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# **R**E-THINKING THE SOUTHERN BRITISH **OPPIDA: NETWORKS, KINGDOMS AND MATERIAL CULTURE**

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*Abstract:* This article examines the role of a range of large settlements in late Iron Age and early Roman southern Britain (c.100 BC–AD 70) conventionally described as oppida. After reviewing current perspectives on the function and chronology of British oppida, new insights are provided through the statistical analysis of assemblages of brooches and imported ceramics at a broad sample of sites. Analysis of material culture reveals distinct similarities and differences between several groups of sites, often transcending regional traditions and supposed tribal boundaries. This patterning is primarily explained by the emergence of new forms of political organization prior to Roman annexation, particularly the creation of the Southern and Eastern Kingdoms.

*Keywords:* brooches, correspondence analysis, identity, imports, late Iron Age Britain, networks, oppida, pottery

## **INTRODUCTION**

This article revisits the role of a range of settlements in late Iron Age and early Roman southern Britain (c.100 BC–AD 70) conventionally described as oppida (Fig. 1). The word oppida (singular oppidum) refers to large defended settlements encountered by Caesar in his military conquests in Gaul (58–51 BC), and has since entered archaeological usage as a means of labelling large enclosed settlements in late Iron Age north-western Europe. In recent scholarship the emergence of oppida in Britain has been increasingly problematized. In the 1970s and 1980s, oppida were intrinsic parts of core-periphery models, as proto-urban settlements stimulated by increased trade with the expanding Roman world-system (Cunliffe 1988; Haselgrove 1976). The presence of highly visible imported material culture at several southern British oppida, such as Italian wine amphorae, was seen as prestige goods that generated increased social stratification and political centralization in the later pre-Roman period, c.100 BC–AD 43 (Haselgrove 1982). Whilst this picture resonated with classical ethnographies stating the high social value of wine in first-century BC Gallic societies (e.g. Diodorus Siculus 5.26–8), it soon became apparent

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that the quantity of imported wine was insufficient to support an élite class dependent on the regular consumption of prestige goods (Haselgrove 1996:168–175), and such models fell out of favour. In current narratives of the period, the role of imported material culture has shifted considerably, now being regarded as a symptom rather than cause of social change (Hill 2007). Consequently, most British oppida are seen as the culmination of longer-term indigenous developments, including population increase, settlement expansion, and diasporas (Hill 2007). Similarly, south-eastern oppida such as Camulodunum (Colchester) and Verlamion (St Albans) are viewed as a manifestation of the emergence of kingship (Creighton 2000), a phenomenon shaped by a combination of local political situations, contact with Rome and the Continent, and longer-term processes (Hill 2007:33). Therefore, in the current climate of thought, the extent to which the British oppida actually constitute a meaningful and unified ‘type’ of settlement is increasingly in doubt (Bryant 2007).



Figure 1. Map showing the locations of the principal sites mentioned in the text. Shaded areas denote the approximate core areas of Creighton’s (2000) Southern and Eastern Kingdoms.

Despite recent theoretical and historical advances in the interpretation of late Iron Age society in Britain (Creighton 2000; Hill 2007), and the critique of the generalizing core-periphery and prestige goods models of the 1980s (e.g. Woolf 1993a, 1993b), several important questions remain unanswered. The first concerns terminology. Does the word oppidum have any value in archaeological terms? If it does, to what extent did oppida and related sites represent a unified phenomenon? More specifically, if imported material culture is no longer important in understanding the late Iron Age to Roman transition, what role did it play? Hill (2007) rightly points out that little attention is given to time-depth and understanding the social context of cross-channel trade with Britain in core-periphery models. Although scholarship has often focused on explaining the genesis of oppida (e.g. Collis 1984:65–85; Haselgrove 1976), less emphasis has been placed on understanding their role in the first years of Roman annexation (c. AD 43–70), before the settlements either ceased to be occupied or became more fully integrated into Roman provincial infrastructure. With these themes in mind, this article aims to review the role of oppida in Britain through a fresh analysis of material culture, following a reassessment of terminology and chronology.

## TERMINOLOGY

One of the main obstacles to the understanding of British oppida is their nomenclature. The term 'oppidum' is a Latin word for 'town', which entered common archaeological usage on the basis of Caesar's descriptions (in *The Conquest of Gaul*) of a range of large defended Gallic settlements with an implied urban character. However, Caesar gave no clear list of characteristics defining an oppidum, and there are inconsistencies in his usage of the term between different areas and social groups in Gaul (Colin 1998). Later classical usage of the term adds further confusion. Suetonius (in *The Life of Vespasian*) reports the capture of 20 oppida in south-west Britain, yet these are clearly smaller hill-forts, which are tangibly different to the sites Caesar was describing in Gaul, and different again from the larger dyke complexes also termed oppida in southern Britain that post-date Caesar. Such ambiguity in classical meaning has not been aided by the use of the term by different archaeological traditions, with variations within and between French, German and British scholarship, with emphasis being placed on a range of factors including defence, minimum size (from c.10–50 ha) and morphology (Colin 1998:16–17; Collis 1984:6–8; Fichtl 2000:12–16).

In British usage the meaning of the word 'oppidum' has been further blurred by the introduction of sub-classificatory schema. For example, classifying oppida into major and minor categories has promoted regional inconsistencies and contradictions in the term's usage. In northern Britain the labels of major and minor oppida have been used to separate what are effectively large and small hill-forts (Feachem 1966:77–79), yet in southern Britain the same labels have been used to distinguish major and minor market centres – on the basis of coin yields – (Collis 1971), or to differentiate large sites defined by dyke arrangements from smaller defended enclosures in excess of five hectares (Rodwell 1976:292–293). Cunliffe's (1976:135–136)

morphological classification is more helpful, particularly in designating the oppida as a fundamentally later Iron Age phenomenon, largely distinct from earlier hill-fort traditions. This scheme comprises enclosed oppida (fully enclosed sites in excess of 10 ha); territorial oppida (typically larger multi-focal sites composed of expansive tracts of land and settlement partially defined by discontinuous lengths of linear earthworks or dykes); undefended oppida (densely settled nucleated centres displaying some urban characteristics but lacking defensive arrangements); and so-called 'ports-of-trade' (coastal sites thought to act as entry points for the importation of commodities from the continent). Although this taxonomy covers an uncomfortably broad range of sites, it is initially followed here to provide a framework for analysis, from which further trends can be elucidated.

## CHRONOLOGY

Table 1 provides an overview of current dating evidence for the foundation of sites designated as oppida in Britain. The earliest sites date roughly to the late second and early first centuries BC, including the 'port-of-trade' at Hengistbury, the enclosed oppida of Salmonsbury, Winchester, and Bigberry, and the unenclosed nucleated settlements of Dragonby and Baldock. With a comparatively wide geographical spread over southern and eastern Britain, many of these sites are enclosed oppida, which are conventionally regarded as the latest stage of hill-fort evolution as opposed to being an entirely new occurrence (Cunliffe 1976). Indeed, there are few direct similarities in material culture between such earlier settlements. However, by the end of the first century BC, the oppidum phenomenon in Britain acquires greater unity. The genesis (or reorganization) of most of the southern oppida for which reliable dating evidence exists falls into a 15-year date range of c.25–10 BC (e.g. Leicester, Silchester, Braughing, Canterbury and parts of Verlamion and Camulodunum), with sites further afield appearing shortly after in the early first century AD (e.g. Bagendon, Chichester and Burgh). This group of sites is dominated by territorial oppida and large nucleated settlements, and is focused in southern and south-east Britain, coinciding with the emergence of the Southern and Eastern Kingdoms<sup>1</sup> (Creighton 2000). Following this comparatively short period of intense development, the foundation or reorganization of the latest oppida and related sites date to the mid-first century AD, and they are located in north-east England (Redcliff and Stanwick).

On the basis of this brief chronological overview, it is clear that the definitive stage of oppida development in Britain began in the closing decades of the first century BC, and had almost petered-out by the time of the Claudian conquest of AD 43. Despite encompassing a wide range of morphological types, not only does this group of sites comprise all the so-called territorial oppida, but all the sites in question have been noted for high levels of imported material culture relative to other late Iron Age sites in their respective regions. In view of this, it is probably best to regard earlier sites such as Hengistbury and Baldock as premature oppida, coinciding with the importation of early Dressel 1A wine amphorae. In contrast, a lack of early continental imports would preclude earlier sites such as Dragonby

**Table 1.** *The dating of selected British oppida and related sites, based on Millett (1990:24, table 2.4) with modifications*

Site	Class	Foundation date	Reference
Stanwick	Territorial	c.100 BC. Reorganized c. AD 40	Haselgrove (pers. comm.)
Redcliff	Port-of-trade	c. AD 30–55	Crowther and Didsbury (1988)
Dragonby	Nucleated	Pre c.100 BC	May (1996)
Old Sleaford	Nucleated	Early first century BC	Elsdon (1997)
Ancaster	Nucleated	Early first century BC	Elsdon (1997)
Leicester	Territorial	c.25–10 BC	Clay and Mellor (1985)
Dyke Hills	Enclosed	Uncertain	Cunliffe (2005)
Grim's Ditch	Territorial	Uncertain	Cunliffe (2005)
Bagendon	Territorial	c. AD 1–20	Clifford (1961)
Ditches (Bagendon)	Territorial	c. AD 10+. Villa c. AD 70	Trow et al. (2009)
Salmonsbury	Enclosed	Pre c.100 BC	Dunning (1976)
Winchester	Enclosed	c.100 BC	Qualmann et al. (2004)
Hengistbury	Port-of-trade	c.100 BC	Cunliffe (1987)
Chichester	Territorial	Pre c. AD 20?	Cunliffe (1978); Haselgrove (1987)
Fishbourne	Territorial	Pre AD 43?	Creighton (2001)
Silchester	Territorial	c.25 BC	Fulford and Timby (2000)
Cambridge	Nucleated	Uncertain	Millett (1990)
Baldock	Nucleated	c.75 BC. Main activity c.20 BC+	Stead and Rigby (1986)
Skeleton Green (Braughing)	Nucleated	c.15 BC	Partridge (1981)
Gatesbury (Braughing)	Nucleated	c.25 BC	Partridge (1981)
Ermine Street (Braughing)	Nucleated	c.20 BC	Potter and Trow (1988)
Gorhambury (St Albans/ Verlamion)	Territorial	Pre c. AD 20. Villa c. AD 100	Haselgrove and Millett (1997)
King Harry Lane (St Albans/ Verlamion)	Territorial	c.10 BC	Haselgrove and Millett (1997)
Prae Wood (St Albans/ Verlamion)	Territorial	c. AD 5	Haselgrove and Millett (1997)
Camulodunum (Colchester)	Territorial	c.25 BC. Main activity from AD 5	Hawkes and Crummy (1995)
Sheepen (Camulodunum)	Territorial	c. AD 5	Niblett (1985)
Heybridge	Nucleated	c.50 BC. Main activity c.15 BC+	Atkinson and Preston (forthcoming)
Loose	Enclosed	Late first century BC	Cunliffe (2005)
Bigberry	Enclosed	Second century BC	Blockley and Blockley (1989)
Burgh	Minor	c. AD 15–25. Villa c. AD 70?	Martin (1988)
Canterbury	Nucleated	c.50 BC. Main activity c.15 BC+	Blockley et al. (1995)

and Salmonsbury from being classed as oppida, despite both sites receiving small quantities of Gallo-Belgic wares in later phases (Dunning 1976; May 1996). However, although it is simple enough to highlight some of the unifying chronological trends in the founding of British oppida, the extent to which they actually constituted a coherent phenomenon remains unclear. Therefore, to examine this problem further, the rest of this article investigates similarities and differences between sites previously classed as oppida (and related settlements) through a detailed analysis of material culture.

### IMPORTED POTTERY AND TRADE NETWORKS

The tight dating of the principal phase of oppida development in Britain owes much to the presence of diagnostic imported Gallo-Belgic pottery forms, which are dated on the basis of their appearance at a series of Roman forts on the Rhine occupied solely in the Augustan period. Gallo-Belgic pottery comprises a series of standardized fine-ware vessels, typically in red and black fabrics (*terra rubra* and *terra nigra*), but also in fine white ware, being produced in a range of locations in central and northern Gaul from the late first century BC to the late first century AD (Rigby 1988). Close typologically to both Italian arretine sigillata and the late La Tène 'Belgic' grog-tempered pottery tradition of northern Gaul, Gallo-Belgic pottery was a product of the fusion of Roman military and indigenous Gallic styles of pottery production (Hawkes and Hull 1947). Together with the smaller quantities of arretine sigillata, early south Gallic samian ware and Mediterranean amphorae, a broad range of typologically diverse imported pottery forms are present at many of the British oppida well into the first century AD. Whilst the significance of imports in social change in Iron Age to Roman Britain is increasingly downplayed in current scholarship, they nonetheless offer the potential for vital insights into understanding this transitional period.

Tables 2 and 3 show the date-ranges and incidence of 68 imported pottery types at a selection of oppida and related sites in Britain, including 22 types of arretine sigillata and early south Gaulish samian, 8 amphora types and 38 Gallo-Belgic forms (data-sources listed in Appendix 1) classified by the Camulodunum typology (Hawkes and Hull 1947). Because of inconsistent quantification of imports in existing publications, presence/absence data was used to maximize the sample of sites considered, whereas the inclusion of pottery finds was limited to the final period of oppidum development in southern Britain (i.e. before c. AD 70), in order to avoid bias by including later types. To make further sense of this complex assemblage, the data were interrogated using the multivariate method of correspondence analysis (hereafter CA), which summarizes the principal associations in large tabulations of data, an increasingly popular method in the study of Roman finds assemblages (e.g. Biddulph 2005; Cool 2006; Cool and Baxter 1999; Lockyear 2000; Pitts 2007). The results are presented in Figures 2 and 3, taking into account the removal of outliers which rendered initial visual interpretation problematic by causing excessive clustering. The outliers comprise several rarer pottery types (denoted by \* in Table 2), with limited occurrence in the sample of sites.

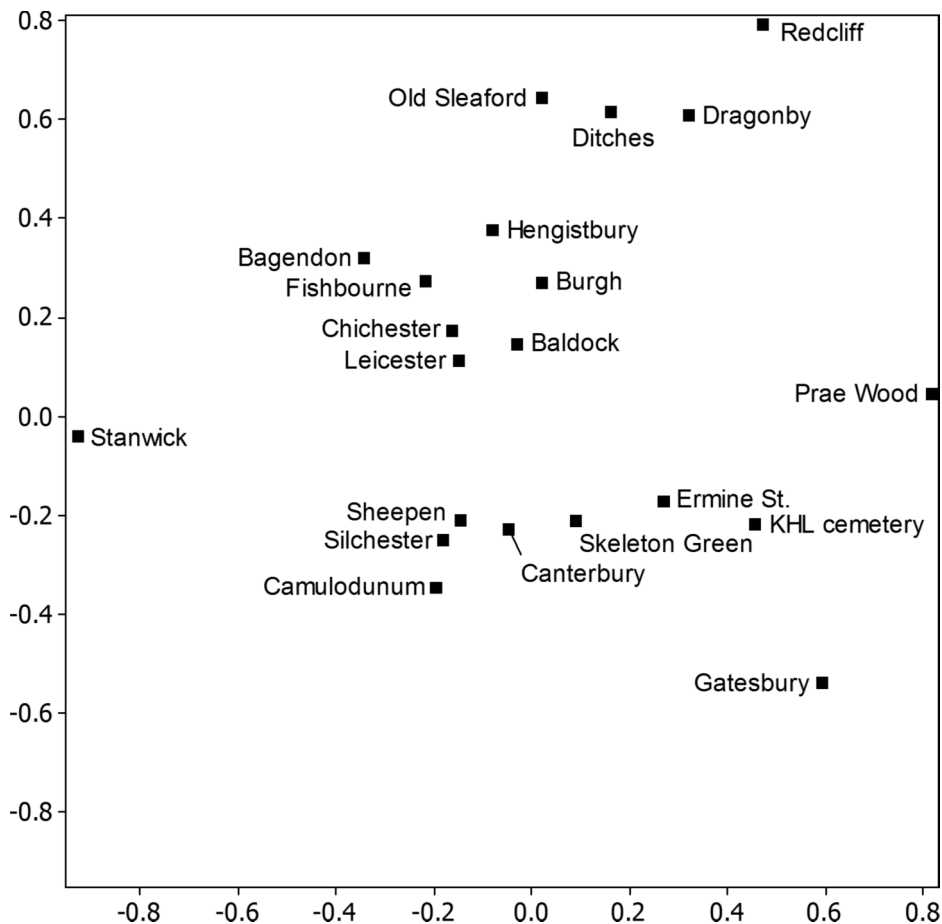
**Table 2.** *Date-ranges of imported amphorae, Gallo-Belgic, arretine, and early Gallic samian forms at selected British oppida and related sites, using the Camulodunum type-series (Hawkes and Hull 1947).*

Date-range	Pottery types
Pre-conquest (c.25 BC–AD 25)	Cam 1, Cam 3, Cam 4, Cam 6, ?Cam 9, Cam 11, Cam 12, Cam 52, Cam 53, Cam 54, Cam 73, Cam 74, Cam 79, Cam 82, Lo. 1, Lo. 4, Lo. 7, Lo. 8, Lo. 10, Lo. 14, Lo. 16, Dressel 1
Transitional (c.25 BC–AD 70)	Cam 2, Cam 5, Cam 7, Cam 8, Cam 13, Cam 17, Cam 51, Cam 56, Cam 57, Cam 74/9, Cam 76, Cam 84, Cam 85, Cam 91, Cam 112, Cam 113, Cam 114, Cam 185, f11, f15/17, f17, f24/25, f27, f29, f33, Ritt. 8, Lo. 5
Claudian + (c. AD 40 +)	Cam 14, Cam 16, ?Cam 50, Cam 58, Ritt. 9, Ritt. 12

To simplify visual interpretation, the results of CA have been separated into two plots; one showing the sites plotted according to similarities and differences in the presence and absence of different imported pottery forms (Fig. 2), the other showing the individual pottery types according to their presence or absence at the sites in question (Fig. 3). The numbers on the plot axes measure the amount of variation of both sites and pot types from a hypothetical average site with an average assemblage composition, which would be plotted where the axes cross. To interpret the plots, it generally follows that the closer two or more sites or pottery forms are plotted to one another, the more likely they are to share similar contextual characteristics (close sites will have similar assemblages, close types will occur at similar sites). Similarly, to interpret trends between a pair of separated plots (i.e. Figs 2 and 3), one must bear in mind that the area of one plot directly corresponds to the area of the other (hence the term ‘correspondence analysis’). To give an example, several Gallo-Belgic forms (e.g. Cam. 76, 54, 11, 79 and so on) plotted towards the lower-right of Figure 3 correspond most closely to the site of Gatesbury on Figure 2. This indicates that as an outlier from the plot centre, Gatesbury is separated from other sites in the analysis by the presence of such Gallo-Belgic forms, coupled with a relative absence of other more typical forms in the wider sample plotted towards the centre. The results of this analysis are discussed in more detail later in the article.

### Conformity and regionality

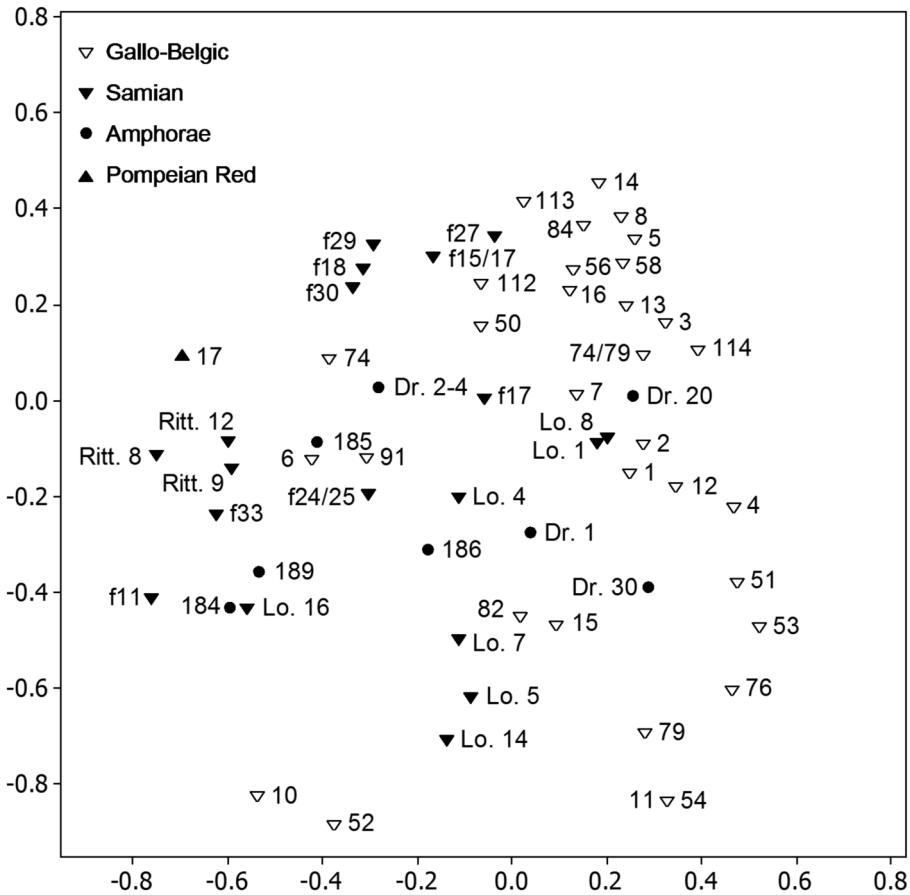
At a general level, the high degree of clustering of pottery types to the upper-right of the plot centre of Figure 3 indicates a high degree of homogeneity in the composition of imported pottery assemblages in this sample of British oppida. This pattern is confirmed by the relatively low inertia scores for both axes (collectively less than 25% of the total in the entire data set), a statistical measure of variation. This observation suggests a strong level of conformity in material culture across a large expanse of Britain otherwise not seen until a generation after the Roman conquest.



**Figure 2.** Correspondence analysis: sites plotted according to the presence and absence of imported pottery types. Horizontal and vertical axes account for 12.29% and 12.55% of total inertia respectively.

Closer inspection of Figure 2 demonstrates the existence of regional patterning in the importation of pottery forms. As might be expected, sites forming part of the same oppidum are typically plotted in loose proximity to one another, suggesting localized patterns of supply, including Colchester (Camulodunum and Sheepen),<sup>2</sup> Braughing (Skeleton Green and Ermine Street, with Gatesbury sharing many key similarities), the Chichester dykes (Fishbourne and Chichester), and Verlamion (Prae Wood and King Harry Lane, hereafter KHL). Similarly, broader regional groupings are also apparent, in the north (Redcliff, Dragonby, and Old Sleaford), Hertfordshire (all sites in the upper-left quarter of the plot), and the larger grouping of south-eastern sites in the upper half of the graph (spanning Essex, Hertfordshire and Kent). Although this patterning is undoubtedly significant, not





**Figure 3.** Correspondence analysis: imported pottery types plotted according to their presence and absence at sites in Fig. 2. Horizontal and vertical axes account for 12.29% and 12.55% of total inertia respectively.

all clusters of sites in Figure 2 show full regional coherence, suggesting the involvement of other factors.

### Chronology

Comparison of the clusters of pottery types in Figure 3 with the date-ranges in Table 2 reveals that much of the patterning is underpinned by chronology. Generally speaking, most of the earlier import types are plotted towards the lower-right of Figure 3, corresponding with the group of south-eastern oppida and related sites (Fig. 2), whereas most of the later imports are plotted towards the upper-left of Figure 3, corresponding to a more regionally diverse group of sites (Fig. 2). Whilst this patterning does not strictly denote the passage of time in terms of the dates of oppida foundation (e.g. early sites such as Hengistbury and

**Table 3.** The presence and absence of imported Gallo-Belgic wares, amphorae and terra sigillata at selected oppida and related sites. \*Denotes types removed from correspondence analysis (Figs 2 and 3) as outliers.

Pottery form	Stanwick	Redcliff	Dragonby	Old Sleaford	Leicester	Bagendon	Ditches	Hengistbury	Chichester	Fishbourne	Silchester	Baldock	Skeleton Green	Gatesbury	Ermine Street	King Harry Lane	Prae Wood	Camulodunum	Sheepen	Burgh	Canterbury
Cam 1					x					x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 2			x		x				x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 3		x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 4			x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 5		x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 6			x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 7			x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 8		x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 9*											x										
Cam 10																					
Cam 11							x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 12					x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 13					x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 14		x			x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 15		x	x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 16			x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 17			x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 50																					
Cam 51			x																		
Cam 52																					
Cam 53																					
Cam 54					x																

(Continued)

Table 3. (Continued)

Pottery form	Stanwick	Redcliff	Dragonby	Old Sleaford	Leicester	Bagendon	Ditches	Hengstbury	Chichester	Fishbourne	Silchester	Baldock	Skeleton Green	Gatesbury	Ermine Street	King Harry Lane	Prae Wood	Camulodunum	Sheppen	Burgh	Canterbury
Cam 56	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cam 57*		x				x															
Cam 58		x				x	x														
Cam 73*						x															
Cam 74				x																	
Cam 76																					
Cam 79																					
Cam 74/79																					
Cam 81*																					
Cam 82																					
Cam 84																					
Cam 85*																					
Cam 91																					
Cam 112																					
Cam 113																					
Cam 114																					
Cam 184																					
Cam 185																					
Cam 186																					
Cam 189																					
Dressel 1																					
Dressel 20																					
Dressel 2-4																					
Dressel 30																					

(Continued)

Table 3. (Continued)

Pottery form	Stanwick	Redcliff	Dragonby	Old Sleaford	Leicester	Bagendon	Ditches	Hengistbury	Chichester	Fishbourne	Silchester	Baldock	Skeleton Green	Gatesbury	Ermine Street	King Harry Lane	Prae Wood	Camulodunum	Sheepen	Burgh	Canterbury
f11	x																				
f15/17	x	x																			
f17	x	x																			
f18	x																				
f24/25	x		x																		
f27			x																		
f29	x		x																		
f30	x		x																		
f33	x																				
Lo. 1																					
Lo. 4																					
Lo. 5																					
Lo. 7																					
Lo. 8																					
Lo. 9*																					
Lo. 10*																					
Lo. 14																					
Lo. 16																					
Ritt. 8																					
Ritt. 9	x																				
Ritt. 12	x																				
Hermet 15*	x																				

Dragonby plotted in the upper sections), it can nevertheless be regarded as a rough indicator of integration into wider trade networks of imported ceramics. In this sense, the main chronological sequence begins in the south-east, before extending to cover other areas to the north, west and south. Although some of the sites plotted in the upper portion of the graph also received early imports (notably Chichester, Fishbourne and Leicester), such occurrences are overshadowed by a greater range of later material at these sites.

The biggest cluster of imports in Figure 3 occurs largely in the upper-right quarter, and is predominantly composed of transitional and later Gallo-Belgic forms (Table 2). This cluster corresponds to a geographically diverse range of sites (including earlier foundations such as Dragonby, Hengistbury and Baldock), hinting at the rapid expansion of the Gallo-Belgic trade network in the mid- to late-first century AD. It is perhaps significant that many of the later pottery forms in this cluster are among the most common across all sites, particularly Gallo-Belgic forms Cam. 5, 8, 14, 16 (platters), 56, 58 (cups), 84 (girth beakers) and 113 (butt-beakers). This suggests that the distribution of Gallo-Belgic imports was at its peak in Britain in the years following the Roman invasion of AD 43, in contrast to the more localized concentrations of imports at the start of the first century AD. Furthermore, the range of common vessel forms in this later assemblage, including dining and drinking forms of different sizes, hints at a centralized trade in complete eating and drinking services, rather than a more random accumulation of types that might be expected through less organized and more socially-embedded exchange.

### Trade networks

Despite evidence for the increased size and uniformity of trade networks at British oppida in the mid-first century AD, not all of the patterns in Figures 2–3 are easily accounted for by chronology. A particularly striking trend is the general dominance of the left-hand side of Figure 3 by arretine sigillata, samian ware and amphorae, and the right-hand side by Gallo-Belgic wares. This pattern suggests that Gallo-Belgic wares moved by separate distribution networks in Britain to other imports. Such a trend cannot be purely chronological given the clear overlap in occupation dates for the corresponding groups of sites, particularly when the pattern is most distinct from the mid-first century AD. Whereas the cluster of Gallo-Belgic imports corresponds to a wide range of sites in the upper-right quarter of Figure 3, the patterning relating to the arretine, early Gallic samian and amphorae is more focused.

Of particular note here is the distorting effect of Stanwick, roughly corresponding to the cluster of sigillata forms plotted to the extreme left in Figure 3 (f11, f33, Ritt. 8, 9 and 12). The assemblage at Stanwick is unusual as it features very few Gallo-Belgic forms relative to samian and amphorae. Given the presence of wine amphorae (such as Rhodian Cam. 184 and Dressel 2–4) in combination with samian forms associated with drinking (including assorted cups, the rare f11 crater, and the even scarcer Hermet 15 flagon) it is likely that elements of this assemblage represented a diplomatic gift of a drinking service given in the context of the expanding Roman frontier in northern England (Willis 1996: 202, and forthcoming). If correct,

this interpretation raises the possibility that the occurrence of similar material at other oppida was also the result of diplomatic gifts. However, caution needs to be exercised in applying this interpretation to other contexts, as the occurrence of samian and amphorae at many of the sites plotted in the left half of Figures 1 and 2 was undoubtedly related to the development of early Roman towns at or in close proximity to such sites (e.g. Camulodunum, Sheepen, Silchester, Canterbury, Leicester, and Chichester). Whilst much of the later (Claudio-Neronian) samian is associated with such post-conquest urban developments, there appears to be less distinction between the distribution of early sigillata and Gallo-Belgic wares pre-dating the Claudian invasion of Britain. In view of this, it is most likely that imports in the mid-first century AD were funnelled through two separate overarching systems, with the distribution of Gallo-Belgic wares representing a continuity from pre-Roman social networks, and the distribution of later samian and amphorae being linked to the supply of the Roman military and fledgling urban network.

### **Discussion: unimportant imports?**

The preceding analysis has a range of implications for understanding the role of oppida. It is clear that a basic uniformity in imported assemblages remains a strong factor linking many of the British oppida. However, it is also apparent that this general pattern comprises several significant chronological and regional variations. Although the late first century BC arguably represents the defining moment for oppida foundation in Britain, the full geographical extent of the phenomenon was not realized until the early mid-first century AD with the appearance of sites further north (e.g. Redcliff) and west (e.g. Bagendon). Analysis of inter-site linkages in the presence of continental pottery types shows this later period to have been the most unified, encompassing Augustan and later foundations, but also much older sites with origins from c.100 BC such as Hengistbury, Dragonby, and Stanwick. This trend seems to represent the emergence of a 'globalizing' network of cross-channel trade links in the late Iron Age, which functioned separately from the supply network associated with the subsequent Roman annexation of Britain (Pitts 2008).

It is particularly noteworthy that the distribution of Gallo-Belgic wares associated with pre-conquest oppida continued to expand and reached its greatest geographical extent in the generation following Roman annexation, hinting at the continued importance of oppida and potentially pre-Roman social structures in early Roman Britain. This is strongly illustrated in Figure 3 in the separate distribution of later samian and amphorae forms from Gallo-Belgic wares and earlier arretine. More detailed analysis of pottery consumption at Claudio-Neronian Colchester reveals like patterning, with discrepant ceramic provisioning and consumption practices between the pre-Roman oppidum and the Roman colony at Sheepen (Bidwell 1999; Pitts and Perring 2006). In addition, recent analysis of the social distribution of arretine sigillata along the Lower Rhine frontier reveals a similar lack of overlap with contemporary Gallo-Belgic wares, with the former wares convincingly associated with the Roman military and returning Batavian auxiliaries, and the latter wares focused in civilian centres such as Tongres (Roymans, *in press*). This research has two important ramifications for understanding the

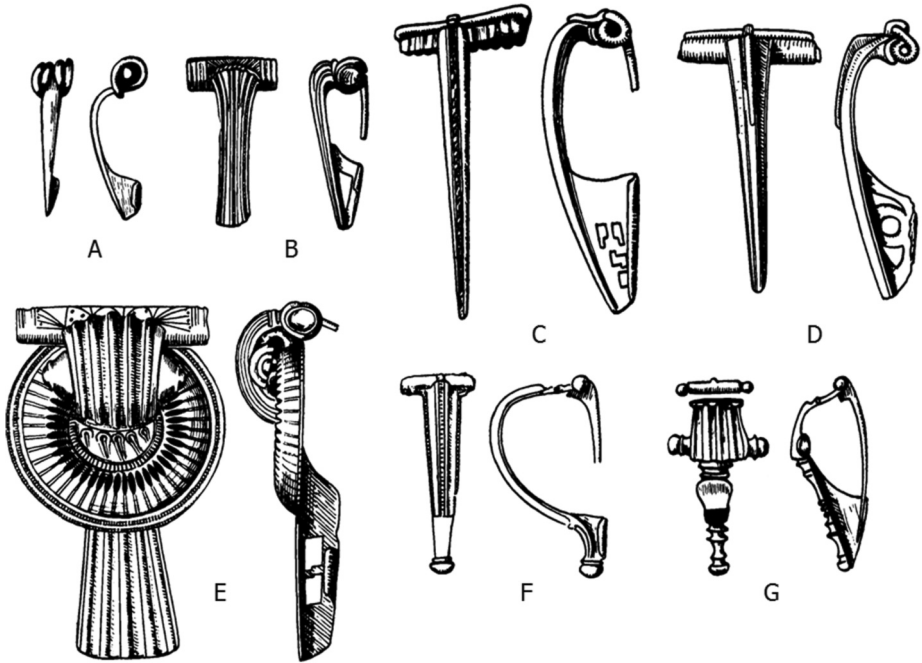
meaning of the trends in imported pottery observed in the present study. Firstly, it adds weight to the interpretation advanced here that the distribution of Gallo-Belgic imports in Britain should be treated as a separate entity to the spread of other import types, and is likely to have been at least initially driven by groups undergoing the process of 'becoming Roman' in Gaul. Secondly, although there is no historical precedent for auxiliary recruitment in pre-conquest Britain, it is nonetheless possible that the larger assemblages of arretine sigillata typically found at south-eastern oppida represent contact with the Roman military, potentially as diplomatic gifts.

The observations in this section underline the significance of imports in understanding the Iron Age to Roman transition in Britain, as signifiers of changing cultural geographies, even if they can be no longer regarded as prime movers of social change. Although it is important to understand the significance of imported material culture in specific local contexts (Pitts 2005), it is also crucial that trends at a wider scale are accorded similar detailed analysis.

## BROOCHES AND IDENTITIES

To complement the analysis of trade networks of imported ceramics, this section focuses on the incidence of brooches in a comparative sample of sites. The emergence of oppida in Britain is associated with an increased quantity and diversity of brooch types, fitting into a broader pattern characteristic of the first centuries BC and AD described as the 'fibula event horizon' (Jundi and Hill 1998). Indeed, the increased prevalence of more outwardly visible types of brooches (Fig. 4) at this time has been suggested as a manifestation of changes in the expression of social identity (Jundi and Hill 1998). Therefore, this case-study investigates the extent to which it is possible to delineate trends in the negotiation of identity through brooch use and deposition at a sample of British oppida and related sites.

Table 4 shows the incidence of the principal brooch types at a selection of oppida and related sites in Britain (data-sources listed in appendix 2). Data from the Roman urban foundations (c. AD 49) of Colchester and Verulamium were included in the analysis (denoted as R. Colchester and R. Verulamium), in order to help untangle any potential Roman influences in assessing the broader cultural and chronological significance of brooches in this transitional period. As with Gallo-Belgic pottery, most of the brooch types considered here had ceased to be produced by the end of the first century AD, providing a degree of chronological control. To make further sense of this material, the data were again interrogated using correspondence analysis. The results are presented in Figure 5, with the brooch types and sites this time imposed in the same plot. Although no outliers were removed from the CA, certain rarer brooch types (Simple Gallic and Polden Hill) were lumped into typologically related categories (Colchester and Colchester derivative respectively). The brooch assemblage from Stanwick was too small for inclusion in detailed analysis, although it is included in Table 4 to permit basic comparisons. The same general guidelines for interpreting CA apply here as in the previous



**Figure 4.** Principal brooch types in late Iron Age to Roman Britain (after Hawkes and Hull 1947). A = Nauheim Derivative, B = Langton Down, C = Colchester, D = Colchester Derivative, E = Thistle, F = Aucissa, and G = Hod Hill. Not to scale.

case-study. The main difference from the previous example is that with fewer brooch types relative to pot forms, it is not necessary to separate the brooches and sites into discrete plots, making visual interpretation more straightforward. The results of analysis are discussed here in rough chronological order, following four principal groupings of sites and brooches identified in Figure 5. To clarify patterns relating to and emerging from Figure 5, Figures 6 and 7 show how proportions of individual brooch types at the different sites deviate from average levels calculated from the entire sample.

### The Nauheim derivative brooch and the Southern Kingdom

The first pattern of note in Figure 5 is the group of sites plotted in the lower-left quarter, an area solely occupied by the Nauheim derivative brooch (here grouped with a much smaller number of typologically similar late La Tène brooches). The Nauheim derivative represents one of the most common classes of brooches in late Iron Age and early Roman Britain, comprising a broad range of sub-types, some bearing little resemblance to the continental Nauheim brooch, probably indicating considerable evolution of the form in Britain (Haselgrove 1997; Olivier 1988). The



**Table 4.** *The occurrence of principal brooch types at selected oppida and related sites. \*Denotes sites not included in Figs 5–7.*

Site	Nauheim deriv.	Langton Down	Thistle & Rosette	Simple Gallic	Colchester	Colchester deriv.	Polden Hill	Dolphin Hill	Aucissa	Hod Hill	Plate	Penannular	Misc.
Stanwick*	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	3
Redcliff	2	2	2	0	4	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	2
Dragonby	30	3	8	11	4	0	5	9	5	15	3	20	3
Old Sleaford	2	1	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	3	0	3	1
Leicester	13	2	2	0	8	11	2	3	1	5	1	5	2
Bagendon	8	7	8	1	8	0	5	4	15	2	2	7	5
Ditches	4	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	4	3	1	2	0
Hengistbury	8	1	1	0	2	7	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Chichester	20	2	2	0	6	4	0	0	5	11	1	2	1
Fishbourne	21	2	2	0	3	0	1	0	3	3	1	2	1
Silchester	46	7	3	0	13	3	0	0	3	10	4	3	3
Baldock	47	10	4	0	20	14	1	1	9	11	9	7	6
Skeleton Green	18	5	5	1	18	1	0	0	3	3	2	3	0
Ermine Street	17	7	1	11	8	5	0	2	3	11	6	2	0
Gorhamby	8	2	2	1	8	9	3	0	4	2	1	0	0
KHL cemetery	12	32	45	11	104	1	0	0	4	5	3	5	13
KHL settlement	10	3	2	0	7	4	0	0	1	4	5	0	0
R. Verulamium	12	3	0	0	10	15	0	2	8	23	2	4	4
R. Colchester	24	0	3	1	14	14	4	5	7	28	6	9	3
Camulodunum	11	50	15	5	81	8	0	7	15	21	20	8	4
Sheepen	1	4	6	0	11	3	0	0	6	7	4	1	2
Burgh	4	0	1	0	3	5	0	0	1	0	1	3	1
Canterbury	25	4	4	1	9	12	0	1	4	8	0	8	1

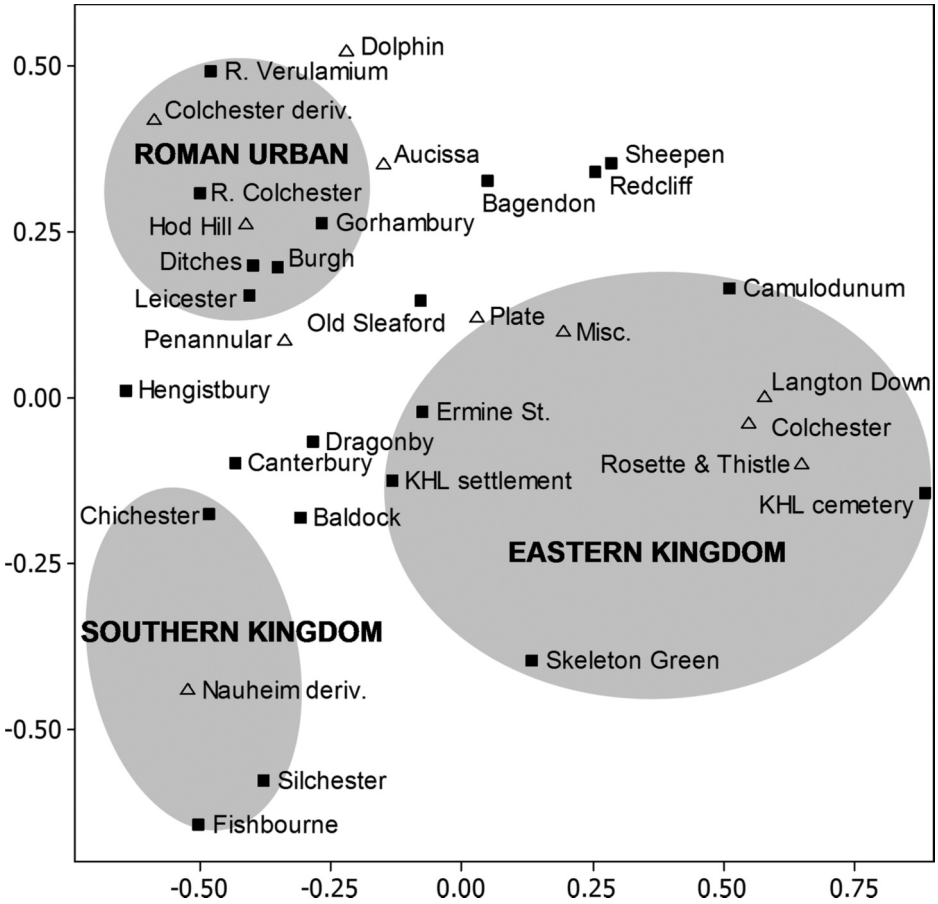


Figure 5. Correspondence analysis: brooch types plotted according to occurrence at selected oppida and related sites. Horizontal and vertical axes account for 45.63% and 14.65% of total inertia respectively.

sites corresponding most closely to this type tend to be a combination of pre-Augustan foundations (e.g. Baldock, Hengistbury, and Dragonby), and those located in central southern Britain or on the south coast (e.g. Hengistbury, Canterbury, Chichester, Fishbourne, and Silchester). Such patterning is prominently confirmed in Figure 6, with the strongest associations occurring with the core sites in Creighton’s (2000) Southern Kingdom – Fishbourne, Silchester, and Chichester.

**The Eastern Kingdom**

Perhaps the most striking trend in Figure 5 is the cluster of three brooch types plotted to the extreme right, including the Colchester (and Simple Gallic), Langton Down and Thistle/Rosette brooches. These brooches are among the most visibly

distinct in the whole assemblage, particularly in comparison to the simpler and more widespread Nauheim derivative. Whilst the three types in question are present at most sites in the sample (Table 4), they only occur in very high proportions at a pair of sites, the KHL cemetery at Verlamion, and Camulodunum, the principal oppida in Creighton’s (2000) Eastern Kingdom (also Fig. 6), with moderately high proportions at the closely plotted Ermine Street and Skeleton Green sites at Braughing. Such patterning concords well with the emergence of a new political entity in the south-east c.25–10 BC, with regionally prominent dress accessories possibly emphasizing the cultural distinctiveness of the Eastern Kingdom. Such distinctiveness also raises the possibility of high cultural connectivity between the Eastern Kingdom and parts of the continent, which is likely given the direct continental parallels of the brooches in question, with the Colchester brooch being typologically close to the contemporary simple Gallic brooch (Olivier 1988:40, Feugère type 14a), and both Langton Downs and Thistle/Rosette brooches similarly occurring in Northern Gaul (Feugère types 14b1b, 19a-d/20a/b respectively; Feugère 1985).

**Roman annexation and colonization**

The third pattern of note in Figure 5 is the close correlation in the upper-left quarter of the Hod Hill and Colchester derivative brooches with the Roman urban

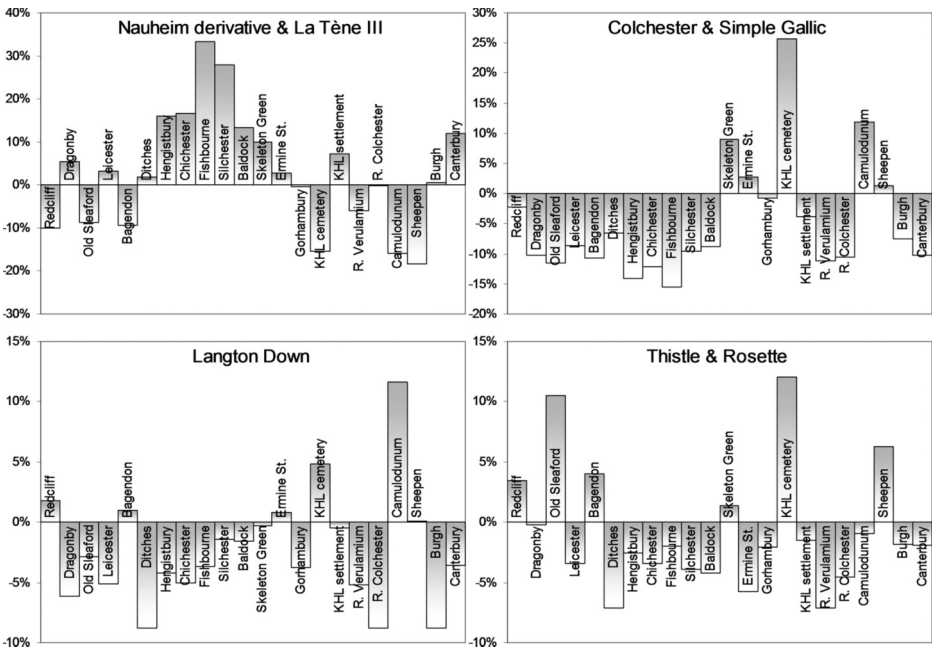


Figure 6. The deviation from the mean of four brooch types at selected British oppida and related sites.

foundations of Colchester and Verulamium (see also Fig. 7), and so-called oppida sites noted for the presence of early villas (Gorhambury, Ditches, and Burgh). As both brooch types are effectively later versions of the Aucissa and Colchester respectively, this observation raises the possibility that differences in distribution are a product of chronology. However, further significant differences remain with other contemporary sites (not least Camulodunum) that hint at cultural factors at work. The Hod Hill type especially is often cited as a Roman military brooch, and the strong association with the fledgling Roman towns of Colchester and Verulamium is not unexpected, not to mention the moderately high levels at other early Roman towns such as Silchester, Canterbury and Chichester. It is particularly notable that the early villa sites of Gorhambury, Ditches (associated with the oppida of Verlamion and Bagendon respectively) and Burgh are included in this pattern, probably indicating changing cultural aspirations within local élite society in this transitional period, with a move towards new styles of architecture being mirrored in new forms of dress accessories prevalent at the early Roman towns in Britain. This trend is further supported by the low incidence at the early villa sites and Roman towns of the distinct brooches associated with the Eastern Kingdom, the Langton Down and the Thistle/Rosette, which are all critically present in relatively high proportions at the contemporary yet more tangibly Gallo-British sites at Camulodunum/Sheepen at Colchester. Such patterning appears to ape similar trends in the pottery evidence, whereby significant elements of the Sheepen assemblage in the form of Gallo-Belgic imported pottery were almost completely absent from the Roman fortress and colony, pointing at deep-rooted cultural differences between the Roman colonists and the pre-Roman occupants of Camulodunum (Bidwell 1999; Pitts and Perring 2006).

The other sites clustering in the mid-left of Figure 5 (Canterbury, Hengistbury, Dragonby and Leicester) feature a combination of Nauheim derivatives and later Hod Hill and/or Colchester derivative brooches. All of these sites have demonstrable late Iron Age origins, yet also feature a degree of direct continuity going into the Roman period, unlike the majority of sites plotted on the right-hand side of Figure 5.

### **The expanding Eastern Kingdom?**

In contrast to the patterns visually highlighted in Figure 5, other less pronounced trends can be elucidated. In the upper-right quarter of the plot the three geographically separate sites of Bagendon, Redcliff, and Sheepen cluster together, being held between the gravitational pull of the Aucissa brooch and the main Eastern Kingdom sites to the lower-right, with moderate proportions of the distinct Thistle/Rosette and Langton Down brooches. Further investigation of this group of sites reveals strong similarities, particularly between Bagendon and Redcliff, which follow the same trends for seven of eight brooch types in Figures 6 and 7. Although the small size of the brooch assemblage compiled from Redcliff (19) urges caution, both it and Bagendon nevertheless share a similar foundation date in the early to mid-first century AD. Therefore, at the very least, this association

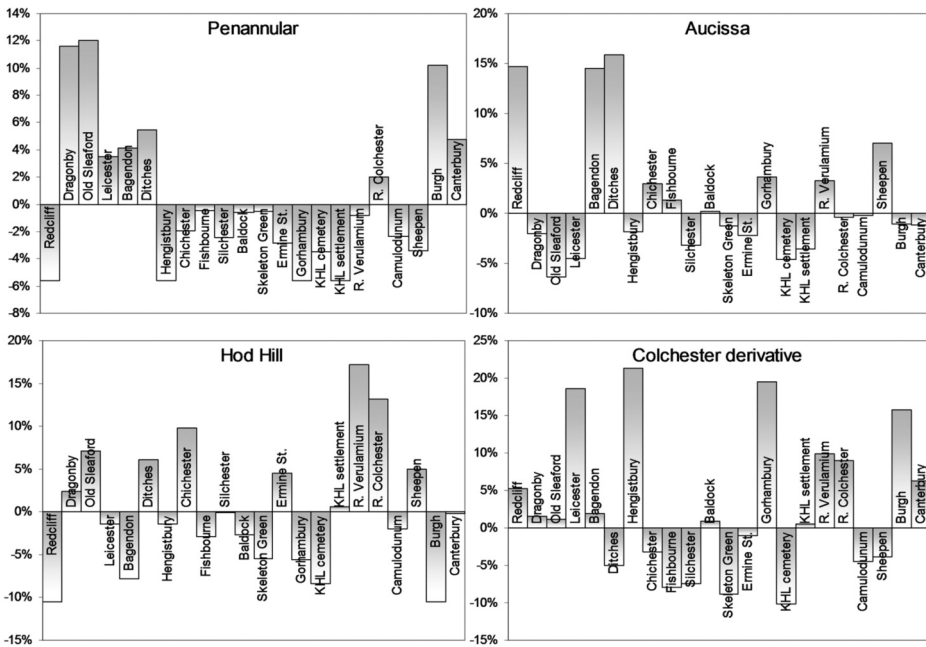


Figure 7. The deviation from the mean of four brooch types at selected British oppida and related sites.

can be partially explained by chronology, with the mid-first century 1970 site at Sheepen (Camulodunum) having a broadly similar brooch assemblage.

As largely contemporary sites, Bagendon, Redcliff, and Sheepen all lack the high proportions of Nauheim derivatives as seen at the earlier or more southern sites plotted in the lower-left quarter of Figure 5, yet have much higher proportions of the diagnostic brooches favoured in the Eastern Kingdom. This suggests that Bagendon and Redcliff are intrinsically related to the Eastern Kingdom, with the higher proportions of Aucissa brooches probably reflecting their later foundation dates. Although the Aucissa brooch is traditionally linked with Roman military identity, Eckardt (2005:152) has shown that this association is 'tenuous at best' for southern Britain, with the type being more common on civilian sites. In this sense, the presence of such brooches at sites such as Bagendon and Redcliff should not necessarily be seen as an indication of Roman military presence, and could equally relate to other geographically mobile groups (e.g. merchants). Similarly, whereas the 1970 Sheepen site (Niblett 1985) is part of the Camulodunum settlement, the high proportions of Aucissa and other later brooch types there (Fig. 7) suggest that the main period of activity at the 1970 site was later than that at the 1930 Camulodunum site (Hawkes and Hull 1947). Therefore, taken together, the close similarity of assemblages from two 'fringe' oppida with that of a later phase from

the royal centre of Camulodunum, suggests that Bagendon and Redcliff were founded in the context of the expanding political and cultural sphere of influence of the Eastern Kingdom in the early to mid-first century AD.

Finally, another pattern emphasizing the distinctiveness of the Southern and Eastern Kingdoms relates to the distribution of the Penannular brooch. Plotted towards the middle of Figure 5, this type shows strongest relative concentrations at a range of sites outside the core areas of the Southern and Eastern Kingdoms, being particularly strong to the north (Dragonby, Old Sleaford and Leicester), west (Bagendon and Ditches), but also in neighbouring Suffolk (Burgh) and Kent (Canterbury) (Fig. 7). However, with a wide geographical distribution and typically low incidence at most of the sites considered in the present study, it is not possible on this evidence to positively relate the Penannular brooch with any particular regional tradition or type of settlement.

### **Discussion: What not to wear?**

The foregoing analysis shows that the incidence of different brooch types seems to be intrinsically related to the chronological and political circumstances surrounding oppidum foundation. Several coherent associations of sites and brooch types have been identified in the CA, notably for the Southern Kingdom (Nauheim derivative), Eastern Kingdom (Colchester, Langton Down and Thistle/Rosette), its possible later expansion (Aucissa), and Roman urban foundations (Hod Hill and Colchester derivative). In all four cases, it is likely that the coherence of each group of sites illustrates a common degree of connectivity and cultural contact. Although certain brooch types seem to be strongly associated with the manifestation of particular historical phenomena, it is an oversimplification to take such patterning and assign specific identities to individual brooch types. Instead, the evidence here suggests that *brooch assemblages* in late Iron Age to Roman Britain can be sensitive indicators of the negotiation and elaboration of aspects of group identity in given situational and historical contexts, such as the creation of the pre-Roman kingdoms, and the imposition and participation in Roman urbanism in the south-east. Nevertheless, caution must be exercised. Carr's (2006) suggestion that the Colchester derivative brooch was a symbol of 'native resistance' in the Eastern Kingdom for a short time following Roman annexation is difficult to verify. On the basis of the evidence discussed here it is more plausible that the type symbolizes acceptance rather than rejection of Roman culture, with high proportions of the type at early Roman urban and villa sites and more critically, a relatively low incidence at so-called 'native' contemporary centres such as Camulodunum/Sheepen (Figs. 6 and 7).

### **SYNTHESIS**

In consideration of the evidence of brooches and imported pottery at a sample of British oppida, this article has presented two differing yet complementary perspectives on the Iron Age to Roman transition in southern Britain. In summary,

analysis of imported ceramics shows a basic unity in supply among oppida, with some clear regional and chronological trends. Most striking was the high level of homogeneity in the supply of Gallo-Belgic imports over a wide geographical area in the mid-first century AD, and the tendency for sites associated with an early Roman presence to receive more diverse Claudio-Neronian samian ware and certain amphorae. In contrast, the analysis of brooch deposition appeared much more politically sensitive, facilitating the delineation of three main cultural processes: the emergence of the distinct Southern and Eastern Kingdoms at the end of the first century BC; the expanding hegemony of the latter to the north and west in the early to mid-first century AD; and, finally, the impact of Roman colonization and annexation.

Whilst the brooches appear to be strong markers of cultural and historical changes, the imported ceramics seem less sensitive to such trends, barring the virtual absence of Gallo-Belgic wares at the early Roman urban centres of Colchester and Verulamium. With the exceptions of the comparatively rare arrivals of arretine sigillata in the south-east and the unusual assemblage at Stanwick which might be regarded as reflecting diplomatic gifts, it seems likely that the majority of imported ceramics in oppida contexts represent the manifestation of networks of independent traders working separately from the supply arm of the Roman military from the late first century BC onward. Such traders could have a range of cultural origins, perhaps as indigenous inhabitants of the newly created province of Gallia Belgica, or Roman merchants seeking to exploit new opportunities afforded by relations of clientage with the Southern and Eastern Kingdoms following Caesar's campaigns. In this context, it is possible that the spread of new brooch types on non-military or non-Roman sites in the first century AD could represent contacts with such independent traders. The flourishing of this alternative 'globalizing' network within Britain in the years immediately following Roman conquest certainly suggest that the new political situation made conditions easier for the wider circulation of Gallo-Belgic pottery. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that this phenomenon was largely separate from the supply of both the Roman military and fledgling civilian centres in the early province. Indeed, it is particularly striking that the main centre of consumption for Gallo-Belgic pottery in post-conquest Britain was the centre of the Eastern Kingdom at Camulodunum, located in close proximity to the first Roman colony at Colchester. Although this pattern could be argued to be a simple product of two separate supply systems, the parallel virtual absence of the diagnostic Langton Down and Thistle/Rosette brooches within the Roman colony (N. Crummy 2007:316) further highlights the important cultural distinctions between colonist and colonized also observed in analysis of pottery deposition at both sites in this period (Pitts and Perring 2006).

Detailed comparison of site groupings from analysis of both brooches and imported ceramics reveals a number of consistent trends. One particularly regionally distinct grouping is that of Silchester, Chichester and Fishbourne, forming the constituent core elements of the Southern Kingdom. Figures 6 and 7 show that this grouping is most coherent in terms of levels of earlier brooch types such as the

Nauheim derivative, Colchester, Langton Down and Thistle/Rosette, whereas for later types such as the Colchester derivative and the military-associated Hod Hill the pattern becomes more variable. In this context, it is possible that the spike of Hod Hill brooches at Chichester could hint at the developing Roman town here, particularly in contrast to the relatively low quantities of the same brooch type found at nearby Fishbourne, the suggested palace of the client king Togidubnus (e.g. Henig 2002).

Untangling the complexities of patterning relating to the Eastern Kingdom in Essex and Hertfordshire is less straightforward. In the analysis of brooches (Fig. 5), the KHL cemetery, Camulodunum and Braughing (Skeleton Green) are most clearly distinguished from the other sites in the region. Similarly, in the analysis of imported pottery (Figs 2 and 3), the equivalent sites (Sheepen/Camulodunum and the KHL cemetery and Prae Wood at Verlamion) are all plotted in the same general area along with other south-eastern sites. Taken together, it is probable that the differences between the imported ceramic assemblages at Camulodunum and Verlamion in Figures 2 and 3 is a factor of both differential trade networks and chronology, with the short-lived KHL cemetery pre-dating the later focus of the Eastern Kingdom at Camulodunum. This suggestion fits with narratives based on numismatic evidence (e.g. Haselgrove 1982; Henig 2002), which assume that Cunobelin shifted the capital of the Eastern Kingdom from Verlamion to Camulodunum in the mid-first century AD. In view of this, the links in both brooch and imported pottery assemblages between later Sheepen and Bagendon reinforce the suggestion of social ties between the two oppida, perhaps as part of the expanding geo-political influence of the Eastern Kingdom.

As a final observation, it is intriguing that the sites associated with the Eastern Kingdom in the mid-first century AD (Bagendon, Redcliff, and Sheepen) all ceased to be occupied by the end of the first century AD. Whereas the Sheepen site at Camulodunum (the subject of both the 1930 and 1970 excavations) was largely destroyed in the Boudican revolt, in the cases of Bagendon and Redcliff the inhabitants are assumed to have abandoned these settlements in favour of newly created Roman urban settlements (those of Cirencester and Brough-on-Humber respectively). In contrast, at sites less closely connected to the Eastern Kingdom, occupation merely continued (e.g. Baldock and Dragonby), or was 'upgraded' with Roman urbanism imposed on the existing settlement (e.g. Chichester, Leicester, Silchester, Canterbury, and the older capital of the Eastern Kingdom at Verlamion). Given the importance of Camulodunum as a pre-Roman political centre and its continued prominence as a hub for imported material for almost two decades thereafter, it is tempting to see this differential treatment as a conscious Roman policy of suppressing an alternative power structure in the aftermath of Roman annexation. If this is correct, perhaps one of the biggest ironies of the Boudican revolt was that while it succeeded for a very short time in removing Roman control in the south-east, it also permanently removed part of the pre-Roman centre at Camulodunum (Sheepen), thus hastening the demise of the region's 'native' (or Gallo-British) elite and strengthening the Roman dominance.



## CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Like any other settlement 'type', the label oppidum conceals a multitude of diverse components, not to mention difficulties arising from discrepancies in the Classical and archaeological usage of the term. Nevertheless, the present study demonstrates that in a British context the term has more utility than recent generations of scholars would perhaps like to admit. The detailed analysis of material culture at late Iron Age to Roman sites in Britain labelled 'oppida' in this article reveals a degree of conformity among many of the sites in question, often transcending seemingly discrete regional traditions and supposed tribal boundaries. Although much of this conformity is closely linked to the emergence of the Southern and Eastern Kingdoms from c.25–10 BC, sites pre- and post-dating this crucial period appear to be increasingly part of the cultural, economic and political influence of the Eastern Kingdom by the mid- to late-first century AD. In this sense, if the term 'oppidum' is to have any value in a British context, it should be used to refer to the large territorial dyke complexes associated with the waxing and waning of kingship in the south-east, such as Camulodunum, Verlamion and Silchester. Related sites sharing parallel chronological development and similarities in material culture (such as high levels of imports) should be viewed as being part of the wider oppida phenomenon, although they are not strictly oppida themselves.

In a wider context, it is possible to regard royal centres such as Camulodunum as forming the central nodes of a pre-Roman globalizing network of settlements extending throughout Britain at the time of the Claudian invasion (Pitts 2008), with similarly strong social ties with groups across the Channel in northern Gaul. This picture is resonant with the observed tendency of oppida to appear in locations on the edges of existing polities and in areas lacking significant middle Iron Age occupation (e.g. Haselgrove 1976; Hill 2007), and also fits with recent interpretations of some southern oppida as manifestations of Gallic colonization (Fulford 2000) or linking them to the migration of small élite groups from Gallia Belgica (P. Crummy 2007). Although further research is needed to verify the precise nature and extent of such connections, there are already well-documented parallels between the Eastern Kingdom and the Gallic tribes of the Suessiones, Remi and particularly the Treveri, in terms of élite funerary practice (e.g. P. Crummy 2007; Niblett 1999:394–404) and the ritual use of Italian wine amphorae (Sealey, forthcoming), in addition to marked similarities in the composition of pottery and brooch assemblages at comparative sites and cemeteries in the Luxembourg region such as Feulen (Schendzielorz 2006), the Titelberg (Gaspar 2007) and Lamadelaine (Metzler-Zens et al. 1999). Such parallels emphasize the complexity of cultural trajectories in first-century AD north-west Europe, both preceding and concurrent with Roman expansion, highlighting the futility of unidirectional terms such as 'Romanization' for explaining developments in this period.

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## NOTES

1. The Southern and Eastern Kingdoms are late Iron Age polities defined largely on the basis of numismatic analyses (Creighton 2000), and refer to the dynasties of Commius and Tasciovanus respectively.

2. The word 'Camulodunum' usually denotes the pre-Roman oppidum close to the later town of Roman Colchester, with the main excavations being conducted in 1930 (Hawkes and Hull 1947), with Sheepen referring to the excavations that took place in 1970 within the Camulodunum oppidum (Niblett 1985). Similarly, 'Verlamion' is the name used to refer to the pre-Roman oppidum on the site of the Roman town of Verulamium, and in the present study refers to the sites of King Harry Lane and Prae Wood. The words Verlamion and Camulodunum both derive from names inscribed on coinage from the period.

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## APPENDIX 1: IMPORTED POTTERY DATA SOURCES

Bagendon – Clifford (1961); Baldock – Stead and Rigby (1986); Burgh – Martin (1988); Canterbury – Blockley et al. (1995); Chichester – Down (1978); Ditches – Trow et al. (2009); Dragonby – May (1996); Ermine Street – Potter and Trow (1988); Fishbourne – Cunliffe (1971); Gatesbury – Partridge (1981); Hengistbury – Cunliffe (1987); KHL – Stead and Rigby (1989); Old Sleaford – Elsdon (1997); Redcliff – Corder and Pryce (1938), Crowther and Didsbury (1988), Stead (1976); Leicester – Clay and Mellor (1985), Clay and Pollard (1994), Kenyon (1948); Prae Wood – Thompson (1982), Wheeler and Wheeler (1936); Sheepen – Niblett (1985); Silchester – Fulford and Timby (2000); Skeleton Green – Partridge (1981); Stanwick – Haselgrove et al. (forthcoming), Wheeler (1954).

## APPENDIX 2: BROOCH DATA SOURCES

Bagendon – Clifford (1961); Baldock – Stead and Rigby (1986); Burgh – Martin (1988); Camulodunum – Hawkes and Hull (1947); Canterbury – Blockley et al. (1995); Chichester – Down (1978); Colchester – N. Crummy (1983), P. Crummy (1992); Ditches – Trow et al. (2009); Dragonby – May (1996); Ermine Street – Potter and Trow (1988); Fishbourne – Cunliffe (1971); Gorhambury – Neal et al. (1990); Hengistbury – Cunliffe (1987); KHL – Stead and Rigby (1989); Old Sleaford – Elsdon (1997); Redcliff – Corder and Pryce (1938), Crowther and Didsbury (1988); Leicester – Clay and Mellor (1985), Clay and Pollard (1994), Connor and Buckley (1999), Kenyon (1948); Prae Wood – Wheeler and Wheeler (1936); Sheepen – Niblett (1985); Silchester – Fulford and Timby (2000); Skeleton Green – Partridge (1981); Verulamium – Frere (1972, 1984), Wheeler and Wheeler (1936); Stanwick – Haselgrove et al. (forthcoming).

## Nouvelles approches des oppida de l'Angleterre du Sud : réseaux, royaumes et culture matérielle

*Martin Pitts*

Cet article examine le rôle d'un éventail de grands villages en Angleterre du Sud datant de l'âge du fer récent et de la première époque romaine (env. 100 BC à 70 AD), conventionnellement décrits comme oppida. Après une revue des opinions courantes sur la fonction et la chronologie des oppida

britanniques, l'analyse statistique d'ensembles de fibules et de céramique importée sur un vaste échantillon de sites ouvre des nouvelles perspectives. Des analyses de la culture matérielle révèlent des distinctes similarités et différences entre plusieurs groupes de sites, reflétant généralement la transmission de traditions régionales, et les frontières tribales présumées. Ce schéma est essentiellement expliqué par l'émergence de nouvelles formes d'organisation politique antérieurement à l'annexion romaine, notamment la création des royaumes méridionaux et orientaux.

*Mots clés* : fibules, analyse des correspondances, identité, importation, âge du fer britannique récent, réseaux, oppida, poterie

(translation by Isabelle Kayser-Gerges)

### **Neue Blicke auf die südbritischen Oppida: Netzwerke, Königreiche und materielle Kultur**

*Martin Pitts*

Diese Studie untersucht die Rolle einer Reihe großer Siedlungen während der späten Eisenzeit und der frühromischen Periode in Südbritannien (ca. 100 BC und 70 AD), die gemeinhin als Oppida beschrieben werden. Nach der Überprüfung der derzeitigen Perspektiven der Funktion und Chronologie der britischen Oppida werden durch die statistische Analyse von Fibeln und importierter Keramik aus einer großen Anzahl von Fundplätzen neue Erkenntnisse erzielt. Die Analyse der materiellen Kultur ergibt klare Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen verschiedenen Gruppen von Fundplätzen, oft überschrittene regionale Traditionen und angenommene Stammesgrenzen. Dieses Bild wird hauptsächlich mit der Erscheinung neuer Formen politischer Organisation vor der römischen Besetzung erklärt, insbesondere mit der Gründung der südlichen und des östlichen Königreiche.

*Schlüsselbegriffe*: Fibeln, Korrespondenzanalyse, Identität, Importe, Britannien in der Späteisenzeit, Netzwerke, Oppida, Keramik

(translation by Heiner Schwarzberg)