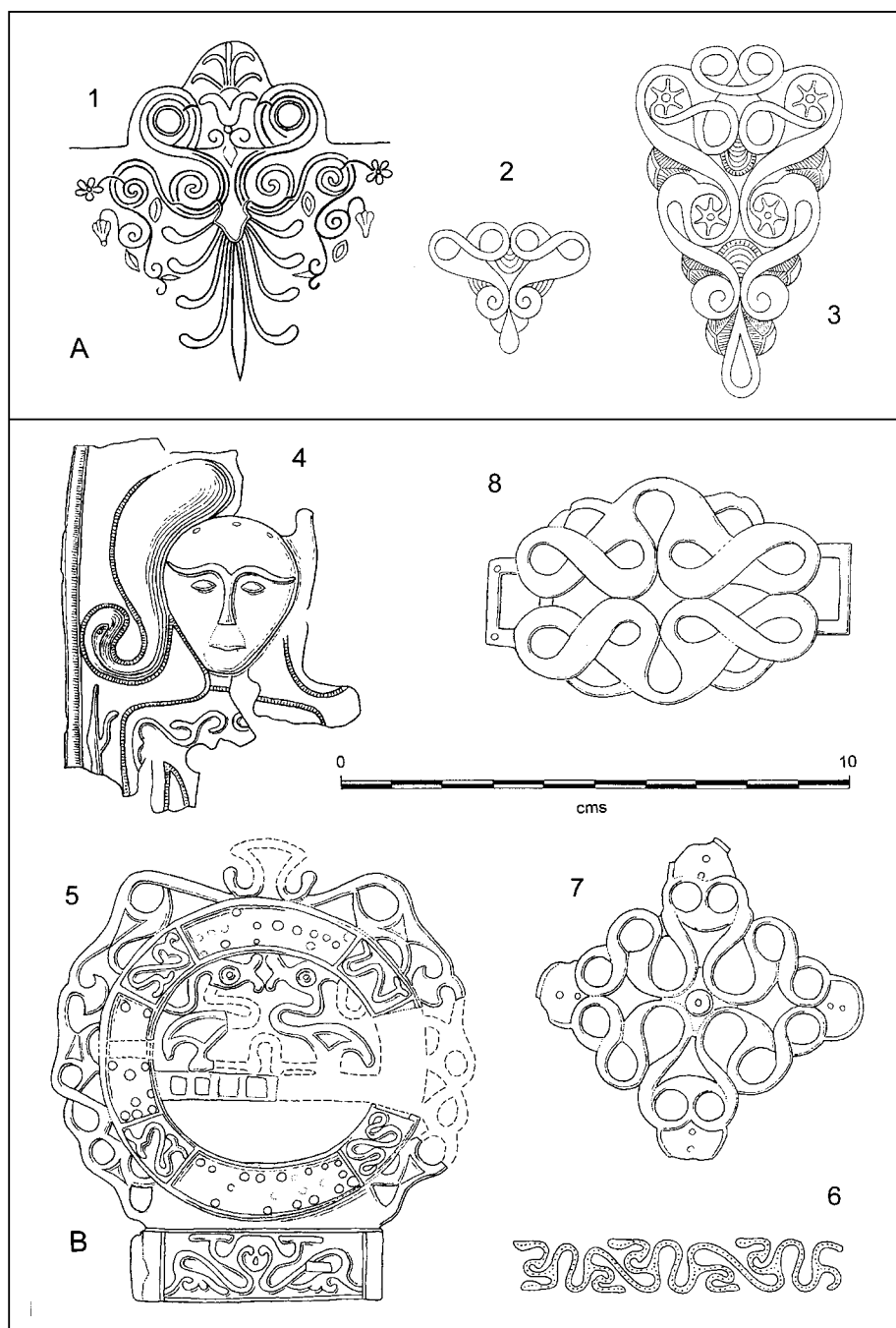
Figure 4.6 Ornament from Waldalgesheim, Mainz-Bingen, grave-group. **A:** 1, design on Campanian bucket handle-attachment; 2, design from arm-ring terminals; 3, design from torc terminals. Not to scale. Adapted from Jope (1971a). **B:** 4, face-mask 2 from yoke assembly; 5, ornamental yoke mount; 6, design on yoke terminals; 7, ornamental plaque; 8, ornamental belt plate. Adapted from Joachim (1995).

identify the component motifs and the way they interact within the overall composition, not simply to reduce the style to a series of nuts and bolts, but to understand its dynamics. To begin with, unlike the Early Style, it is a low-relief style, which means that the interplay between foreground and background, latent in the Early Style, no longer pertains, at any rate not in the same way. By contrast, the Waldalgesheim Style comprises a continuous composition of conjoined elements, rather than rows of independent but potentially inter-acting motifs.

For Jacobsthal, a key component of the Waldalgesheim Style was the tendril, which could coalesce with other motifs such as whirligigs or fans. The tendril is essentially a classical motif, and it is not difficult to cite classical prototypes for Celtic tendril designs. Jacobsthal described the classical tendril as having fluid movement, by contrast to the static Celtic version. Frey convincingly showed that by infilling the tendril to create a curved triangle or vortex, the Celtic artist was able to allow the movement of the Celtic tendril to flow both ways, rather than being uni-directional. Martyn Jope (1971a) developed Jacobsthal's analysis of Waldalgesheim motifs in a study that also attempted to establish the existence of a Waldalgesheim 'master' as the principal progenitor of the style. The term was in fact Jacobsthal's (1944, 93), but there is no evidence that in using it he was implying anything more than the existence of one among a number of specialist craftsmen or workshops. Jope's thesis has not been generally adopted, not least because it is by no means certain that any of the grave-goods from the type-site, other than the spouted flagon, were local products. But his analysis of the constituent motifs of the style as exemplified on the torc and bracelets from the type-site, notwithstanding its rather florid articulation, was still among the most perceptive analyses available until Frey's in the definitive republication of the assemblage (Frey, 1995a).

A recurrent theme of the Waldalgesheim Style is a serpentine scroll, which may swell out like a slender leaf in some versions, but which forms the main agent of articulation of the design. This element commonly flows into curved triangles or vortexes from which at least one other corner will continue the flow of the composition. A particular feature of the Waldalgesheim group, noted by Jacobsthal and Jope, is the over-and-under figure-of-eight device forming a kind of interlace pattern that is particularly suitable for use in confined spaces. Further embellishment can be provided by finials, either fan-like peltae or concave-tailed fins. These designs are particularly well illustrated on the wagon accessories from Waldalgesheim, which included a series of yoke-fittings and ornamental embellishments. Two other ornamental plaques employ over-and-under figure-of-eight motifs to conceal elusive 'Cheshire Style' face masks, while figural representations in the yoke fittings include humanoid busts with 'leaf-crown' and a pair of opposed swan-like birds but with large, coral-inlaid eyes in open-work.

A second fundamental theme, illustrated on the Waldalgesheim torc and bracelets by the triangular elements that form the ends of both central and buffer-terminal designs, is a Celtic rendering of the lyre-motif, commonly combined with palmette, but characteristically transformed by the Celtic artist through the extravagant use of over-and-under figures-of-eight or similar devices of non-classical inspiration. The bracelets nevertheless include some repetitive, frieze-like panels of stylized waves or hooks resembling those on the Amfreville helmet. And from between the foliage peer out small stylized faces with bulging eyes and twirly eyebrows, reminiscent of the face-masks of the Early Style. For two other motifs, exemplified on the torc and

bracelets, Jope argued a direct derivation from the classical design below the handle-mounts of the Campanian bronze bucket (Figure 4.6, 1). The star-rosette terminals of the torc design certainly mirror the classical model, while the axillar fillings on torc and bracelets (Figure 4.6, 2 and 3) occupy the same relative position in the tendril-design as the convolvulus trumpet-flowers of the bucket cartouches. Whether or not the bucket was the exact model for a Celtic craftsman or school of craftsmen working in the patronage of the Waldalgesheim princess, there is little doubt regarding the authenticity of the derivation of these component elements in the Celtic design from a model that would have looked very much like the bucket cartouches. In the context of trans-alpine activity in the fourth century, there seems no reason to doubt that the model of a lyre-palmette with tendrils could have been available as the inspiration for a Celtic craftsman through a variety of agencies, more especially so if that craftsman had himself operated in Italy. The Waldalgesheim bucket, therefore, is less significant for its impact upon the imagination of a middle Rhenish 'master' (appealing though such a cameo insight might be) than for the fact that it must have been one of the last of the trans-alpine imports to reach that region before links between the Mediterranean world and north-alpine Europe went into decline for a couple of centuries.

One reason for questioning the notion of a single Waldalgesheim 'master' is that close analysis has shown that the ornamented metal-work in the grave was the product of several different hands. This in itself should hardly occasion surprise, however, since the goldsmith responsible for torc and bracelets would surely not have been the same craftsman who ornamented the chariot and its draught-attachments. Jeweller, sword-smith and armourer, brooch-maker and coachbuilder would each have commanded specialist skills, and while all may have been influenced in their luxury products by new ornamental fashions, it is unlikely that individuals would have turned their hands to more than one craft in the Iron Age any more than they would today. The Waldalgesheim princess may indeed have been unusual in the middle Rhine in the fourth century by retaining in her patronage a group of skilled craftsmen whose work so magnificently reflected the new developed art style, but it seems unnecessary to deny that these products could have been made locally, even if as a result of external impulse.

Waldalgesheim Style ornament has a wide distribution, from eastern Central Europe to the Seine, and with a significant trans-alpine component that will be discussed in due course. Among the more westerly group is the helmet from Amfreville-sous-les-Monts (Pl. 7a), an example of the so-called 'jockey-cap' helmets, which, though influenced by Italic models, were undoubtedly produced by Celtic armourers. There are two principal variants of helmet found in north-alpine con-texts, a taller conical form best represented at La Gorge Meillet, Berru and the Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein, and a lower version like Amfreville or the richly ornamented example from Agris in the Charente region of western France, for which the term 'jockey-cap' has been prompted by its shape, notwithstanding that the 'peak' is in fact a neck-guard. Amfreville is plainly a high-status piece of parade armour. Made of bronze, it is ornamented with iron open-work on its crown and lower panel, with gold leaf over bronze forming the ornament of the central panel between. Top knob and ear-guards are missing. The design of the central panel immediately recalls the experi-mental attempts to create a flowing, continuous design discussed earlier. Alternate upright and pendant triskeles are simply joined up to create a continuous chain, bor-dered above and below with a frieze of wave-hooks like those already remarked on the

Waldalgesheim bracelets. The lower panel, however, originally embellished with enamel infilling, is of a new order altogether, its low-relief, sinuous wave-tendril owing much more to the assured, mature Waldalgesheim tradition. Not all such helmets translate classical themes into Celtic with this degree of confidence. Indeed, for all its splendour, the Agris helmet still retains a formal series of palmettes as its principal ornamental theme.

The Agris helmet (Pl. 7b), discovered in 1981 in a cave near Angoulême (Gomez de Soto, 1996) is a truly remarkable piece, not simply because it is one of the most westerly outliers among high-status La Tène metal-work. Its context appears not to have been funerary, and the excavators have suggested instead that the helmet was a ritual deposit to the spirits of the underworld. Despite its superficial formality of its palmette-dominated design, which might be thought to proclaim its indebtedness to the Early Style, its association with a Dux brooch of La Tène B seems to confirm the conclusion from closer analysis that the helmet belongs to the later fourth century. Its construction is based upon an iron crown, with bronze appliqué strips and gold-leaf plating. Coral is used extensively as infilling of palmettes and studs. Subsequent to the initial discovery, the top-knob and one cheek-guard of the helmet were recovered from the disturbed deposit.

Like Amfreville, the Agris helmet is divided for purposes of decoration into several panels. Lower and upper panels are dominated by a series of palmettes, arranged in a formal, unconnected frieze. The central panel likewise includes a formal arrangement of S-curves, with swelling-leaf terminals, but otherwise not linked into a continuous sequence. In fact, it is the infilling between these elements that affords the closest links with Waldalgesheim. Though the palmette is still prominent, the filler motifs combine palmettes with over-and-under tendrils that are not so far removed from those of the Waldalgesheim bracelets. On the central panel the infilling devices of palmette and comma-leaf also include hatching not unlike that used in the Waldalgesheim repertory. This is even more apparent on the upper panel, where the detail of hatched elements is very close to the style of axillar filling on the Waldalgesheim torc itself. The ornament of the neck-guard comes closest to experimentation towards a freer and more sinuous composition, with swelling leaves interlocking with a typical yin-yang. One final detail has attracted comment, the delicate curled serpent, apparently horned, lurking within the palmette design of the cheek-guard. Horned serpents have a well-documented significance in the Romano-Celtic iconography of Gaul and Britain, and of course are depicted no less than three times on the Gundestrup cauldron. Snakes also figure in various guises on the coinage of the later Iron Age in North-Western Europe. But there are hardly any representations in early La Tène art, even though snake-imagery was part of the Greek and Etruscan repertory. Its presence on the Agris helmet may be assumed to have had some special significance, if not as a signature of the artist, then perhaps as a symbol of its owner. In sum, the Agris helmet, like Amfreville, is a remarkable demonstration of the independence and creativity of the Celtic artists of this vibrant, transitional phase.

## The Developed Style in Champagne

Within the Champagne region, several examples of bronze torcs are decorated in a style that echoes some of the themes of the Waldalgesheim or Vegetal Style. Despite

some uncertainties regarding provenance of certain finds, Kruta and Roualet (1982) were able to demonstrate that at least three graves from Beine-l'Argentelle and Beine-Montequeux have reliable associations with brooches derived from the so-called Duchcov (German Dux) and Münsingen types. The Vegetal Style, in Reinecke's terminology belonging to the first half of La Tène B, would equate with La Tène ancienne II (or more specifically IIb) in the Hatt and Roualet scheme of 1977, in absolute terms spanning much of the fourth century BC. The principal types of torc are already current in phase IIb, including conical and cylindrical buffer varieties, and a more elaborate form with open-work appendages. The classic form of brooch of this phase is the Dux type. Bracelets include a serpentiform type that continues into the ensuing phase. Some simple curvilinear motifs in relief appear at this period, but it is not until the La Tène Ancienne IIIa phase, dated by Kruta and Roualet to the end of the fourth century or the early third century BC, that the Marnian torcs display more complex curvilinear designs. Two distinct types of torc can be distinguished, one a buffer-ended variety in which the buffers were commonly decorated with simple tendril or S-chains, the other having conical terminals ornamented with axially-symmetrical tendril designs. There is no indication that these are archaeologically distinct in dating or distribution, and we may therefore infer that they reflect some other difference in social fashion or symbolic significance; their similarities in ornament certainly suggest that they were the product of a local school or even of a single workshop. The example from Jonchery-sur-Suippes (Figure 4.7, 2) and the unprovenanced pair in the museum at Nancy show the classic motifs of the developed style, tendrils flowing into curved triangles, sometimes opposed in a balanced fan-like device, peltae, fan-like finials, and palmette-derivatives, used particularly to terminate the elongated triangular field of ornament. The compressed nature of the composition lends to it an appearance of asymmetry. In fact, in extended form the design would be very similar to that on the bracelet from Caurel in the Marne (Figure 4.7, 4) in which swelling leaf-tendrils lead into peltate fans with side tendrils in a wholly symmetrical composition. One further detail should be noted on the torc from Beine-l'Argentelle (Fig. 25, 1). Within the end leaf of the terminal palmette are depicted eyes nose and mouth of a small face-mask. Pin-prick faces like this are known elsewhere in the region, at Rouillerot in the Aube, for example. But human features are even more clearly depicted on the bronze torcs from Courtisols (Figure 4.7, 3) and Witry-les-Reims in the Marne; the former is particularly remarkable since the design comprises a series of intertwined faces, some mask-like in the earlier La Tène tradition, others with features, including nose, mouth and chin more fully developed.

With the skilful use of the *cire perdue* technique to render ornament on torcs and bracelets, it is apparent that it is hard to draw a clear distinction between the relief styles of the Waldalgesheim or Vegetal tradition and the more pronounced relief ornaments, developing some of the same basic motifs, of Jacobsthal's later Plastic Style, which will be the subject of a later chapter.

The dominance of torcs and bracelets, together with brooches, in any discussion of the developed phase of early La Tène Celtic art in the Champagne should not detract from the importance of the ceramic art of this period (Corradini, 1991). Painted pottery was characteristic of funerary ceramics in the Marne from La Tène ancienne I (Roualet, 1991; Charpy, 1991; Desenne, 2003), but by the fourth and early third centuries exotic painted curvilinear designs are found on vessels from the Champagne
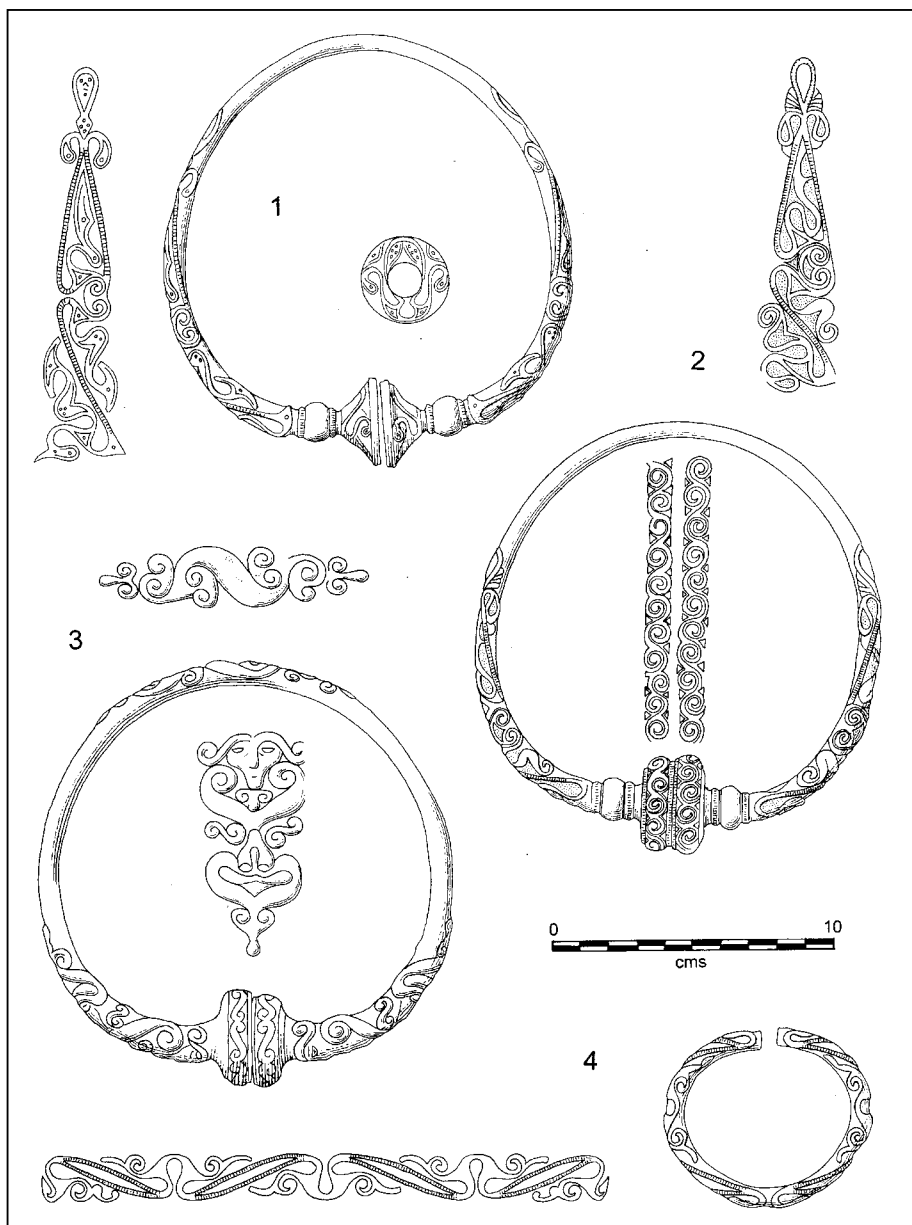
Figure 4.7 Torcs and arm-ring from the Marne region. 1, Beine 'l'Argentelle', gr. 6; 2, Jonchery-sur-Suippes; 3, Courtisols; 4, Caurel 'Mont de la Fourche' gr. 380. Adapted from Kruta and Roualet (1982) and Stead and Rigby (1999).

and Ardennes that translate into ceramics some of the principal themes of metal-work ornament (Figure 4.8). Unlike the angular-profiled pottery from the Champagne, the finer pedestal vases are wheel-thrown. Their designs are painted in red and black (or dark red), and include scrolls, tendrils, yin-yangs and even triskeles that would be familiar to the metal-worker, though not of course in low relief. The Prunay ('Le Champ la Guerre') vase is instructive, since it shows a greater degree of symmetry than is normal in this series of vases. Its uppermost panel comprises a geometric key design in black on red, matched by the lowest panel, a wavy line similarly in black on a red ground. In the main central panel the principal motif is in red on a black ground. It comprises a repeating double scroll, linked by yin-yang whorls, in which the lower element is an inverted and reversed image of the upper. Some of these ornamental motifs are shared with the pedestal vase from Caurel, but more significantly it is the detailed proportions of the two vessels that confirm that they must have been products of the same workshop (Stead and Rigby, 1999, 49).

Münsingen and Dux

From the end of the fourth century, funerary practice across north-alpine Europe became remarkably homogeneous, with extended inhumation in flat cemeteries becoming the norm. One of the best-known examples of the period is the cemetery at Münsingen-Rain near Bern (Hodson, 1968), the archaeological importance of which derives in part from the fact that its location, on an elongated terrace that permitted only linear expansion over time, allowed archaeologists to order its grave-groups on the principles of horizontal stratigraphy (Figure 4.9). The flat graves were relatively simple in construction, the pit containing the extended inhumation sometimes being lined with stones, and occasionally with traces of a wooden coffin. Though Münsingen is not large in numbers of graves by comparison with earlier La Tène cemeteries, its graves were relatively well furnished with diagnostic types, brooches especially, but also torcs, bracelets and anklets, and some examples of the so-called warrior's 'triple panoply' of sword, spear and shield. Pottery significantly seems to play no part in the grave inventory. Typical of the La Tène B phase is the Münsingen type brooch, characterized by having its foot turned back at a diagonal angle towards the low-arched bow, and sporting a large disc on the foot which, like the bow itself, is frequently the subject of ornament. Champion's (1985) analysis of two particular groups has suggested the existence of local workshops producing brooches with distinctive and recurrent styles of ornament. One, her Münsingen-Andelfingen type, has a slightly asymmetric bow, against which the foot with elongated pointed finial rests, and an enamel disc attached to the foot by a star-shaped rivet. The second, the Münsingen-Deisswil group, has red enamel inlay around an S-scroll on the bow, and around the disc-pin, which is shaped like a four-leafed flower. The ornamental repertory is obviously constrained by the size and limitations of the available surfaces, but more elaborate renderings of classical models can be seen in two brooches with complex interlocking lyre designs from Münsingen, graves 49 and 50 (Figure 4.9B). Waldalgesheim themes, including leaf-tendril and over-and-under figure-of-eight, are exemplified on brooches from Münsingen (Gr. 107) and Rickenbach, in Switzerland and on two finger-rings, one of silver from Stettlin-Deisswil near Bern, the other in gold from grave 28/2 from the Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein. Indeed, low-relief ornament of this kind is known on brooches
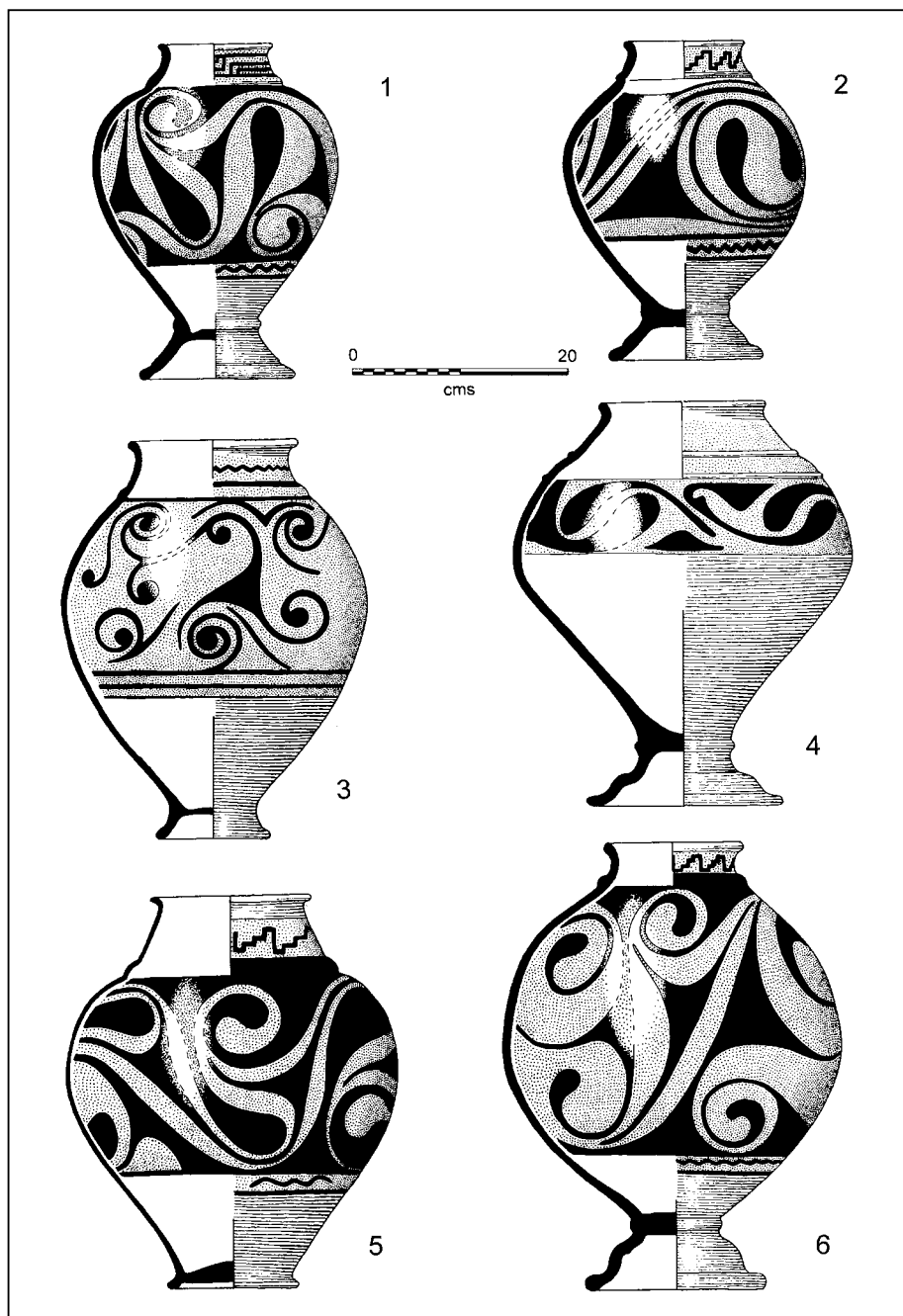
Figure 4.8 La Tène decorated pottery from Champagne. 1, Prunay, 'Le Champ la Guerre'; 2, Caurel, 'Le Fosse Minore'; 3, Beine, 'L'Argentelle'; 4, Sogny-aux-Moulins, 'Sur les Côtes'; 5, Bussy-le-Château, 'Culvidames'; 6, Lavannes, 'Le Mont de la Fourche'. Adapted from Corradini (1991).

from sites as far afield as the Marne in the west and Duchcov in the Czech Republic in the east.

The Duchcov hoard (Kruta, 1971) was found in 1882 in a cauldron at the site of thermal springs in north-western Bohemia, at the foot of the Erzgebirge mountains. It consisted principally of brooches and bracelets, and although the material was widely dispersed after discovery, the hoard probably contained a total of around 2,500 items. It was a remarkably consistent assemblage, and was perhaps deposited as a dedicatory offering to the deity that presided over the sacred springs. Among the brooches are examples of the Münsingen type, but also a broadly contemporary variant, named the 'Dux' type after the type-site, which is distinguished generally by its six-coiled spring with internal cross-over, and the knobbed moulding of its foot. Together, these two brooch types provide an invaluable fourth-century 'horizon' across much of north-alpine Europe.

The Developed Styles in Eastern Europe

As a result of the work of Kruta, Szabó and others, much more is now known than at the time of Jacobsthal's pioneering research about the impact of the Waldalgesheim style in eastern Central Europe, and its formative role in creating there the three-dimensional Plastic Style and the distinctive Hungarian Sword Style of the ensuing period. Some examples of the Developed Style from Bohemia bear striking similarities to the Waldalgesheim group, and could even have been the product of a Celtic work-shop in northern Italy (Kruta, 1975). The ornamental fitting from Čižkovice shows under-and-over figure-of-eight tendrils in a triangular field, terminating in a palmette-derivative with axillar infillings, in a manner that could have been the product of the same workshop as some of the Waldalgesheim pieces. The bronze bracelet from Klobuky is ornamented with leaf-tendrils leading into peltate 'fans' in a manner seen on several western pieces, and the designs on bracelets from Jenišův Újezd and Lahošt are sufficiently close to suggests that they could be the product of the same workshop. Tendrils with curving triangles also appear in relief on the bows of two brooches from Lahošt (Kruta, 1975, Figures 7, 4 and 6) in a style quite closely paralleled on the bronze torc from Fiad in Hungary and again on a bronze torc of similar type from Muttenz in Switzerland (Szabó, 1992). Nevertheless, the absolute numbers of such pieces in Bohemia are not great, and some, like the gold torc from Oploty, are almost certainly imports from an Italo-Celtic workshop, so that current opinion favours a relatively brief period of contact with northern Italy as the most likely catalyst for their appearance.

In Hungary too, the question of origins has dominated much of recent research, with direct influence from northern Italy, though not through direct imports, currently vying with the alternative introduction of the new style from Western Europe. An unprovenanced iron spear-head from Hungary is regularly cited as having elements in common with the Waldalgesheim torc ornament, notably the lyre-palmettes and star-rosettes (Szabó, 1992, 120–1; Szabó and Petres, 1992, 19–20). These are balanced by two opposed pairs of conjoined triskeles to form a symmetrically balanced composition. The border of the blade is outlined by a wavy line in a manner also familiar in the west. The main ornamental panel of the Hungarian spear-head lacks the over-and-under figure-of-eight, characteristic of Waldalgesheim, but this does appear in cruder execution
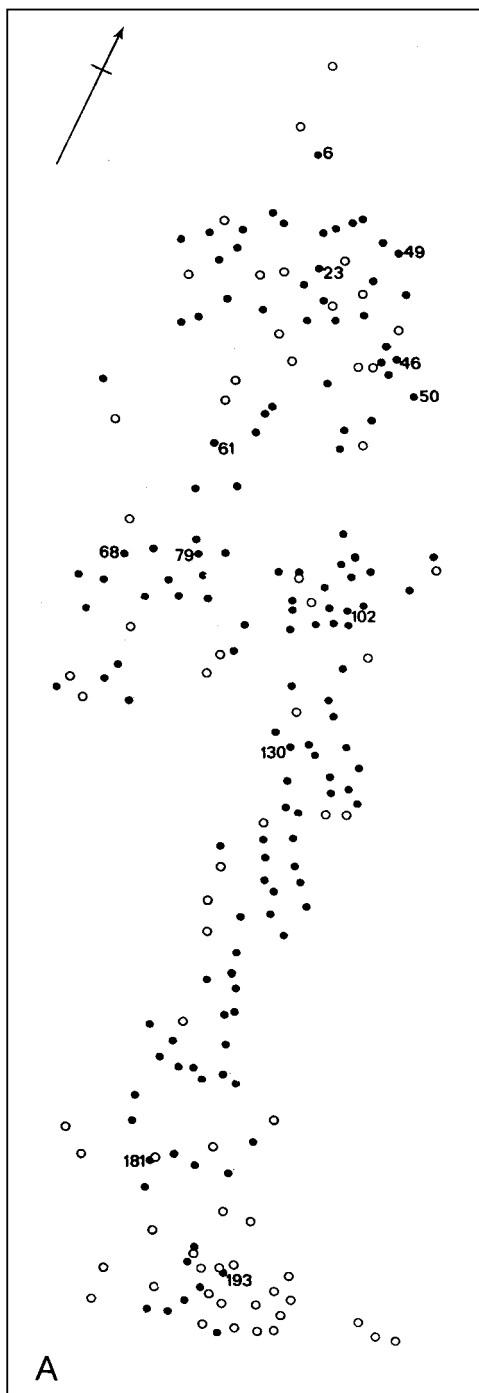
Figure 4.9 Münsingen, Berne. **A:** cemetery plan. **B:** some characteristic brooch types. Adapted from Hodson (1968).
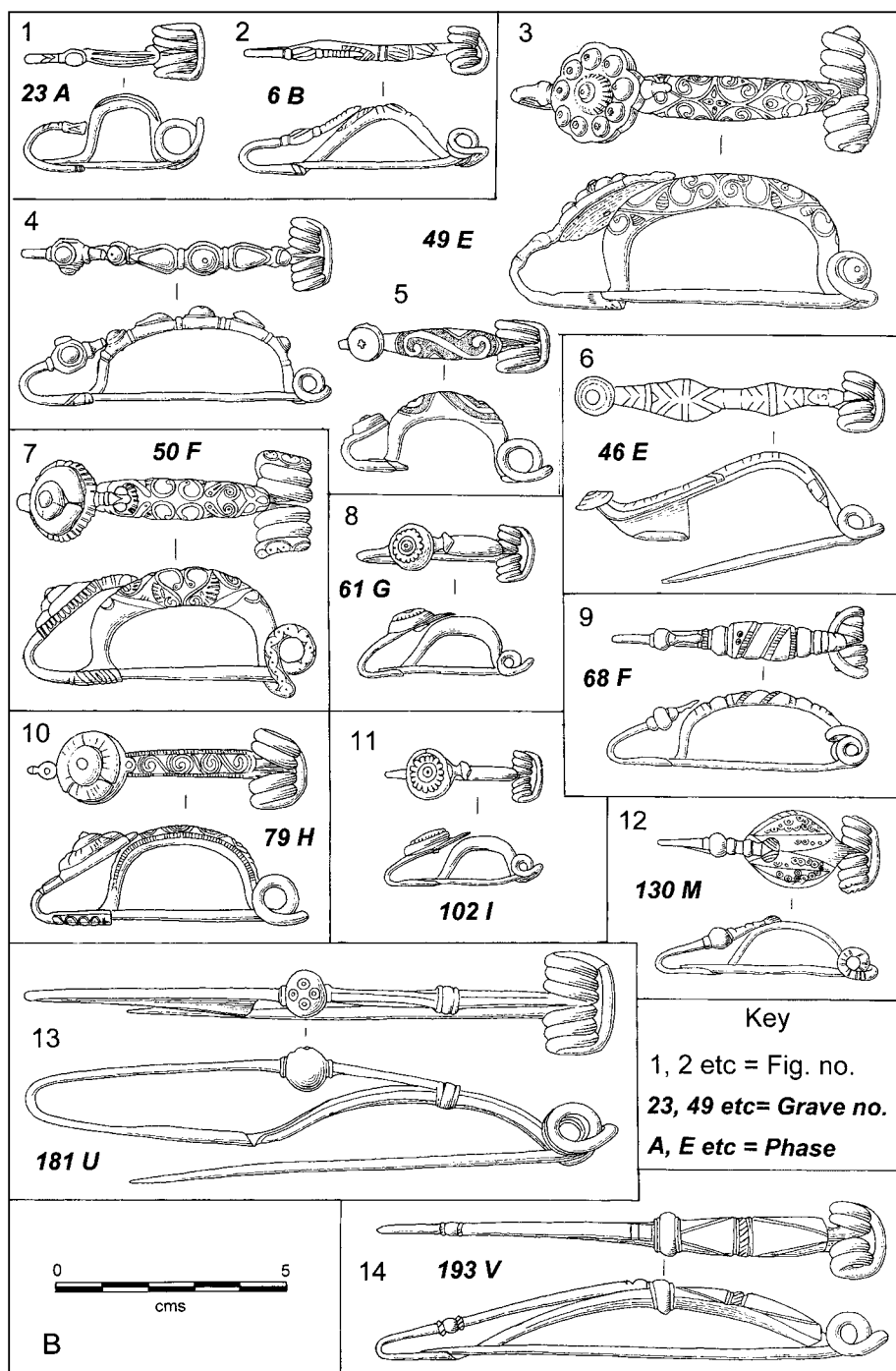
Figure 4.9 Continued.

on the socket. The best example of the sinuous tendril of the Waldalgesheim Style is the Litér scabbard (Figure 4.10, 4), the back plate of which is ornamented in pure Waldalgesheim Style in three panels, the upper and lower triangular, the middle one a diagonal band. The design is a wave-tendril leading through a series of curved triangles or vortexes, the third arm of the tendril ending in a rounded, spatulate terminal. The Italian scabbards are plainly related, though they differ in detail; Moscano di Fabriano (Figure 4.10, 3) does not have the curved triangles and on the Filottrano scabbard (Figure 4.10, 2) the triangles are linked by fleshy leaf-tendrils. The closest analogy for the Litér design, as Szabó and Petres (1992, 20) pointed out, is the ornamental fragment on the Larchant scabbard from the Champagne, but the choice of a diagonal field remains a distinctively eastern trait.

Influence of the Developed Styles on insular art

For most commentators of insular Celtic art, a retarded chronology has been axiomatic, with an inviolable threshold around 300 BC. In consequence, there are no unequivocal examples of the Continental La Tène Early Style, and any reflecting the developed Waldalgesheim tradition are generally nevertheless seen as displaying an insular character (Frey and Megaw, 1976). Megaw and Megaw (2001, 192) nevertheless cite the Cerrig-y-Drudion fragments (Figure 4.11, 1) as an example of the 'classic Waldalgesheim or Vegetal Style'. Jope, who once thought that it 'must have been made by a Gaulish craftsman' (1961a, 74) eventually believed it to have been a 'provincial' product, which, 'though structurally unique, is stylistically not entirely isolated in its insular setting' (2000, 25). An essential similarity has frequently been remarked between the fleshy lyre-palmettes of the rim ornament of Cerrig-y-Drudion with Breton pottery ornament, notably that from St Pol de Leon. In metal-work, there are certainly similarities in the rendering of palmette and leaf motifs with the bronze disc from Écury-sur-Coole, though the proportions of each are different, while the theme of alternating palmette and leaves of the Cerrig-y-Drudion rim plate and the 'yin-yang' of the body fragment can be matched in more than one panel on the bronze flagon from Besançon. The background to the Cerrig-y-Drudion design is hatching or basketry, but not of the regular, square-based variety that characterizes later insular mirror-ornament, and therefore not in any way indicative of a date later than the fourth century. In fact, this form of basketry hatching is not exclusively British, unless we are to see an insular artist as responsible in the early La Tène period for just such embellishment of a bronze chariot-nave from La Gorge Meillet (Jacobsthal, 1944, No. 157), the Erstfeld torcs (Wyss, 1975) or the Borsch flagon-handle (Jacobsthal, 1944, No. 353).

The Standlake scabbard (Figure 4.10, 5) is in many respects the prime example of Waldalgesheim-influenced ornament in Britain. As a composite piece, the dating of the scabbard is a contentious issue that will be addressed later. For the present, its importance lies in the two ornamental plates, one at the front of the chape, the other at the mouth of the leather scabbard. The basal bronze plate adopts the low-relief Waldalgesheim effect, in a meandering tendril that would not be out of place in the company of classic Continental examples. The upper plate is dominated by a bold relief design of pelta suspended from a loop, for which third-century parallels such as the Torrs pony-cap might be invoked. At the same time, from this main motif extend low-relief spatulate arms in clear Waldalgesheim fashion, with the ends of the pelta
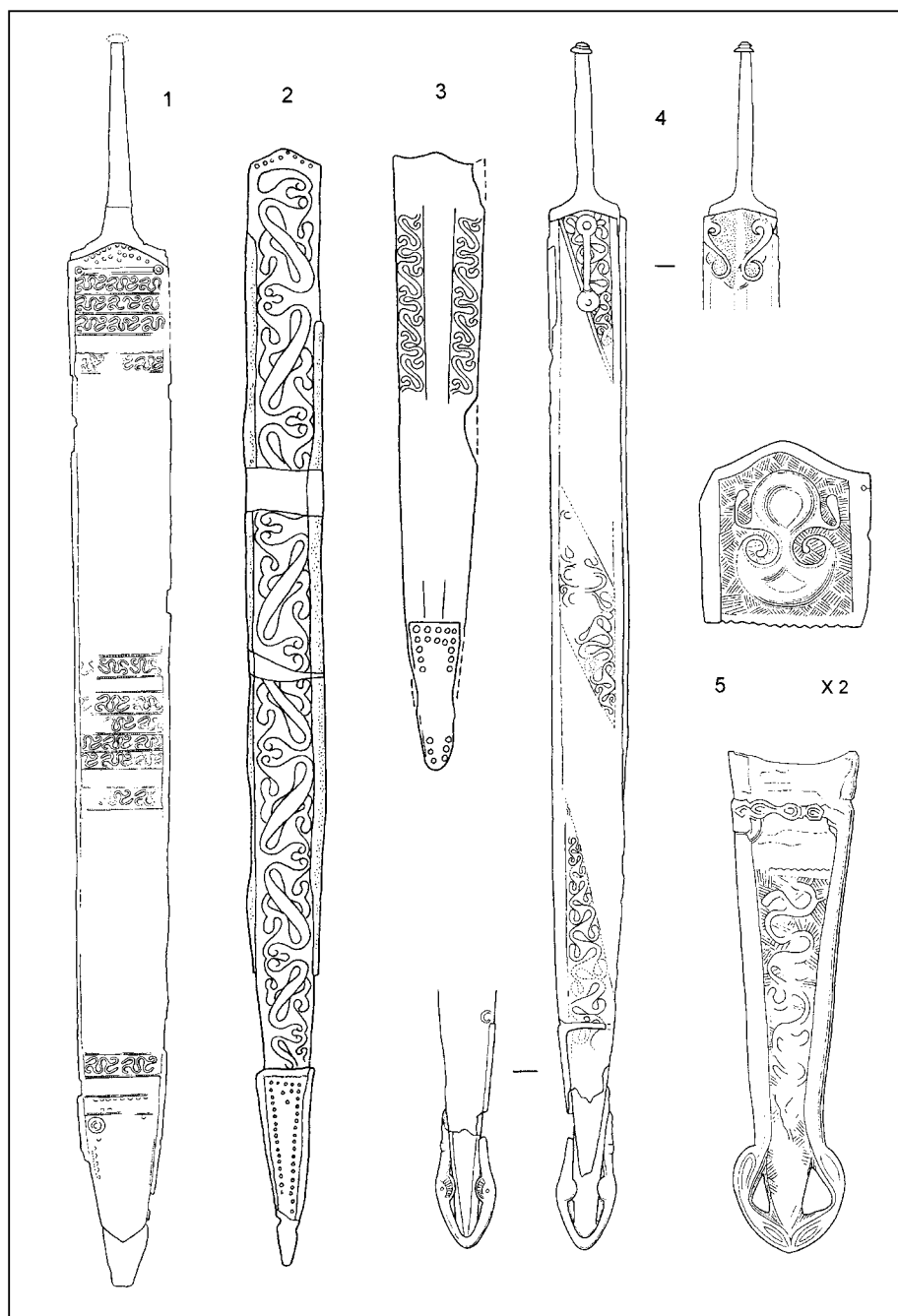
Figure 4.10 Scabbards with 'Vegetal Style' ornament. 1, Epiais-Rhus, Val d'Oise; 2, Filottrano, Ancona, Italy; 3, Moscano di Fabriano, Italy; 4, Litér 1, Hungary; 5, Standlake, Oxfordshire, England. Adapted from Kruta *et al.* (1984), Megaw (1982), Szabó and Petres (1992). Standlake drawn from original in Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.
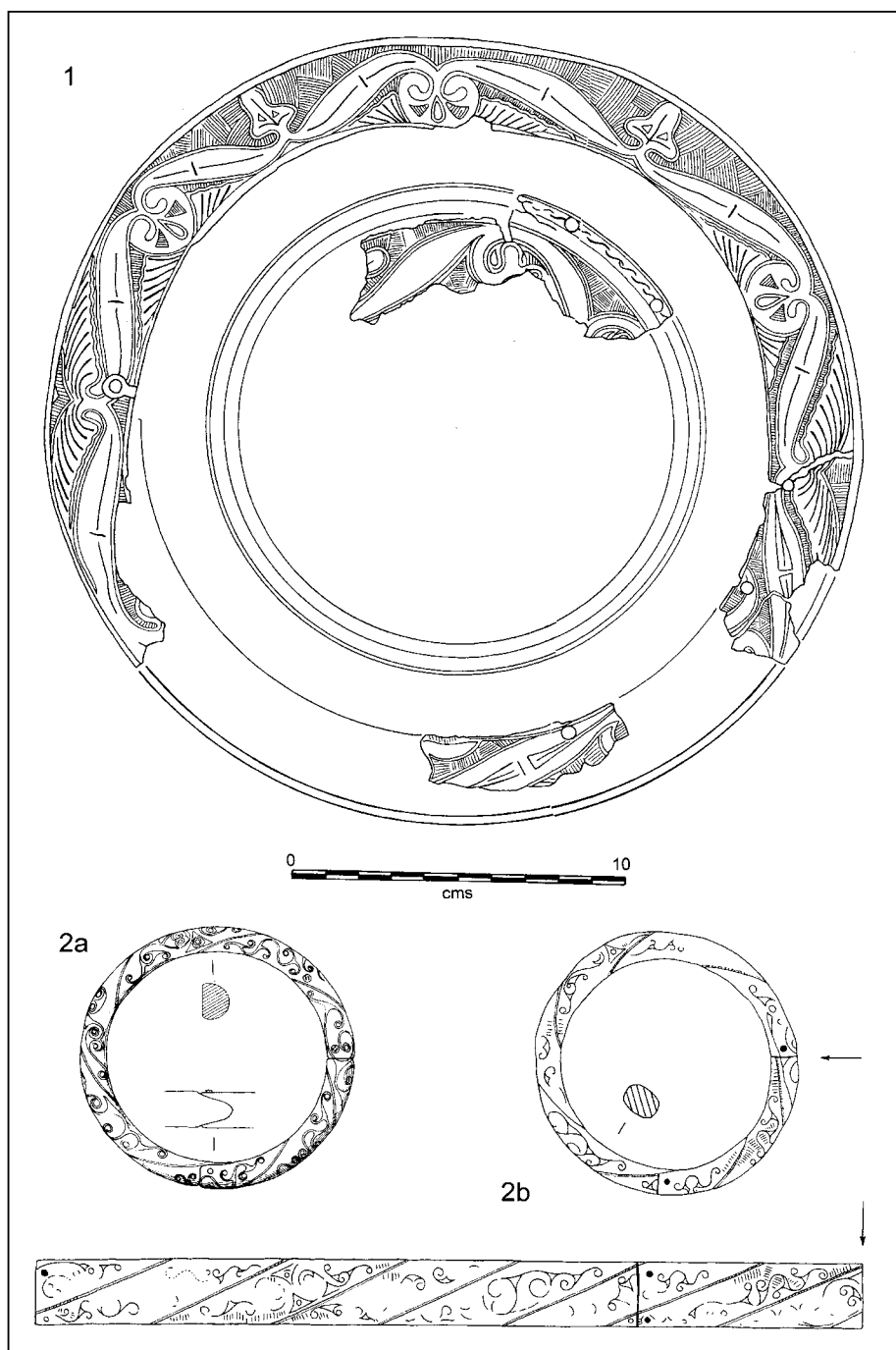
Figure 4.11 Insular early La Tène metal-work. 1, Cerrig-y-Drudion, Denbighshire, adapted from Smith (1926); 2, Newnham Croft, Cambridgeshire, 2a adapted from Fox (1958), 2b drawn by D. W. Harding by kind permission of the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge.

finished in similar technique. The background is basketry hatching of the asymmetric (non-square-based) kind. Other insular examples have been claimed of Waldalgesheim or less specifically Waldalgesheim-derived ornament, but few are convincing, and in any event are better treated within the broader compass of developing insular styles. The tendril design of the Newnham Croft bracelet (Figure 4.11, 2) certainly owes its theme if not its execution to Continental inspiration, though the reality is not quite as impressive as Fox's drawing implied. The Brentford 'horn-cap', a heavy casting that could have served as a yoke-fitting, on the other hand, has a near-symmetry that is alien to Continental Waldalgesheim, and shares several elements, peltae, curved triangles and bossed finials, with later pieces like the pair of 'spoons' from Weston, Somerset. The penannular brooches from Woodeaton and Beckley (Figure 6.10, 8 and 9) are more remarkable for their innovative insular form, unlike anything from Continental Europe, than for any influence upon their ornamentation, which is on such a limited surface that it can hardly be characterized with confidence.

One striking example of Waldalgesheim influence that passed unremarked until its rediscovery in recent years is the shield from the Trent near Ratcliffe-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire (Watkin *et al.*, 1996). Recovered from the river at the end of the nineteenth century, it was not initially recognized as the boss, spine and terminal roundels of an Iron Age shield. Like other insular parade shields, the length of the spine around the central umbo is not equally divided, though the construction and ornament are otherwise symmetrical. Most closely related to the Waldalgesheim style are two panels of meandering tendril design, not identical but in diagonally alternate relationship on the flanges of the spine, that have their closest parallels on the fourth-century scabbards from Moscano di Fabriano or Filottrano. The matching pair of alternate panels, likewise not identical, departs from the normal Waldalgesheim repertory, having sharply angular elements that hint at the presence of exotic beasts. The design on the central boss, essentially a composition in rotational symmetry around its diagonal, also includes angular elements, which, together with a profusion of pseudo-under-and-over intersections, heighten a sense that the affinities of this piece are with the Hungarian Scabbard Style, itself, as we shall see, a development out of Waldalgesheim antecedents, and that the elusive beasts concealed in the foliage are related to the dragon-pair menagerie. The piece is truly unique, and may well have been the product of a craftsman familiar with Continental fashions in the later fourth or early third centuries BC.

A more recent find that again reflects the Continental Waldalgesheim Style is the ornament of the sword-hilt from Fiskerton, Lincolnshire (Field and Parker Pearson, 2003), a waterlogged site by the River Witham that may have been the focus of ritual deposits. The ornament (Stead, 2003) includes simple lyre-palmette motifs extended into triskele-vortices, and meandering tendrils with fan-finials of the kind that Jope regarded as diagnostic of the Waldalgesheim Style. The wooden causeway with which the votive deposits were associated was apparently in use from the mid-fifth to later fourth centuries BC, which certainly does not require any time-lag in the adoption of Continental fashions in Britain.

North-alpine Europe and Italy

Finally, and perhaps crucially, we should examine the trans-alpine examples of the Developed Style of La Tène art, trans-alpine, of course, from the Celtic perspective but

vexingly cisalpine for two centuries or more from the Roman viewpoint. Discounting for the moment pieces that can be regarded as Italo-Celtic, the number of major artefacts that are of La Tène type is strictly limited, and almost invariably from funerary contexts rather than from settlements. In recent years excavations at Monte Bibele have begun to redress that imbalance, but even so perhaps the clearest evidence for a Celtic presence there comes in the form of warrior burials with sword, spear and helmet among the grave-goods.

Two of the weapons from Italic cemeteries closest in style to north-alpine Celtic models are the swords and scabbards already alluded to from Filottrano on the mid-Adriatic (dismissed by Jacobsthal as an inferior product, perhaps even a local imitation) and from Moscano di Fabriano, somewhat to the west in a mountainous pass through the Apennines, both of which were accompanied by rich assemblages of Italic and Greek grave-goods. The Filottrano cemetery, explored erratically in the early years of the twentieth century, contained around sixty graves, of which nearly half contained artefacts of 'Celtic' type, notably grave 22, which contained the sword with scabbard ornamented in Waldalgesheim Style, and grave 2, which included a gold torc with buffer terminals, again ornamented with low-relief designs allied to those of the Waldalgesheim torc and bracelets. The latter also contained a series of Attic pottery vessels, an Etruscan mirror and other ornaments that conclusively point to a dating in the mid- to late-fourth century BC. Moscano di Fabriano, by contrast, appears to have been an isolated burial. Apart from the sword with decorated scabbard, it contained an Italo-Celtic bronze helmet, bronze horse-trappings and a La Tène brooch, together with Etruscan and Campanian bronzes, Greek pottery vessels and comprehensive drinking-service, all of which date to around the second quarter of the fourth century. Without at present pre-judging the significance of historical evidence, on the archaeological evidence alone, this would appear to be a convincing case of cultural assimilation, but this still leaves open the question of who was adopting what from whom. An illustration of this dilemma is the type of helmet, found in a number of graves in northern Italy and around the head of the Adriatic, distinguished by its hemispherical shape with top-knob or plume-holder, hinged cheek-guards and flanged neck-guard. While these helmets undoubtedly influenced the style of helmet produced north of the Alps, like that from Amfreville, scholars since Jacobsthal have regarded them as the products of Etruscan or at least Italic workshops, and have not even been persuaded that they were ever worn by Celts. On the face of it, therefore, the graves with mixed inventories could be evidence of Celtic warriors assimilating the luxuries of the Italic lifestyle, or local dignitaries buried with trophies or diplomatic gifts received from northern neighbours.

One example highlights the dilemma particularly graphically. The helmet from Canosa di Puglia is one of the southernmost examples of a helmet, the Celtic character of which is seemingly proclaimed by its lavish use of the developed Vegetal Style of ornament (Figure 4.12, 2 and 3). Made of iron with bronze overlay, its lower panel depicts a series of alternately upright and pendant lyres, linked by swelling, fleshy leaves. The upper panel is filled with complex pelta-palmette motifs, again alternately upright and inverted, and again linked by fleshy leaves, the latter in both fields being accentuated by wavy lines in a manner noted earlier on the Besançon flagon, with which the design of the Canosa panels bears comparison. Kruta (1991a, 201; 1991b, 147) cited a striking and unusual comparison between this design and that of the
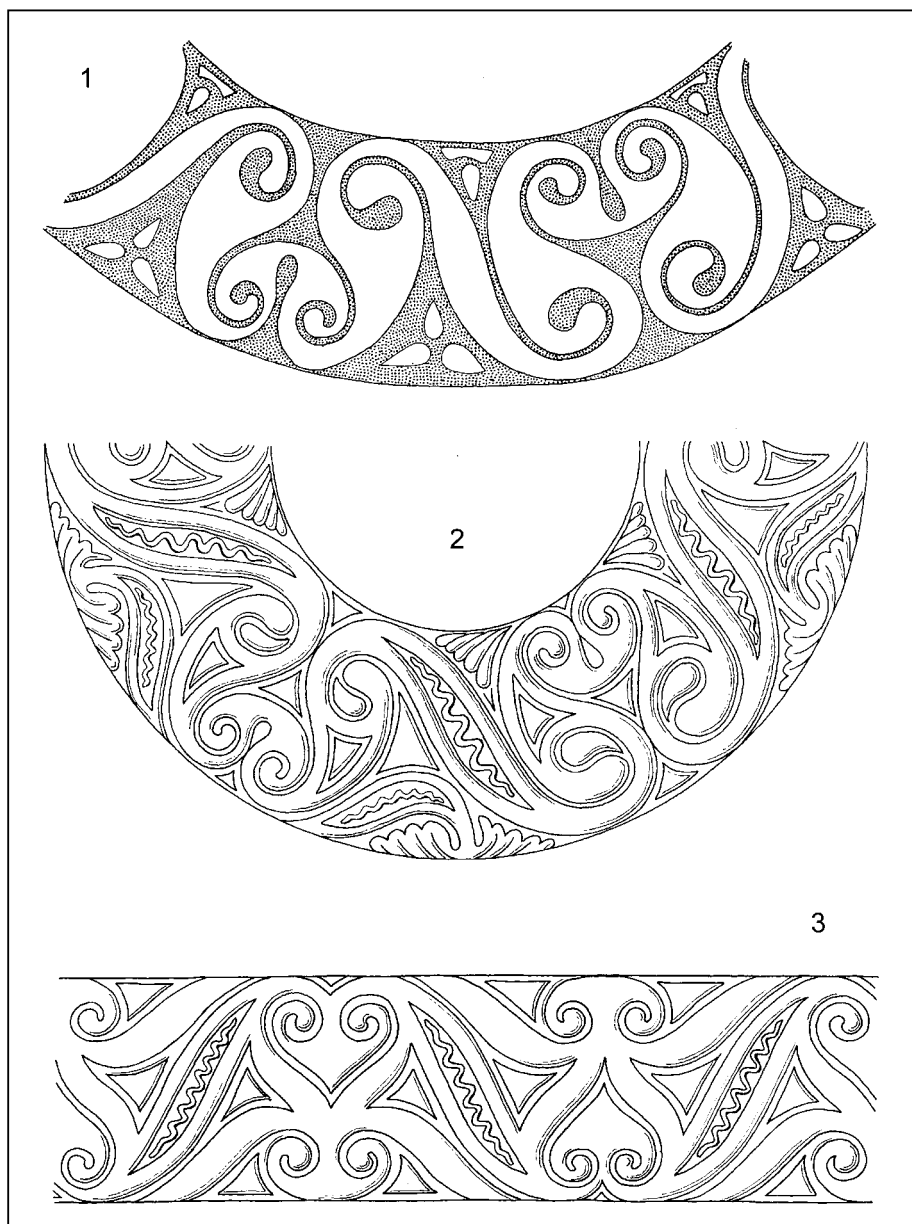
Figure 4.12 The Prunay 'Les Commelles' vase (1) and the Canosa helmet, upper (2) and lower (3) panels. Not to scale. Adapted from Jacobsthal (1944) and Kruta (1991b).

Prunay, Marne, ('Les Commelles') pottery vase (Figure 4.12, 1), that surely argues for a common stylistic source. The Canosa tomb, excavated in 1895 and not easily reconstructed from inadequate records, contained a rich panoply of armour, weapons, horse-gear, ornaments and numerous pottery vases. With its six separate chambers, it certainly contained more than one burial, but only the helmet could be claimed as evidence of Celtic workmanship. There is no case for regarding this as a Celtic or Gaulish burial, and the most probable explanation is that the helmet was a trophy from regions further north.

Finally, among the outstanding examples of the Waldagesheim or Vegetal Style in Italy are more than thirty bronze mounts (Jacobsthal, 1944, 401) of uncertain purpose from an equally insecure provenance, believed to have been Comacchio, south of the mouth of the Po. The motifs displayed by the mounts are mainstream Waldalgesheim, including leaf-tendrils, curved triangles, and peltate finials. But the execution is distinctive, the design being defined by stippled dotting of the background, almost as if it were imitating leatherwork.

Together with a number of lesser items from various cemeteries in northern Italy, these major works of Celtic art doubtless attest the Celtic presence in Italy in the fourth century recorded in historical sources, but it is a relatively modest inventory to promote as the genesis of the developed Waldalgesheim or Vegetal Styles. Jacobsthal's verdict is not easily dismissed: 'Celtic Italy is an unproductive province' (1944, 154). Even Kruta, one of the foremost proponents of an Italian origin for the new Vegetal style was obliged to concede (1991a, 198) that 'very few decorated La Tène objects datable to the fourth century BC have so far been found in Italy, and their contexts are not very representative, uncertain, or unrecorded'. We should recall Jacobsthal's dictum that the area of production of a given class of artefacts should be the area of the most frequent occurrence (1944, 155). On this principle it might be quite hard to identify any particular locality as having an indisputable claim to be the source of the Waldalgesheim or Vegetal Style, but the appearance in the Champagne of the essential elements of the style in a medium other than metal-work, namely, funerary ceramics, may suggest priority in that region. The mechanisms for these stylistic developments are in any event likely to have been complex, involving a variety of different trans-alpine and north-alpine interconnections. Notwithstanding the limited distribution of artefacts with Waldalgesheim Style ornament in Italy, there can be no doubting the significance of the classical contribution to that new style, nor the role of Italic sources in its genesis. Frey (1995b) argued convincingly for direct connections between the Champagne region of north-eastern Gaul and Italy in the distribution of fifth-century types such as belt-hooks and iron meat skewers, suggesting a 'reflux' process whereby new fashions could have been brought into North-Western Europe. If these introductions were triggered by movements among a warrior elite or their swordsmiths and armourers, it would require only a small but influential group to make a disproportionate impact upon the archaeological record.

The historical dimension

There remains the important consideration of historical records of the political expansion of Celts into Italy and the events that this precipitated. This important source of information has been deliberately left till last, since too often the archaeological

evidence is seen only as a material manifestation of the truths that are enshrined in the historical texts. Properly, both sets of data should be examined rigorously by the criteria of their respective disciplines before cross-reference is made from one to the other. The archaeological evidence, as we have seen, certainly argues for a close dependence of the Developed Styles of early La Tène art upon classical inspiration, doubtless drawn from Italic sources. But it would in itself hardly sustain widespread invasions or population movements of Gauls across the Alps to settle in the Po valley and mid-Adriatic if the historical texts were lacking. The corollary of this line of argument must be to question whether the historical texts actually tell us the whole story anyway, since it is probable that in their way they are as defective as is the testimony of archaeology.

The main thrust of the historical record is well known. Polybius, writing in the second century BC, records the defeat of the Romans by the Gauls in 387 BC at Allia, and the ensuing sack of Rome, a traumatic event that evidently left an indelible mark on the Roman psyche for more than three centuries, until it was expiated by Caesar's conquest of Gaul. Both Polybius and Livy, the latter writing around the time of Augustus, broadly agree on the names of the principal tribes involved in the invasion and settlement of northern Italy (probably because they were using a common source), in geographical sequence from the Alps to the mid-Adriatic the Insubres, Cenomani, Boii, Lingones and Senones. The history of the following two centuries involved recurrent conflicts and periodic tactical alliances between the Romans and their Celtic neighbours. In 295 and again in 285, the Romans inflicted heavy defeats upon the Senones; in 225, it was the turn of the Insubres and Boii to suffer defeat at Telamon. That these setbacks were not immediately definitive was largely because of the intervention of the Second Punic War from 218 to 202, during which the Celtic tribes evidently joined forces with Hannibal against their common enemy. Following the Carthaginian defeat at Zama in North Africa, the Insubres were finally defeated in 194, and the Boii in 191, leading to the expulsion of those Celtic groups whose territory had not already been annexed.

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of these basic historical events, though the historical record doubtless over-simplifies a much more complex set of circumstances. Most clearly it is oblique regarding the beginnings of the Gaulish colonization of northern Italy, reducing this process to the level of the anecdotal with stories of Arrunte, the Etruscan who enticed the Celts to attack Chiusi (Livy, 33, 2–4) or of Helicus, the Helvetian blacksmith who played a similar catalytic role in Rome (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, XII, 5). These stories are at best metaphors for a process that doubtless has its origins several centuries earlier than the normally accepted date of the Gaulish invasions, and that was almost certainly rooted in trans-alpine trading and cultural links going back at least to the later Urnfield period. In fact, Livy refers to the migration of a cadet group of the Bituriges in the age of Tarquinius Priscus, which would place that episode in the sixth century BC. Equally, current linguistic scholarship regards as Celtic a series of Lepontic inscriptions dating from around 500, which may suggest that the Golasecca culture of north-west Italy already contained within it Celtic elements. In fact, there is very little evidence archaeologically for cataclysmic change in the cultural sequences of northern Italy, and therefore every reason to presume that the process was a progressive one over a long period of time, involving cultural assimilation rather than radical displacement. The existence of different tribal

groupings in northern Italy may well account for differences in distribution north of the Alps of Italic types or influences, but it is unlikely that those tribal groupings will manifest themselves very clearly at a local scale in specific archaeological distributions, any more than they do for the most part north of the Alps.

The lesson then is not just that, without the historical sources, any archaeologist proposing a Celtic invasion of Italy in the fourth century BC would be ridiculed as an unreformed and irredeemable diffusionist, and that in consequence we should perhaps review the extent to which archaeological interpretation is severely constrained by the limitations of the data. It is also that the archaeological evidence, for all those limitations, strongly suggests that the historical record is an over-simplification of a much more complex and protracted process of interaction to the point of distorting the likely reality. Above all, we should avoid the assumption that either source of evidence, historical or archaeological, necessarily should be accorded priority over the other as the basis of received wisdom.

5

THE ART OF THE SWORDSMITH

Jacobsthal coined the term 'Sword Style' with particular reference to a series of ornamented scabbards of middle La Tène type from Hungary. In doing so he recognized that this distinctive group was not generated in isolation, either geographically or chronologically; indeed, he memorably declared that 'the style is a development of the Waldalgesheim style and presupposes its existence' (1944, 95). In fact, the Hungarian Sword Style, or more strictly Scabbard Style, has a Waldalgesheim phase, best represented in the Litér scabbard, as well as subsequent Waldalgesheim-derived and later variants. Equally the construction of some of the Hungarian scabbard chapes betrays the influence of earlier La Tène 1 forms of western open-ring chapes. Broadly contemporary with the Hungarian series, Jacobsthal also recognized a Swiss grouping of decorated scabbards, more limited in its ornamental repertory, though displaying distinctive technical traits, so that it would not be unreasonable to speak of 'Scabbard Styles' in the plural as characteristic of the middle La Tène phase of early Celtic art.

Britain and Ireland too have a role in this middle La Tène story, parallel to rather than derivative from the Central European sequence. As in Hungary, the insular sequence of decorated scabbards begins with echoes of the Waldalgesheim Style, notably on the Standlake scabbard, as well as technical features such as open-ring chape-ends which signal their ultimate La Tène 1 origins from the later fourth and early third centuries. The Irish group of scabbards, geographically concentrated around the Bann river in the north and conventionally assigned to a fairly tight if late chronological span, has always been recognized as a distinctive localized tradition, notwithstanding the fact that Piggott (1950) saw them as the product of immigrants from northern England. The decorated British scabbards, on the other hand, seemed too few in number, and too widely separated both geographically and chronologically, to form a coherent group, until more recent discoveries in Yorkshire lent weight to the idea of an insular tradition of decorating scabbards, and raised once again the issue of their relationship with the Irish. One immediate distinction between the British and Irish scabbards and their Continental counterparts is the fact that the insular scabbards bear ornament over their entire surface, in contrast to the restricted panels of ornament that characterize in different ways the Hungarian and Swiss examples. They raise, nevertheless, similar questions regarding their manufacture and decoration, whether by craftsmen working under aristocratic patronage or in local workshops and 'schools'. Regionally distinctive as the ornament may be, there are some pan-European traits, most notably the 'dragon-pair' theme, a motif embellishing the hilt-plate of many swords, widely distributed from Eastern to Western Europe (including Britain, though not Ireland), to

which special significance as a cult symbol or warrior emblem has sometimes been attributed.

The archaeological and historical context

In the middle La Tène period in north-alpine Europe, the principal source of orna-mented metal-work continues to be burials, but in place of the high-status *Fürstengräber* of the early La Tène phase are cemeteries, comprising both flat-graves and tumuli according to regional preference, but seldom displaying the extravagance in grave-goods of the princely burials of the middle Rhine or Champagne. In place of the wine-service and precious personal ornaments, the best-equipped burials are those of a martial elite, whose 'triple panoply' of sword, spear and shield becomes the hallmark of the Celtic warrior. The distribution and range of ancillary types, such as brooches and bracelets, suggest a developed network of local craftsmen and markets rather than long-distance connections, which are attested only by a limited number of luxury goods.

The appearance of these cemeteries in eastern Central Europe from the end of the fourth century, like the appearance of La Tène types south of the Alps a century earlier, was inextricably associated by an older generation of archaeologists with the historical accounts of Celtic expansion eastward and south-eastward that culminated in the sack of Delphi in 279 BC. According to Livy, Gauls under Segovesus had migrated east-wards into the uplands of Bohemia at the same time as Bellovesus had led his Gallic tribes into Italy. Equally from the documentary sources, we learn that Celts had served as mercenaries in the Peloponnese as early as 369, and were also among envoys received by Alexander the Great on the lower Danube in 335. As with the trans-alpine migra-tions, we might suspect that these inroads had already begun well before they were recorded historically. In 280 BC, the Gauls are recorded as invading Macedonia in three divisions, led by Cerethrius, Bolgius and Brennus respectively, the latter being briefly frustrated in his advance at the Pass of Thermopylae before proceeding to sack Delphi. Named contingents, including the Tectosages, a tribe familiar from southern Gaul, the Tolistobogii and the Trocmi crossed the Hellespont, eventually being subdued by Antiochus in 276 and settling in the vicinity of Ankara, where their Gallic origins were to be enshrined in the name of the New Testament Galatians to whom St Paul wrote his epistle. The Gauls were eventually defeated by the Hellenistic ruler of Pergamon, Attalos I, who at the end of the third century was responsible for erecting the original victory monument which included the memorable images of the Dying Gaul and the suicide of a Gaul and his lady. That these accounts were doubtless based on a characteristic mix of fact, propaganda and legend need not detract from the authenticity of the fundamental fact of an aggressive Gaulish presence in South-Eastern Europe in the third century BC. Correlating that basic truth with the archaeological evidence is, as ever, much more problematic.

Middle La Tène cemeteries in eastern Central Europe divide into two distinctive distributions. Northern Bohemia, the upper Elbe, Austria and Hungary as far as the Tisza are characterized by flat-grave cemeteries; by contrast, north-eastern Bavaria and southern Bohemia are notable for their tradition of burial in barrow cemeteries. This contrast was once seen, by Filip (1956) and others, as corresponding to the graves of migrating Celts and the native population respectively, though this must always have

seemed an improbably simplistic equation. Current opinion, in any event, now favours an earlier date for the Gaulish expansion in Eastern Europe, with evidence for fifth-century La Tène A movements into the Carpathian basin (Szabó, 1992, 17). From the occurrence of square-ditched barrow cemeteries in immediate proximity to older Hallstatt burials, it might be inferred that the process of expansion and acculturation in eastern Central Europe was a relatively peaceful one rather than the culture con-flict attested in the South-East by the Greek historians. Szabó (ibid., 27ff) cited ceme-tery evidence from Transdanubia and northern Serbia that he believed indicated the co-existence of incomers with indigenous communities. New cemeteries appear in Bohemia from the early fourth century at least, pre-dating the La Tène B1 horizon, which is associated archaeologically with the type-sites at Münsingen in Switzerland and Duchcov (Dux) in the Czech Republic and their diagnostic brooch types. By the late fourth century, such cemeteries appear in Hungary and Transdanubia, but by contrast there is very little surviving evidence for a Celtic presence in Macedonia, where we must therefore conclude either that the impact of incursions was relatively brief or that any continuing presence was subject to acculturation in which the La Tène component was effectively subsumed.

Scabbards and their construction

The advantages of iron over bronze for swords at the developed level of La Tène technology is self-evident. More surprising, however, is the near-total predominance in the Hungarian and Swiss series of iron for the construction of scabbards. Commentators regularly point to the poor state of preservation as a hindrance to interpreting scabbard ornament, without remarking that iron scabbards must also have been prone to corro-sion from the outset. The British scabbards alone are almost invariably of bronze, and even iron components, like chapes, commonly have cast or flashed bronze coating. The blade itself could be ground and polished, but such treatment of the scabbard would soon rub away the decoration. Whether some surface treatment was practised to protect the scabbard can only be guessed. Armourers in La Tène Europe may well have been a distinct caste among metal-smiths, following their own skills and conventions in isolation from other craftsmen.

Scabbards display a high degree of technical accomplishment, and the detail of their construction has long been the basis of archaeological classification. The scabbard case itself is made up of a front plate and a back plate, which can be of beaten bronze or iron, or of leather with bronze and iron attachments to bind the parts together. At its mouth the case may be straight or extended into a campanulate curve to match the shape of the hilt-end of the blade itself, a feature that de Navarro (1972) regarded as indicative of the scabbard's place within a typological development, but which seems in practice rather less definitive than the form of the chape. Generally, though, the campanulate variants may be assigned to the early and middle La Tène phases. A suspension-loop provides the means for attaching a belt, and ornamental chains sometimes embellish the attachments. At the bottom of the scabbard are further reinforcements to prevent the tip of the blade piercing the case. A chape binds the front and back plates of the case together, which itself requires a 'bridge' across the front of the scabbard with flanges or clamps around the back to prevent the chape from prizing apart. All of these elements can be subject to simple ornamentation, like the

stylized birds' heads of the Swiss middle La Tène chape-bridges. The chape terminals are one clear indicator of where a sword lies within the sequence. La Tène 1 chapes tend to be of open construction, either annular or cordate, whereas the middle La Tène forms are closed and either V-shaped or U-shaped in outline, but within this simplified rule of thumb there are, not surprisingly, a wide range of variants.

The Hungarian Scabbard Style

Hungarian scabbards have been divided by Szabó and Petres (1992) into those with ornament belonging within the Waldalgesheim continuum, and those that stylistically may be regarded as later. In fact, the conventional chronology for the Hungarian Scabbard Style is quite compressed, its start being dated hardly before the early third century, with its decline apparently by the second quarter of the second. While there may well have been direct influence from western Waldalgesheim centres, we should not discount the possibility of further impulses from the Mediterranean (Frey, 1974, 150).

The Litér 1 scabbard (Figure 4.10, 4), as we have seen, is the closest in the series to displaying 'pure Waldalgesheim' ornament. The upper panel of scabbard 1 from Tapolca-Szentkút (formerly Haláphegy) (Figure 5.1, 1) consists of a similar simple tendril in sub-Waldalgesheim style, so that there can be no doubt that the Hungarian workshops were conversant with that style; but here it is combined with the distinctive diagonal layout of the Hungarian Scabbard Style in which the engraved ornament and its infilling are much more stylized.

A recurrent element in the Hungarian Scabbard Style that might also be seen as analogous to the progressive aspiration of craftsmen in the west to imbue classical motifs with a sense of restless movement, is the use of devolved lyre-palmettes and lotus motifs. As in the west, the process was essentially one of deconstruction, with the residual elements being re-assembled in a form that barely acknowledges its origin. The outline of the design on the Jutas 2 scabbard (Figure 5.1, 2) might thus owe its inspiration ultimately to the lyre-palmette, while the filler elements, including over-and-under figures-of-eight and sinuous triskeles, are certainly common in the Waldalgesheim repertory. But the lack of integration of the frame of the design and the filler-motifs, together with the symmetry of composition, are distinctive of the Hungarian Scabbard Style. The same lack of integration is displayed by the scabbard from the region of Voivodina, Serbia (Figure 5.1, 3), in which a simplified lyre-palmette outline has axillar fillings of stylized lotuses, again arranged in symmetrical composition. Their origin is undoubtedly classical, but their treatment bears no relationship to any previous use of the lotus and must be indicative of the manifold and recurrent influences that combined to generate this distinctive eastern style. These simplified and stylized motifs continue in use either as infilling or as terminal finials, as on the scabbard from Batina (Kisköszeg), Croatia (Figure 5.1, 4), anticipating the later variant of the Hungarian Scabbard Style.

Connections between the Hungarian Scabbard Style and Western Europe are most clearly attested by the middle of the third century by comparison between the iron scabbard from Cernon-sur-Coole in the Marne and the scabbard from Drňa in Slovakia (Figure 5.2, 1 and 3; Megaw, 1973). One striking motif, the bird's head with long, curving bill and plumage rendered as curving hatched triangles, could have been the
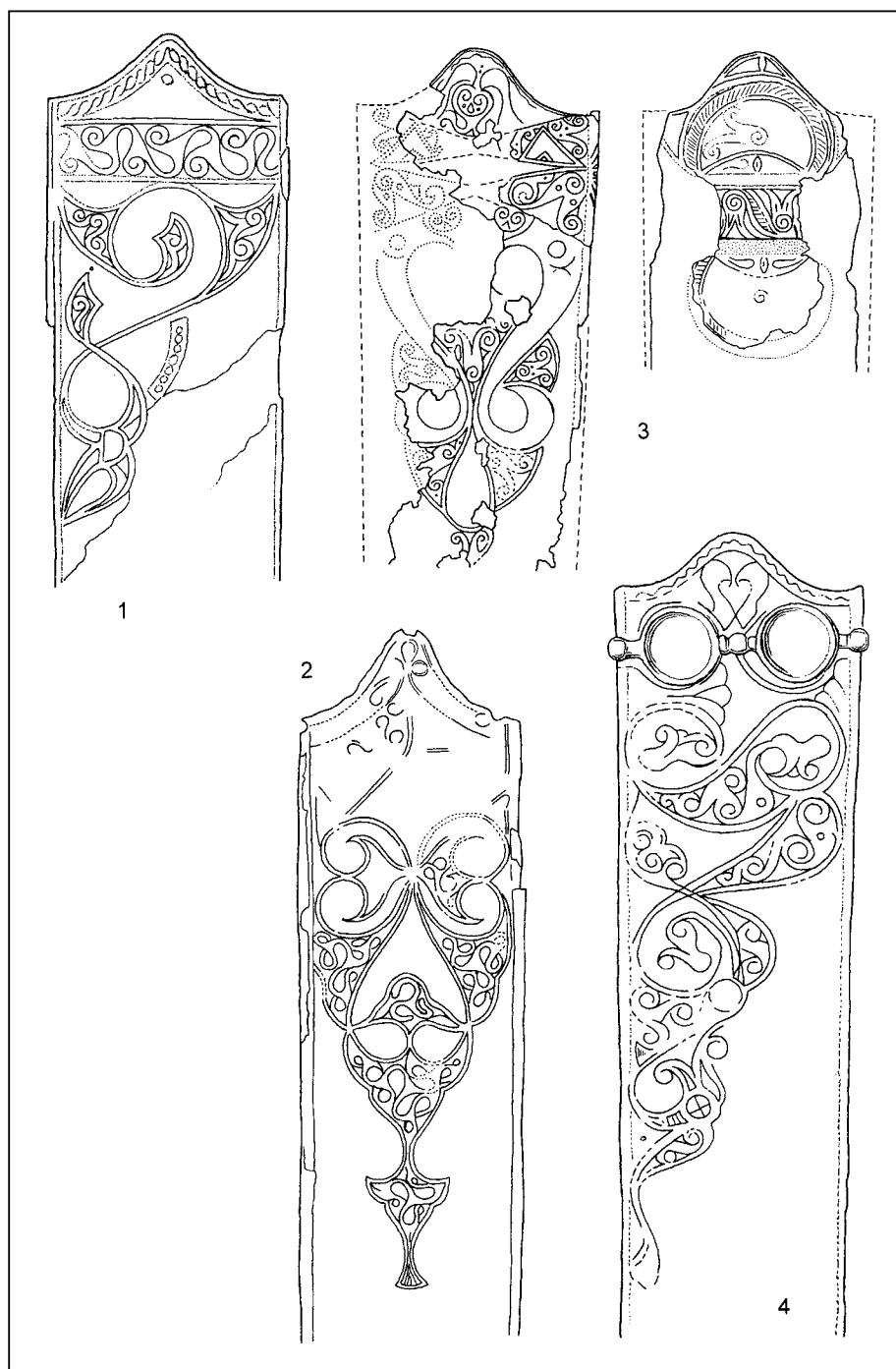
Figure 5.1 Hungarian and related scabbard ornament – 1. 1, Tapolca-Szentkút 1; 2, Jutas 2; 3, Voivodina region, Serbia; 4, Batina/Kisköszeg, Croatia. Adapted from Szabó and Petres (1992).
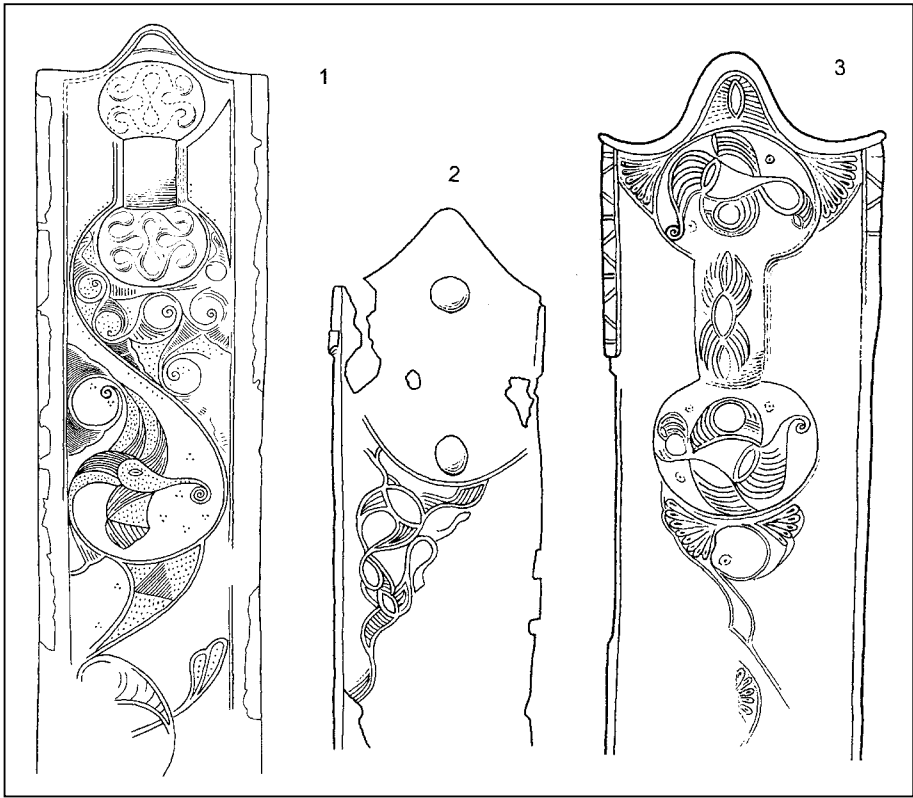
Figure 5.2 Eastern and western scabbards. 1, Cernon-sur-Coole, Marne; 2, Montbellet, Saône-et-Loire; 3, Drňa, Slovakia. Adapted from Szabó and Petres (1992) and Duval and Kruta (1986).

signature of a specific middle Danubian workshop. On the Cernon scabbard it forms a terminal motif within a tendril design; on the Drňa scabbard it occupies one end of the suspension-plate as part of a larger design in which hatched, curving triangles are also dominant. Significantly, the suspension-plate of the Cernon scabbard has a low-relief design in the Waldalgesheim tradition, matched exactly, but in different orientation, by one of the Szob series of scabbards (Szabó and Petres, 1992, Pl. 63), suggesting the continuing currency of the earlier style. The sophistication of technique of the Cernon scabbard is indicated not simply by the use of both low relief and incised ornament, but also by the subtle surface treatment of individual panels, designed to reflect light differentially (Duval and Kruta, 1986). Both bird's head motif and curved hatching occur again on a scabbard fragment from Montbellet, Seine-et-Loire (Figure 5.2, 2; Bonnamour and Bulard, 1976), in which the ornamental panel is on the inner face of the surviving back-plate, indicating secondary re-use. The design, which follows the Hungarian fashion for a diagonal layout, includes hatched, curving triangles as infilling and a variant of an over-and-under figure-of-eight design that leads in one axis to a

simplified bird's head terminal. Other examples of the hatched, curving triangle motif include one of the Kosd scabbards (Szabó and Petres, 1992, Pl. 41), one from Lovasberény (ibid., Pl. 46), and one from Ižkovce, Slovakia, suggesting that this was indeed a local stylistic tradition in the middle Danube.

One of the most distinctive scabbards of the Hungarian series is that from an uncertain provenance in the Veszprém district, frequently known as the Halimba scabbard (Figure 5.3). The ornament is essentially divided into three separate panels, the upper emanating from a Type I (or possibly Type III – it is badly abraded) dragon-pair immediately below the scabbard-mouth, the lower leading into the decorated chape. The whole composition has a tendency towards the diagonal, induced by the central swelling-leaf motif of the complex tendril design. This is especially apparent in the central element in which the tendrils are balanced in rotational symmetry around the swelling leaf. The upper and lower panels are basically made up of half each of this composite element. Raftery (1994b, 490) has pointed to the tantalizing similarity between this design and the very worn traces on the back of the Bann 1 scabbard plate from Co. Antrim; indeed, some aspects of the Halimba ornament echo the ornament of the Irish scabbard series. The symmetry of the Halimba design is not absolutely exact because of the freehand technique and differences of scale. Furthermore, wear has eroded the ornament of several tendril-ends, so that it is uncertain whether exact symmetry was maintained. In terms of infilling, swelling S-motifs, peltate finials and simple spiral comma-leaves seem to be represented. Dating remains problematical. Notwithstanding the inclination of Eastern European prehistorians to date much of the Hungarian Scabbard Style to middle La Tène, and not necessarily an early phase within it, de Navarro (1972, 84–6) was inclined to assign this piece to an earlier horizon, on grounds of ornamental style and scabbard typology.

Because of the lack of adequate contexts and associations, it is not clear whether symmetrical layout of scabbard ornament and the distinctive diagonal arrangement were sequential or concurrent, though the means of progression in principle has been demonstrated by Frey in his analysis of the Bölcske-Madocsahegy 1 scabbard. The diagonal effect is simply achieved by splitting a symmetrically balanced acanthus composition and reversing the lower component (Frey, 1974, Fig. 2.1–2), exactly the experimental approach to formal symmetry that Celtic artists in the west had adopted at an earlier stage of development. By contrast, the upper ornament on the Bölcske-Madocsahegy scabbard (Figure 5.4, 1) is still a symmetrical composition with echoes of the lyre-palmette, and with infilling of figure-of-eight and droplets remin-iscent of a disintegrated palmette. The scabbard is also of interest because of its use of triple dots in the voids, a curious signature that it shares with the scabbard from Cernon-sur-Coole and some of the Irish scabbards.

The two Bölcske scabbards (Figure 5.4, 1 and 2), sometimes attributed to the same craftsman, are commonly regarded as prime examples of the later Hungarian Scabbard Style. Szabó and Petres (1992) argued that the later Hungarian Scabbard Style was characterized by a process of geometricization and increasing abstraction in design, with simplified triskeles or S-shapes, or sometimes just simple wedges or droplets being deployed as filler-motifs. One of the scabbards from Szob (Figure 5.4, 4) and one from Dobova (Figure 5.4, 3), the latter with associations from the La Tène C1–C2 phase, indicating a date spanning 200 BC, well illustrate this trend. What brought about this formalizing trend is unclear; Szabó and Petres (1992, 48) alluded to the
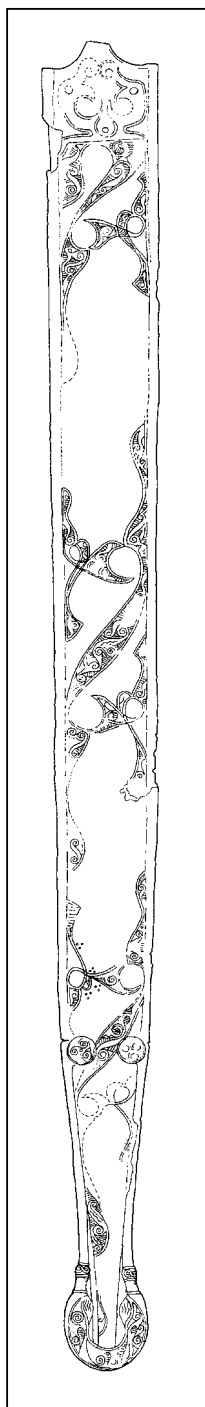
Figure 5.3 'Halimba' scabbard from Co Veszprem, Hungary. L. 64 cms. Adapted from Szabó and Petres (1992).
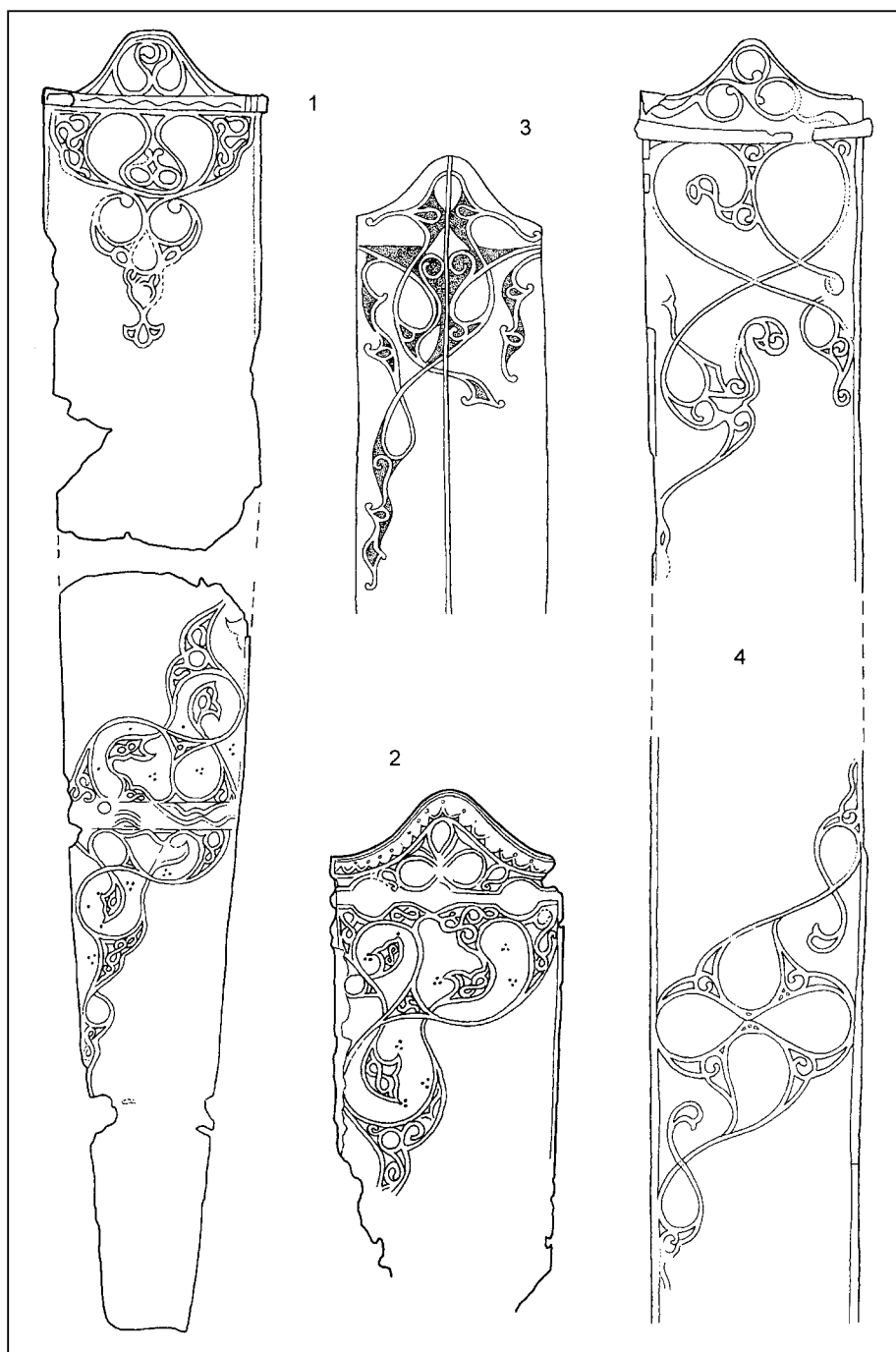
Figure 5.4 Hungarian and related scabbard ornament − 2. 1, Bölcske-Madocsahegy 1; 2, Bölcske-Madocsahegy 2; 3, Dobova, Slovenia; 4, Szob. Adapted from Szabó and Petres (1992).

conservative tendency of scabbard artists, and even likened it to a reversion towards the formulaic aspects of the Early Style. The continuing fashion for geometric stamped decoration on pottery into the La Tène C phase has sometimes been suggested as an influence on sword ornament. The grave associations, where they exist, clearly indicate a later third- or early second-century date for their deposit, though this of course could be considerably later than the construction and ornamentation of the scabbards themselves, so that the clarity of the sequence is far from assured. In any event, by the mid-second century, the Hungarian Scabbard Style was in decline.

If the decline of the Hungarian Scabbard Style is dated with reasonable certainty, there remains the question of its inception. Eastern European scholars have been cautious in advancing too early a date, though Waldalgesheim influence could argue in principle for the beginnings of the style as early as the fourth century. Associations include brooches of essentially early La Tène type, as at Kosd grave 16, where they are accompanied by later brooches of middle La Tène type with Plastic Style ornament, perhaps indicating the inclusion of older grave-goods in a later deposit. The Kosd scabbards also display a very distinctive form of chape-end that proclaims a connection with regions further west. Instead of a simple oval or cordate form, the Kosd chapes have a segmented construction, created by the insertion of circular studs. This variant is also displayed by the Irish scabbards, and others in Western Europe. But rather than invoking direct connections between these polar extremes, Jope (2000, 353) rightly insisted that all were regional derivatives from an ancestral early La Tène form that developed in north-eastern France out of earlier late Hallstatt anchor-chapes. They are therefore evidence not so much of direct contacts but of a broader European *koine* in the armourer's repertory, which might include technical tricks of scabbard construction as well as stylistic traits in ornamentation.

Dragon-pairs

One of the few genuinely pan-European elements in early La Tène art is the dragon-pair motif (Figure 5.5), embellishing the upper end of the front-plate of scabbards from south-eastern Britain (Stead, 1984) to Transylvania (Petres, 1982), with examples south of the Alps (Megaw and Megaw, 1989) and one outlier across the Pyrenees (Ginoux, 1995). Both Jacobsthal (1944, 46) and de Navarro (1972, 229) saw these devices as evidence of orientalizing influences in early Celtic art, or even as a direct Scythian introduction into eastern Central Europe, a view that would not have seemed implausible, given the predominantly eastern distribution at the time and the prevailing climate of diffusionism as an explanation of cultural innovation. Subsequent discoveries in the west, and critical analysis of the dating of the constituent types, have now rendered this view obsolete, though the basic classification of dragon-pairs remains that of de Navarro. Essentially he distinguished three types, of which the earliest confusingly was Type II. This comprises what has sometimes been regarded as simply a zoomorphic lyre, a pair of opposed S-shapes with zoomorphic heads facing inwards. The beasts represented are highly schematic, but have sometimes been thought of as griffons rather than dragons. The earliest incidence of a Type II dragon-pair has conventionally been the example from an old and never fully published burial from Saint Jean-sur-Tourbe in the Marne, which should belong to an early La Tène phase. More recent discoveries from northern Italy, notably at Monte Bibele and
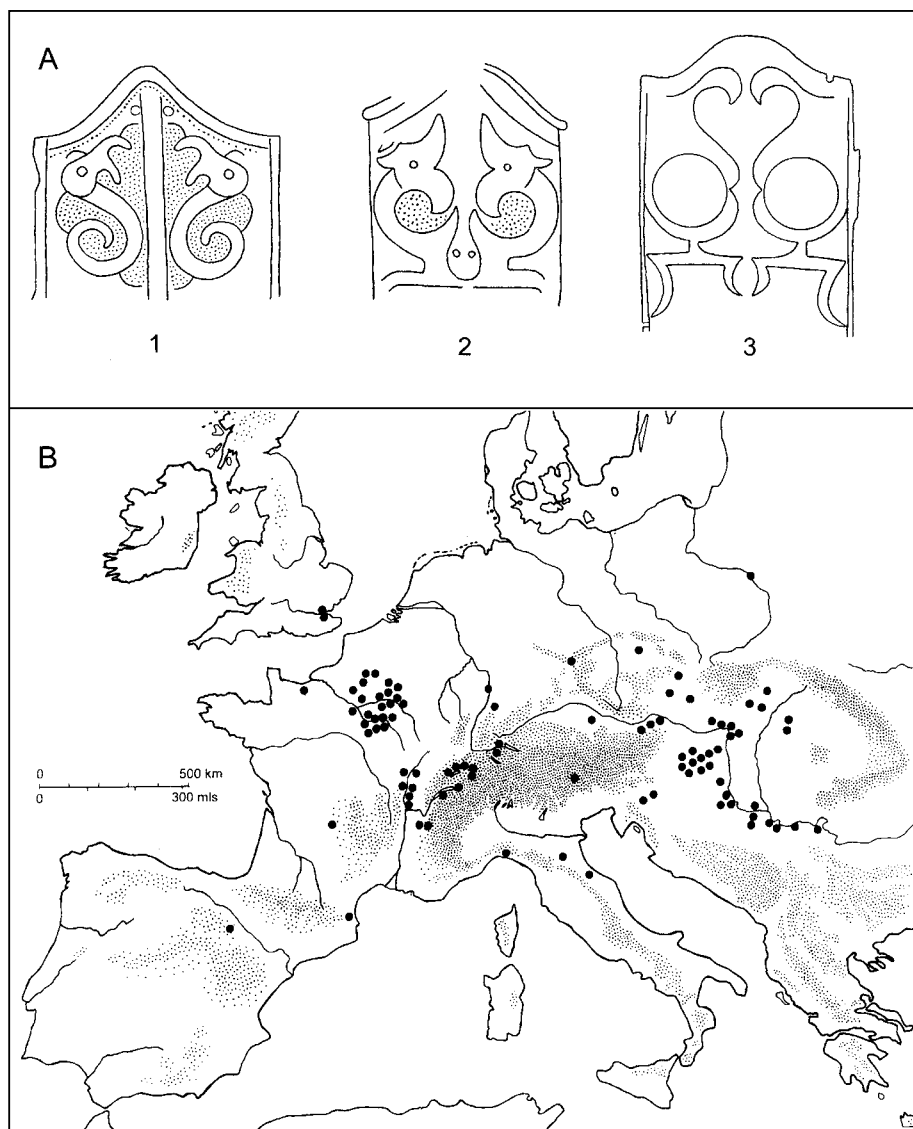
Figure 5.5 Dragon-pairs and their distribution. **A:** 1, Type I, Taliándörögd, Hungary; 2, Type II, Münsingen, Switzerland; 3, Type III, La Tène, Switzerland. Adapted from de Navarro (1972) and Stead (1984). **B:** distribution of all types. Adapted from Stead (1984) and Ginoux (1995).

Ameglia, confirm the priority of Type II over Type I, but hardly afford a dating of the Italian series before the later fourth century. One suggested origin for the zoomorphic lyre type is the form of open-work belt-clasp with reversed stylized griffons' or birds' heads, the distribution of which extends north and south of the Alps. This, as the Megaws have plausibly argued, could have been the origin by analogy, or indeed could have prompted the elaboration of the widely current S-lyre motif itself into a zoomorphic version. Whatever the explanation, a western or trans-alpine introduction now seems more likely than an eastern. The wide distribution and similarity of form are remarkable nevertheless, as a comparison of examples from Italy (Ameglia), France (Montigny-Lencoup) and the Carpathian basin (Taliándörögd) demonstrates. Doubtless other examples remain to be identified, like those from London on which the faint traces of ornament had eluded detection until relatively recently; but as the distribution stands, the marginally greater number of known examples still lies between the middle Danube and the Tizsa. Most of these examples date from the third century, rather than much earlier.

Type I has a more complex form, resembling a pair of inward-facing C-shapes, each mounted on a plinth, which is sometimes interpreted as a rear limb or tail, while the end of the C curls up towards the beast's chin. Finally, in Type III, this circle is closed completely, and the design can acquire further embellishment with tails and infilling. Dating and origin still require closer definition. Broadly third century in date, they are well represented on scabbards in Eastern Europe, in association with the Hungarian scabbard style, as at Halimba, Jutas 3, Kosd and Szob; indeed, in some cases, the dragon-pair is actually absorbed with the main scabbard design, or embellished with scabbard-style infilling.

Dragon-pairs are known from Britain, notably on a pair of iron scabbards discovered in the nineteenth century from the Thames at Battersea and Hammersmith (Stead, 1984), the former certainly of Type II and the latter possibly of Type I. An intriguing derivative of the dragon-pair motif from Fovant, Wiltshire, occurs on an iron scabbard that even Jope (2000, 278) was not disposed to date later than the third century.

The Swiss Scabbard Style

By far the greatest proportion of Swiss La Tène swords and scabbards come from, or are attributed to, the type-site itself, and for that reason lack the benefit of closed associations afforded by cemetery contexts. The purpose and function of the site at La Tène (Figure 5.6) have been a source of debate since its discovery in 1857 in an old branch of the river Thielle, between Lake Neuchâtel and Lake Biel, immediately beneath the Jura mountains in north-west Switzerland. It was the controlling of the Jura water-system in the later nineteenth century that prompted a series of investigations at La Tène and at neighbouring sites, where quantities of artefacts and structural remains in the form of preserved timbers were exposed. The most systematic excavations at La Tène took place between 1907 and 1917 under the direction principally of Paul Vouga, whose father had uncovered evidence of timber buildings on the site in the 1880s. Apart from these buildings, the main structures on the site were two timber bridges, subsequently called the Pont Vouga and the Pont Desor, the latter named after another pioneer investigator in the region. The timbers had been severely displaced by the stream, but
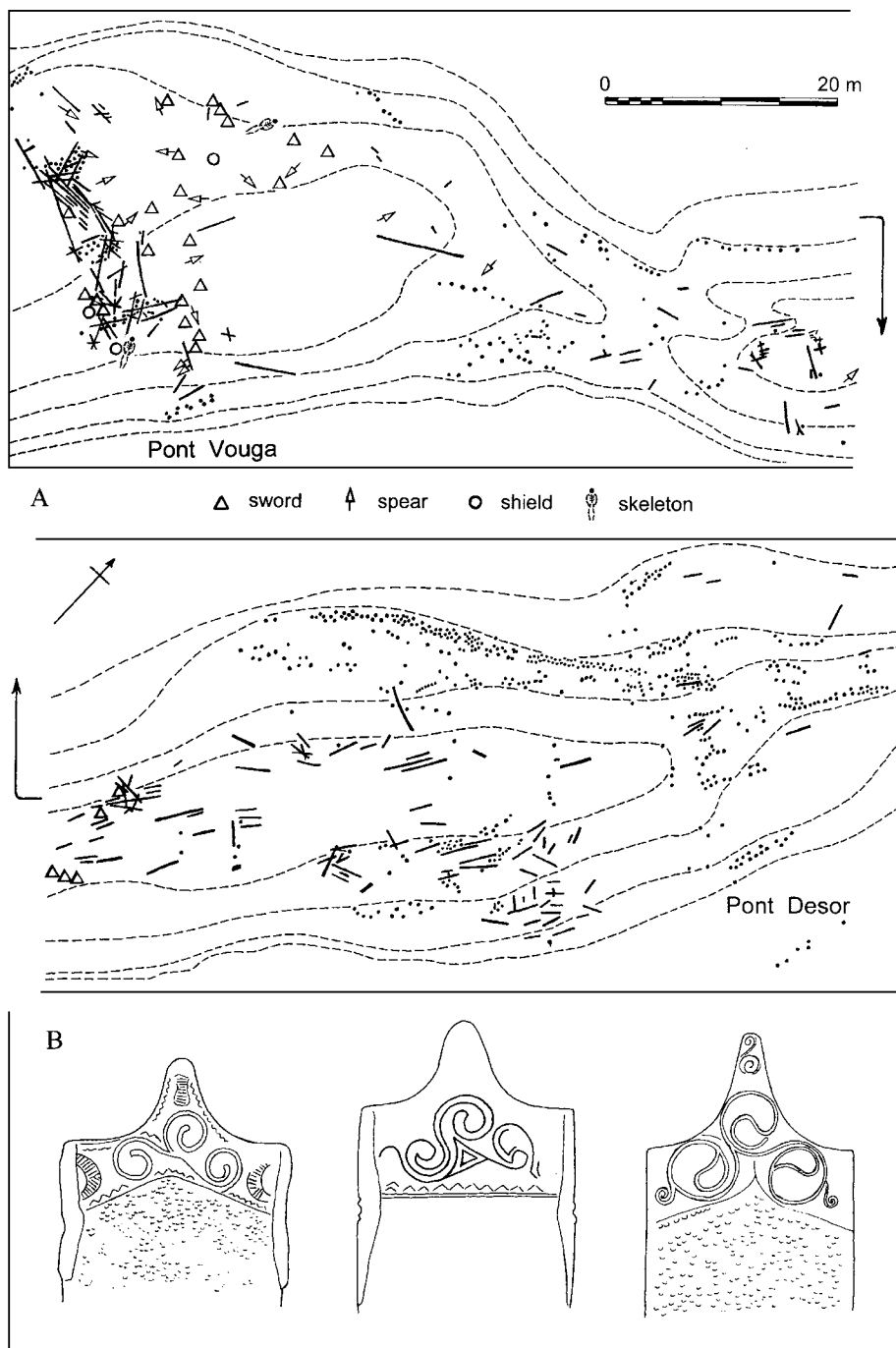
A   △ sword   ⚑ spear   ○ shield   👤 skeleton

Figure 5.6 Finds from the site of La Tène. **A:** plan of site. Adapted from Vouga (1923). **B:** scabbard ornament from La Tène. Adapted from de Navarro (1972).

apart from the bridges, there were indications that the north bank had been reinforced, perhaps to create a wharf against which boats or barges could be moored. The inventory of finds from the site includes more than 150 swords, together with spears and the remains of shields. Personal ornaments that elsewhere are typical of La Tène assemblages, such as brooches and bracelets are present, but not in abundance, but the presence of tools and implements such as sickles indicates that the site's associations were not exclusively martial or aristocratic. The material dates from the early La Tène through middle La Tène, with hardly any finds thereafter, by contrast with the sites near Port, at the north-eastern end of Lake Biel, which mainly belong to the late La Tène phase. As to function, the site is plainly unlike normal domestic or fortified settlements, not simply in terms of its structural evidence but more especially for its concentration of preserved artefacts. Its location, at the intersection of natural routeways and between the territories of the Helvetii and Sequani, at least as historically documented several centuries later, has led to suggestions that the site was an observation post, controlling crossing of the border, or where exchange of goods between neighbouring communities took place. The quantities of finds have prompted the idea that it was a prehistoric emporium, or alternatively a ceremonial focus, where artefacts were ritually deposited in the waters. The presence of human skeletons among the jumbled timbers lent added weight to the presumption of a ritual explanation. Furthermore, the concentration of weaponry in Vouga's plan around the Pont Vouga, contrasting with its apparent absence around the Pont Desor, might indicate that the 'bridges' served different functions, the one as a platform for ritual activities, the other perhaps more utilitarian in purpose. The discovery in the mid-1960s of another site, two miles downstream at Cornaux (Schwab, 1974), where skeletons too were found among the debris, prompted its excavators to suppose that a natural flooding disaster had overwhelmed the local community. None of these explanations satisfies the evidence entirely, though the idea of a ritual dimension would be consistent with the widespread recognition archaeologically of watery deposits in later prehistoric times throughout north-alpine Europe.

By comparison with the Hungarian Scabbard Style, the Swiss is generally described as more formal or severe, lacking the 'arabesque' fluency of the Eastern European style. It is simply much more limited in its repertory and application, being generally restricted to the panel directly below the scabbard-mouth, and very seldom extending down the length of the scabbard-plate itself. The range of designs, listed by de Navarro (1972), includes triskeles, true or false (that is, with terminals rotating in the same direction or not), zoomorphic designs other than dragon pairs or bird pairs, and what de Navarro termed 'other ternary designs', those involving triplism without being formally triskeles. Unlike the dragon pairs, in which some examples display remarkable similarities, triskeles are almost consciously not identical, as if some individual or unique group identity was implied in each. Some, like that from the famous 'doctor's grave' in Bavaria (de Navarro, 1955), are ornithomorphic.

While some early Swiss scabbards have ternary designs, the great majority of examples of the Swiss Scabbard Style belong to scabbards of the middle La Tène period. A significant proportion comes from the type-site itself, so that their classification is based upon typological considerations, which are not always above dispute, rather than upon closed associations.

Laddering and chagrinage

Two distinctive ornamental techniques characterize some of the Swiss swords and scabbards: laddering and chagrinage. Laddering is known on less than a dozen sword blades or scabbards. It comprises a series of horizontal grooves disposed invariably on either side of a central midrib, and extending for the full length of the blade or scabbard. Laddering appears on early La Tène scabbards, continuing into the earlier stages of middle La Tène. In Britain even it occurs on the early La Tène scabbard from Orton Meadows as well as on somewhat later pieces like Walthamstow and Little Wittenham, suggesting a currency marching in step with the Continental sequence. The scabbard from Sutton Reach shows a variation on the theme (Figure 5.7, 1). Its purpose remains obscure. De Navarro (1966) believed that it was to enhance 'optical contrast', which is doubtless true, though in doing so it necessarily precludes other forms of ornament, unless adopted selectively as at Sutton Reach.

Chagrinage (Figure 5.8) is broadly associated with middle La Tène scabbards in Switzerland. The term was first used by Ferdinand Keller (1858) to describe the technique of punched ornament, generally down the full length of the scabbard, and hence conventionally assumed to be in imitation of leather. The ornament itself can be stamped individually, or with compound or multiple punches, which presumably simplified a repetitive task for the artificer. Mid-ribs do not occur when chagrinage is applied. The use of chagrinage serves as a reminder that the bronze and iron sheaths that are the medium for so much scabbard ornament doubtless represented only a very small proportion of the total number of scabbards, which would have been made principally of less durable materials, though even these would have required some metal components for binding and suspension. Whether leather scabbards also bore ornament can only be surmised.

The British sword series

After an absence in the late Hallstatt (Ha D) phase, the long sword in Britain makes a delayed reappearance in La Tène 1, but throughout the fifth century and into the fourth the short dagger of late Hallstatt derivation remains a principal weapon type. Jope (1961b) effectively demonstrated that these were insular products, distinguished from their Continental counterparts by the technicalities of their twin-loop suspension and open-ring chape construction. Among early fourth-century examples, the Minster Ditch scabbard (Harding, 1972, Pl. 79A) indicates that its maker was aware of Continental fashions. Its chape proclaims insular manufacture, but the belt-attachment was plainly intended to emulate the Continental suspension-plate system. But instead of using a separate plate, the insular technician simply cut parallel openings in the back-plate, prising up the metal to take the belt, and adding skeuomorphic bosses to simulate rivets above and below. Not surprisingly, the plate snapped under pressure of use. As to ornament, the front-plate is embellished with a series of simple, geometric designs, achieved by the use of compasses; the back-plate is dominated by a compass-aided serpentine design.

For the most part, then, ornament on the insular early La Tène scabbards is simple and geometric. Minster Ditch uses conjoined, compass-drawn arcs; another scabbard from Hammersmith employs a border of intersecting arcs, with stippled infilling, in a
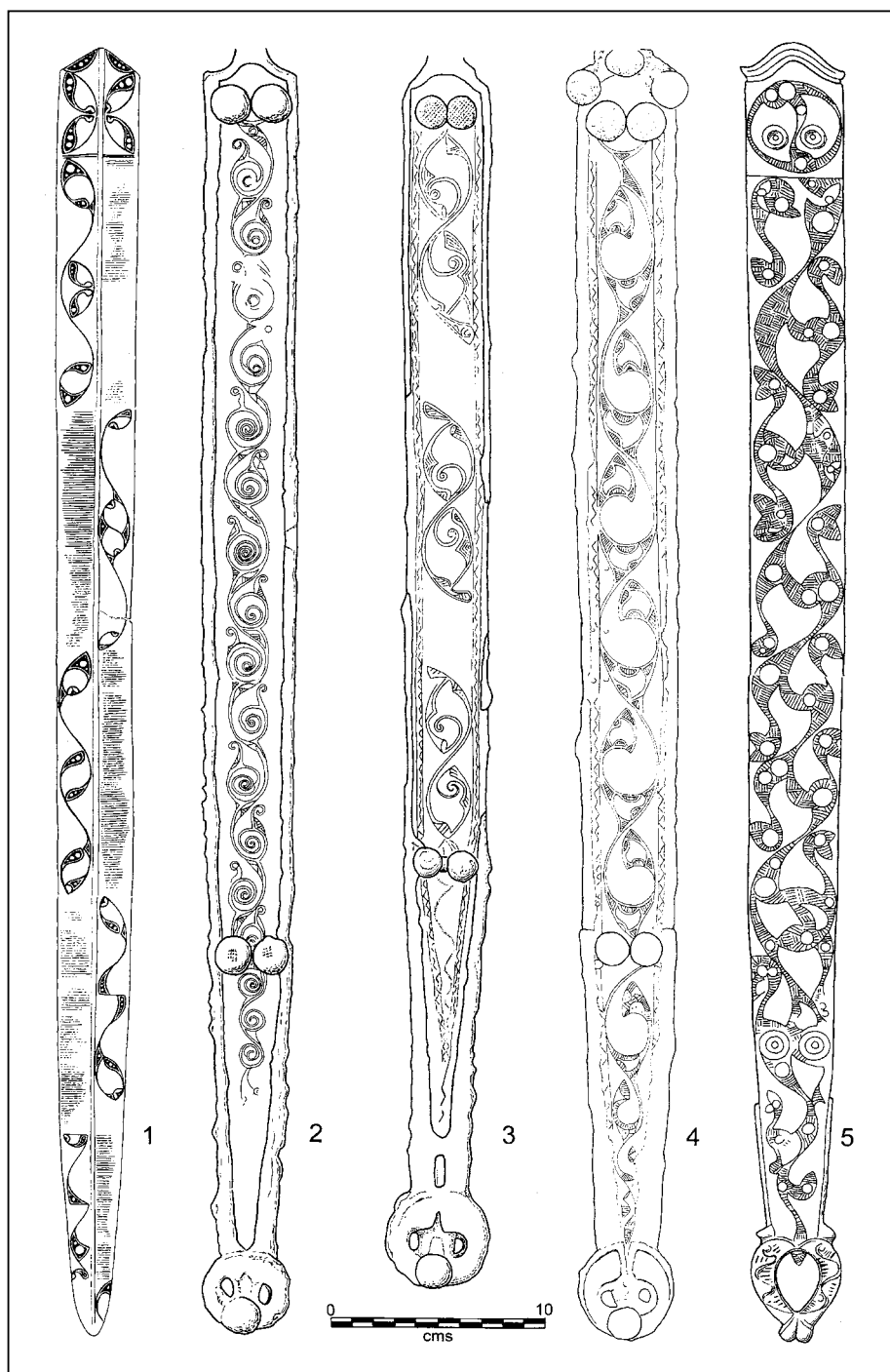
Figure 5.7 Scabbards from eastern England. 1, Sutton Reach, Lincolnshire; 2 and 3, Wetwang Slack, Yorkshire; 4, Kirkburn, Yorkshire; 5, Bugthorpe, Yorkshire. Adapted from Stead (2006).
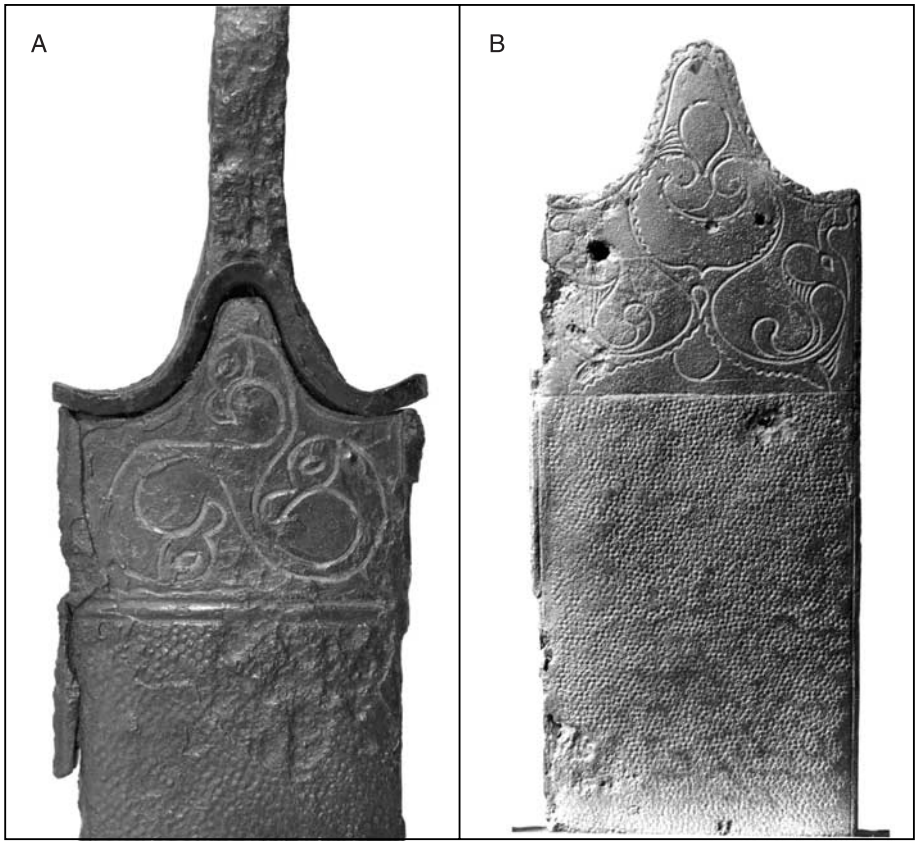
Figure 5.8 'Chagrinage'. **A:** Obermenzingen, Munich. Photo: Archäologische Staatssammlung, Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Munich. **B:** Basadingen, Thurgau. Photo: Swiss National Museum, Zurich, A–3262/10370 Neg. no. P–15226.

manner exactly matched on a scabbard from Bussy-le-Château in the Marne, or on the Zelkovice bronze disc from western Bohemia. The same motif in pottery is exemplified on the *Linsenflasche* from Dürrnberg-bei-Hallein, among many other examples of Schwappach's eastern 'arc-and-circle' style (Schwappach, 1973; 1976). The decorative motifs themselves were doubtless the product of simple experimentation with the use of compasses, so that too much significance should not be placed upon the widespread recurrence of such designs.

Among the earliest scabbards in the British series must be the Wisbech fragment (Jope, 2000, Pl. 28a, b; Pl. 29a: Stead, 2006, Fig. 48), ornamented rather crudely with stacked lyres in a manner immediately reminiscent of the transition from Early Style to *Premier Style Continu* of the Champagne region. Wisbech certainly renders the lyre-palmette motif in a more sinuous and less 'strict' treatment than classic Early Style models, with the S-scrolls becoming swelling leaves, notwithstanding the uncertain freehand execution. The curvilinear design nevertheless overlaps the border of hatched

triangles and we may therefore be dealing with a composite piece. Without the benefit of diagnostic features such as its chape, dating of the Wisbech scabbard could span from late fifth to fourth centuries rather than much later.

Rather more complex is the composite sword and scabbard fragments from the Thames at Standlake in Oxfordshire (Figure 4.10, 5). The iron sword, among the earliest long La Tène swords in Britain, survives intact, but its scabbard, presumably of leather, has been lost, with the exception of a small bronze plate that ornamented its mouth, and the iron chape with its iron and bronze attachments. The chape itself is of La Tène 1 open-ring form, its terminal made up of four leaf-shaped elements. Above it, iron side-bindings enclosing a decorated bronze plate are held together at their upper ends by an iron cross-bridge of double hour-glass form with engraved line, arguably modelled on the bird-bridges of Swiss middle La Tène scabbards. This has been taken as the decisive indicator of date, demanding a late third-century dating at earliest. On the other hand, the ornament, as we have seen, is quite close to the Continental Waldalgesheim style, and could have originated rather earlier. The ornament of the base plate is very worn, and in fact runs under, and is partly obscured by the side-binding. We are therefore dealing with a composite piece, in which the binding and cross-bridge of the scabbard could well have been repaired late in the sword's life.

Among notable finds of the past thirty years are a series of weapons from cemeteries of the Arras culture group in eastern Yorkshire, notably the decorated scabbards from Wetwang Slack (1 and 3) and Kirkburn (Figure 5.7). Hardly 'long' in Continental middle or late La Tène terms, they are nevertheless well within the range of earlier La Tène swords. Stead (1991a, 183) recognized that open-ring chapes, and the absence from the burials at Garton Station, Wetwang Slack and Kirkburn of La Tène 2 brooches, suggested a dating no later than the third century BC, and he tentatively looked to the inception of the Yorkshire Scabbard Style not too far removed from the currency of the Besançon flagon in the middle of the fourth. The evidence of insular La Tène art is inherently stacked in favour of late dating. The lack of reliable contexts for an early horizon, uncertainties of radiocarbon calibration for that period, the longevity of some stylistic techniques like background hatching, the fact that prized pieces were treasured and repaired over many generations, and deposited long after their construction and initial currency, all militate against a precocious chronology. Cumulatively, nevertheless, the evidence favours earlier beginnings than Fox, Piggott or Jope imagined, with consequences for our assessment of the relationship between insular, British and Irish, and Continental early La Tène art.

The recurrent theme of the Yorkshire scabbards, as Stead observed, is the classical wave tendril, exemplified by Wetwang 1. Here the scroll design has balanced, alternating tendril-terminals comprising a pair of spirals, one larger and with more coils, the other scarcely more than a boss. This design is sustained from below the scabbard-mouth to the chape. Kirkburn also comprises a full-length scroll with tendrils alternating to right and left, this time leading to peltate terminals that are filled with three-sided voids, one side convex, one concave and the third S-shaped. Similar voids occupy the curved triangle at the point where the terminal tendrils spring from the main scroll. Their impact is heightened by the use of hatched filling of the background, a technique that is later used widely in insular art to create an interplay between foreground and background. It is seen notably on the Bugthorpe scabbard (Figure 5.7, 5), where the hatching comprises very much denser basketry, and where a

later dating is clearly indicated by its developed, insular, 'twin-lipped' chape-end. Bugthorpe must belong to a later second- or first-century BC horizon, and its sharing with Kirkburn of the three-side curving void motif against a hatched background indicates no more in terms of chronology than the duration of this regional tradition. The earlier occurrence of this motif has been confirmed by a more recent find from Mill Hill, Deal (Stead, 1995, 95). Another signature that also appears in the repertory of the Irish scabbard-smiths and the later eastern English shield-makers is the use of wavy-line-and-dotted bordering, which first appeared on the hilt-end of the Wisbech scabbard-plate. In considering its dating, we should note that the Kirkburn scabbard-plate has been repaired in a different hand. Hidden by the chape discs is a break, below which the design is executed in much cruder fashion with a variety of different infilling.

The Wetwang 3 scabbard stands slightly apart from Wetwang 1 and Kirkburn, though it shares with those scabbards the same form of La Tène 1 chape, as well as the distinctive use of discs at the mouth of the scabbard and at the top of the chape. The striking difference is that the design is not continuous, but is divided into three discrete panels. The basic elements are described by Stead as 'well-spaced elaborate reversed-S motifs whose terminals spiral within a field defined by a triangular "cusp" on the stem' (1991a, 181). It too deploys wavy-line bordering, and this, together with the fact that the scabbard's suspension loop is located well down towards the centre of its length, quite unlike the standard British fitting, has prompted further comparison with the Irish scabbard series.

The most obvious parallel for the tripartite composition of Wetwang 3, however, is an older find from Sutton Reach in Lincolnshire (Figure 5.7, 1). The chape does not survive, but the low triangular mouth of the scabbard-plate led de Navarro to regard it as rather earlier in the middle La Tène scabbard sequence than most previous commentators had believed. Immediately below the mouth is a 'key' panel (1) occupying the full width of the plate composed of a geometrically described leaf-rosette design, within which four comma-leaves are deliberately not quite symmetrical overall, the right-hand element showing rotational symmetry, the left-hand showing mirror symmetry. The comma-leaves are filled with circular voids. Below this the ornament is separated into five further panels (2–6) of incised designs alternating across the central mid-rib with five panels of Swiss-style laddering. These panels are variants on the same simple theme, much as a musical composer compounds variations on a theme, using the variables that have been trailered in the 'key'. Panels 3 and 5 use symmetrical designs, 2, 4 and 6 are progressively more asymmetrical. The 'simple theme' is the interlocking S, which in panel 3 is achieved with rotational symmetry of cusps and finials. In panel 4 the same gives a superficial impression of symmetry from its central component, but is in fact deliberately not so in its outward elements. Panel 1 explores a further variant, overlapping the S-elements to form a sinuated wave. Here the outward elements are not symmetrical, but the medial device is borrowed from the left-hand element of panel 1. Panel 5 introduces a rarity in La Tène art, the straight line; the parallel with the Torrs horns, which had been remarked since Fox (1958, 32–3), underscores the rotational movement induced by this device, here acting as the fulcrum for exact rotational symmetry. Finally, in panel 6, the theme is completely deconstructed, with one leaf-motif even transgressing the central mid-rib. The whole composition is not just curvilinear tendrils with repetitive infilling. It is a systematic exploration of a

theme, an exercise in rational deconstruction and re-assembly in a manner that typifies the La Tène art tradition. Sutton Reach is not among the earliest British scabbards, neither on the basis of form, in so far as it can be determined, nor decoration, which belongs within the pan-European middle La Tène scabbard tradition. But it is not as late as Fox and Piggott insisted, as de Navarro rightly recognized (1966, 148–50). Stylistic similarities with the Torrs horns would not be incompatible with an early third-century date.

British scabbards of the middle Iron Age are best represented by examples from Little Wittenham, Deal and Hunsbury, though these too were subject to the late dating syndrome favoured by older commentators. The problem is simply that certain techniques, like background hatching, and certain motifs, like trumpet-voids, plainly reach their apogee on metal-work with demonstrably late associations, like some of the mirrors of first-century BC or even first-century AD date. Stead has demonstrated in the case of the trumpet-void that this should not preclude an earlier origin, and this principle almost certainly holds good for other motifs or styles of ornament. Background hatching certainly can be traced back in Britain to the early fourth century at Standlake and Cerrig-y-drudion, and even the 'squared' variant characteristic of mirror ornament may not have been confined exclusively to a late horizon, given that perfectly good examples occur on the handle of the early La Tène Borsch flagon and Panenský Týnec brooch. The low-relief style of the Little Wittenham or Deal scabbards is innovative, but the designs in template form would not have differed so greatly from those exemplified at Hunsbury in the incised style. The relief elements define three-sided curving voids in both, open circles become relief bosses, and comma-leaves, seen in engraved ornament on the Sutton Reach scabbard, have their counterpart in relief on both the Deal and Little Wittenham scabbards. Stead rightly emphasized the essential relationship of the main motif of the upper panel at Deal and the linked-S theme of Sutton Reach and the Yorkshire scabbards, and while the relief style, first seen in the Standlake scabbard, is doubtless thereafter a development of the third and second centuries, there can be no doubt from the Witham–Wandsworth shield series that engraved ornament continued alongside the newer relief style.

The Irish Scabbard Style

The Irish Scabbard Style is based upon just six decorated scabbard-plates, all found in relatively close proximity in County Antrim. Three of these decorated scabbards were found in the River Bann, as was a fourth undecorated example and a number of other Iron Age finds, including several horse-bits, spear-butts of both knobbed and tubular types, a sword and socketed axe, both of iron, and the well-known Bann disc. As with the British finds from the Thames and the Witham, these may well have been deposited in the river at different times as part of a ritual veneration of sacred waters or their supernatural custodians, or perhaps as a variation on the ceremonial destruction of wealth represented by the burial of prestige goods in the earth. Three more decorated scabbards, and a further undecorated example, were found in a bog at Lisnacrogher, not far from the Bann but itself a wetland location of a kind elsewhere favoured for ritual deposition.

Piggott (1950) believed that the Irish scabbards (classed as Group IIIA) were derived from his north-eastern English Group III scabbards, exemplified by the Bugthorpe

scabbard. Building upon Ward-Perkins' (1939) study of horse-bits, he concluded that the La Tène phenomenon in Ireland was introduced by 'the plantation of Ulster by Yorkshire charioteers' (1950, 16), an event that, based upon his dating of the Bugthorpe scabbard, could hardly have preceded the first century BC. The distinctive character of the Irish La Tène, and its marked differences from that of eastern and north-eastern England, made this an implausible hypothesis from the start, and though vigorously rejected by Irish scholars, the implication of a late dating for the Irish scabbard series stuck. In fact, the Bugthorpe scabbard is relatively late in the sequence, as compared with the more recent discoveries of decorated scabbards with early La Tène characteristics from the Yorkshire cemeteries. Some elements of these finds may endorse the idea of a relationship between the Irish and British series (Raftery, 1994b), but it would be a rash assumption indeed that any such relationship was of one particular kind or from one particular direction. More important, the question of chronology of the Irish scabbards is once again thrown wide open, and can be firmly detached from older models of diffusion.

The fact that the Irish swords are relatively short compared with British or Continental counterparts has been frequently remarked. Most are less than 50 cms in length, whereas British and Continental swords of the early to middle La Tène transition, like Standlake, can be as much as 75 cms in length. The more recent finds from Yorkshire, however, are not nearly so long, suggesting that here earlier swords may have been shorter, and later examples progressively longer. The difference may reflect fighting conventions. Raftery suggested that the Irish swords were for hand-to-hand combat, whereas Jope (2000) argued that the longer British swords were designed as cavalry weapons. As regards typology, most authorities, following Jope (1954a; 1974), recognize that the Irish chapes owe more to the Continental tradition than to the British, and parallels from Champagne to Hungary are really quite striking.

The initial impression created by the designs of the Irish scabbards (Figure 5.9) is one of great complexity, the full length of the scabbard being filled with intricate free-flowing curvilinear ornament. In reality, the designs are very much more regular and symmetrical than first appears, and the essential framework is based upon stacked S-motifs, lyres or spirals. The appearance of complexity is essentially achieved by the dense use of finials and appendages, themselves actually rather repetitive, and the infilling of these vegetal designs.

This principle is well exemplified in Lisnacrogher scabbard 2 (Figure 5.9, 2). Its basic structure consists of stacked lyres, or opposing stacked S-motifs on either side of the scabbard's central midrib, like the open-work mounts from La Bouvandeau each simply abutting the next, rather than being interlinked like the Wisbech scabbard ornament. Unlike La Bouvandeau's fleshy elements, however, the Lisnacrogher lyres are engraved outlines only, possibly aided by the use of compass-work, though finished in freehand with rocked graver. Each S-curve ends in a tripartite peltate finial, balanced in fold-over symmetry with its neighbour across the midrib. The infilling of the peltate finials and of the axillar fillings between stacked lyres is instructive. To the right of the midrib the dominant theme is simple hatched infilling, while to the left the pelta-within-peltae motif is preferred. In the upper third of the scabbard, however, there is greater variety, with dotted or dog-tooth infilling of peltae to the right, and spiral or leaf infilling in false relief to the left. False relief leaves infill the axillar elements throughout the scabbard's length. The reason for this contrast is not immediately
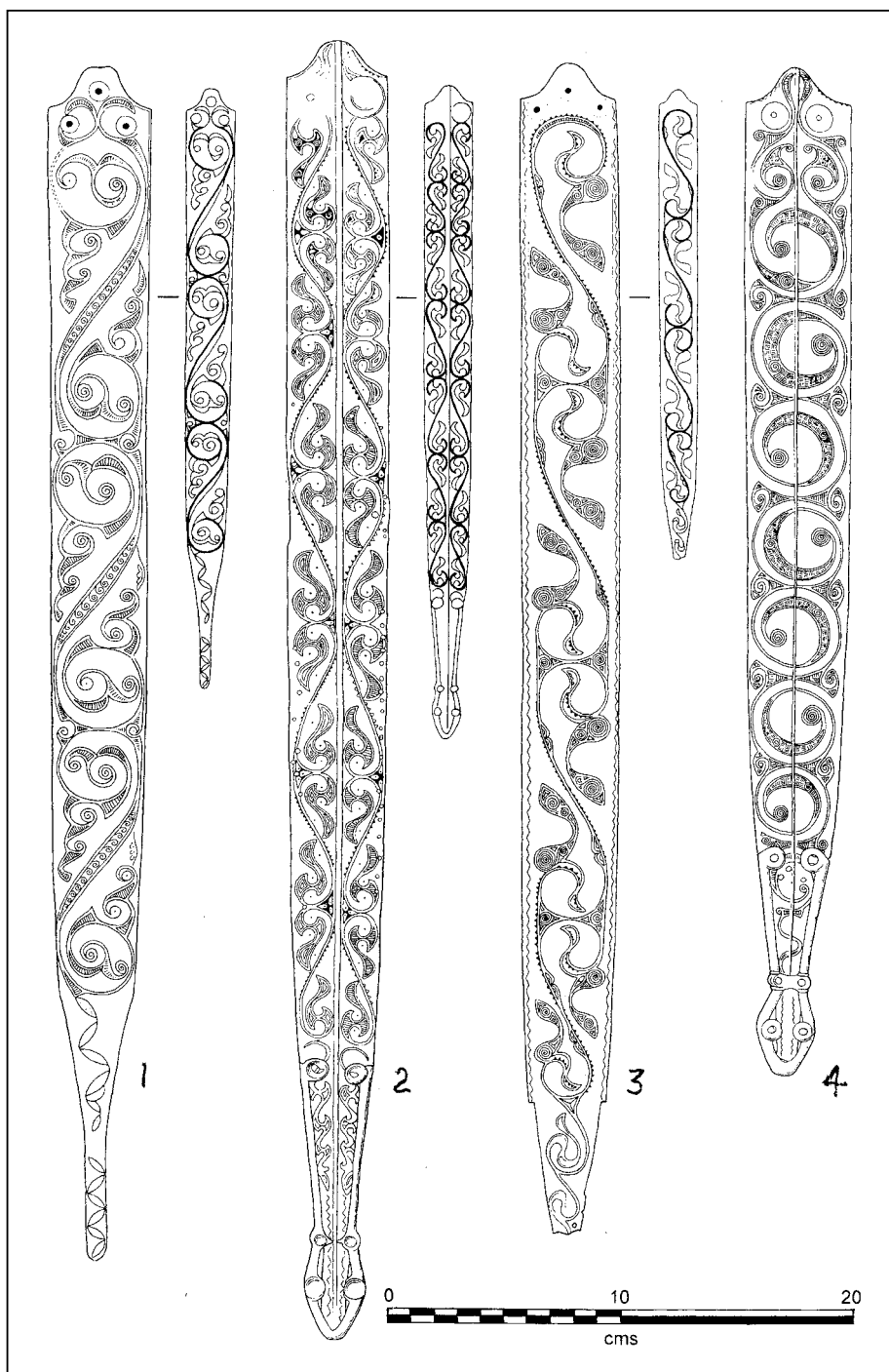
Figure 5.9 Irish engraved scabbards: 1, Toome 1; 2, Lisnacrogher 2; 3, Lisnacrogher 1; 4, Lisnacrogher 3. Adapted from Raftery (1983).

obvious, but the possibility that the design could be the work of more than one craftsman should not be overlooked. Raftery has drawn attention to the 'saw-tooth' emphasis of the lyre outlines, which he sees as a signature of this and the two other decorated scabbards of the Lisnacrogher 'school' (1994b, 476).

The design of Lisnacrogher 1 (Figure 5.9, 3, the example with broken tip in the Ulster Museum; numbering and attribution of the scabbards have not been uniformly consistent) can also be reduced in essence to a series of stacked S-scrolls with compound finials, but integrated in a fashion that enhances the overall sinuous effect. In fact, its composition is even more repetitive than Lisnacrogher 2, in that the filling of the finials and axillar triangles, and even the small, paired swellings on the stem of the S-scrolls, are exactly matched in each successive element of the series. The finials are made up of two motifs, one consisting of crescentic curves, reversed to form an S-shaped element in which the opposed inner curves are accentuated with the 'saw-tooth' technique, the second being closer to the Continental comma-leaf approximating to the shape of a sycamore seed. A dominant and repetitive motif in the filling is the tightly wound hair-spring spiral, one of the common motifs shared with Torrs and other British pieces. Perhaps because of the absence of a central mid-rib, Lisnacrogher 1 conveys a greater sense of unity in its design, and a hint of interplay created by the engraved ornament between foreground and its background.

Lisnacrogher 3 (Figure 5.9, 4) is again based upon a series of figure-of-eight S-scrolls, this time with more rounded spiral components. At the point where each figure-of-eight abuts the next, the axillar angles are filled with hatched triangles leading to alternately oriented finials. The same devices are then used at the mid-point of each figure-of-eight, creating the illusion of a continuous but alternating series of rounded spirals. Each main spiral ends in a tight hair-spring, the tendril itself swelling towards its terminal to accommodate infilling of hatched basketry. Though broadly symmetrical, the design is not consistently so in detail, the opposed finials between the second and third figure-of-eight below the mouth of the scabbard bucking the trend of orientation of the remainder. At the mouth end, the first figure-of-eight leads into a balanced design in which a pair of peltae with hairspring terminals are the dominant element, again motifs reminiscent of the repertory of the Torrs craftsmen. The use of basketry hatching, on the other hand, invites comparison with the much later South-Western Mirror Style, from which the Irish scabbard ornament cannot possibly be derived. Though the insular British character of this style of square-based basketry is often asserted, it should be regarded as one regional variant within a longer and more complex tradition, in which any particular variant might be chronologically typical but not necessarily chronologically exclusive.

A feature worth remarking on both Lisnacrogher 2 and Lisnacrogher 3 is that the chape partially obscures the scabbard ornament, raising the possibility that these may have been composite pieces. In the case of Toome 3, we might also question whether its appearance of crude execution is not in part a factor of alteration in secondary re-use. Attempting to date such composite artefacts on the combined basis of scabbard or chape typology and ornamental style is thus made still more contentious.

The basic design of Toome 1 (Figure 5.9, 1), a series of stacked S-spirals, together with its essential symmetry, allies it closely to Lisnacrogher 1 and 2. Each of the three S-spirals has a swelling leaf-shaped stem, infilled with hooks or incipient spirals, leading to terminals that are developed with fins and finials, infilled with linear hatching,

and frequently terminating in tightly coiled hair-spring spirals. Axillar fillings again create an illusion of continuity, but in fact, with very minor deviations, the three principal elements are remarkably repetitive. Towards the tapered point of the scabbard are leaf-chains created from simple intersecting semi-circular arcs, each with dotted infilling.

Of all the Irish scabbards, Toome 3 is aesthetically the least skilled piece, apparently lacking any continuity in design and displaying a very limited range of motifs and techniques. It has plainly had more than one phase of use, apparently being reversed to conceal the ornament in its adapted form, and it is possible that trimming of the metal plate may have curtailed its original design. The temptation is to see this as the work of an apprentice or an unskilled imitator, who did not understand the geometry of the design and whose line-work was crude and stilted. It would be possible to restore a continuous, sinuous design if the edges of the plate had been trimmed, but the resulting effect would still be contorted, and the use of leaf-pairs, spiral terminals and linear hatched infilling is still monotonously repetitive. Perhaps the most significant feature of the piece, however, is its almost total use of rocked tracer, which could suggest that this was an experimental piece, in which the aesthetic effect of the design was less important than the mastery of the technique.

Finally, the decorated scabbard known as Bann 1 also has ornament on both surfaces, the inner, earlier ornament being now very worn and faint. The main, outer design is based, as Raftery has observed, on a wave-tendril, a Greek-derived theme commonly adapted into the repertory of early Celtic art. From the main tendril spring complex peltate compositions ending in spirals, in which interlocking elements share a common spiral. These peltate elements are variations on a theme seen from Loughnashade to Torrs, and even more closely paralleled on the Newnham Croft bracelet. The whole design is enclosed within a border, on one side composed of a leaf-chain, on the other a series of simple 'steps'. Infilling includes a variety of impromptu motifs, as well as the use of the 'saw-tooth' technique seen previously on Lisnacrogher 1 and 2. In the spaces between the tendril designs are inserted groups of fine triple dots, another curious 'signature' that Raftery has compared to examples on the Cernon-sur-Coole scabbard and on Hungarian scabbards (1994b, 490). In fact, the Continental affinities of the Bann scabbard plate are underlined by the faint surviving traces of the design on its inner face, for which Raftery has likewise argued Hungarian analogies. That both sides should display elements of Continental inspiration is surely significant, since the span of time represented by two periods of use, sufficiently long to result in the almost total obliteration of the ornament on the inner face, must be reckoned as more than a generation. In sum, Bann 1 shows a fusion of Continental and insular features; it is a consummate piece of work, in which the effect of interplay between foreground and background is stronger than in any other in the series.

Conclusion

Scabbard ornamentation was a widespread phenomenon in Celtic Europe with notable regional concentrations in Eastern Europe, Switzerland and in Britain and Ireland. Its earliest manifestations are on swords with early La Tène typological attributes, developing to a peak of production in the middle La Tène series in Continental Europe, and thus spanning chronologically the later fourth to second centuries BC. Though

reliable associations are frequently lacking, there is no *a priori* reason for believing that the British or Irish scabbards should not conform to the same chronological span. In terms of ornamental style, the different regional groups are quite distinct, the Eastern European adapting an initial Waldalgesheim impulse into its independent engraved style, the Swiss having a more limited repertory focused notably upon triskele and pseudo-triskele designs. British and Irish armourers developed parallel and perhaps related engraved styles, but not predominantly derived from any Continental ante-cedent. Pan-European traits are apparent, most obviously the dragon-pair motifs, while tantalizing hints of long-distance connections, like the use of the triple-dot signature on Irish and Eastern European scabbards, may be the result of mobility among special-ist craftsmen in the patronage of a ruling elite. In sum, we may infer strong regional traditions with mutual inter-relationships, and with connections direct or indirect with workshops south of the Alps open to Mediterranean influences. These relationships were complex, dynamic and contemporary, rather than unilateral with implications of time-lag before their impact was felt in peripheral parts of the eastern or north-western Celtic world. What part historically recorded or even historically anonymous Celtic migrations had to play in the process can only be guessed; but swords, like pots, are not mobile of their own volition, and there can be no more personal expression of the lifestyle of the Celtic elite than the La Tène warrior's panoply.