When most North Americans think about Scotland's inhabitants, they think of one people, or at most of "Highlanders" and "Lowlanders". The truth is, of course, that the Scottish people embody a number of distinct ethnic groups, evidence for which can be found in the historical record, in the country's residue of regional Scots/English dialects, and in the continuing presence of Gaelic. These two companion volumes highlight that diversity as it is revealed in the archaeological record.

Clearly, these works are designed to provide an appetizer for a tour of relevant archaeological sites, or a memento of such a tour. Not systematic enough for guidebooks, they resemble the museum catalogues that seem to be their spiritual ancestors. But they do have much to offer, especially in the quality of their illustrations: anyone who has failed to capture the details of a Pictish symbol stone because of difficult light, and as a result has watched his/her hopes for a good slide presentation literally fade away, will be impressed.

The invading groups included in Invaders of Scotland are the Romans, Gaels, Angles, and Vikings, leaving the Picts as the indigenous people, an interpretation which might surprise the non-Celtic people they assimilated or supplanted. Of the groups covered, the book is most helpful on the Romans and the Gaels. The Antonine Wall, for instance, which usually plays second fiddle to the English Hadrian's Wall in discussions of Roman Britain, is given special treatment. It should come as no surprise, however, given the scope of the book and the small number of pages, to hear that most topics are covered in not much more than outline form (although remember, the illustrations are good).

The interpenetration of the various ethnic cultures that make up Scotland is a theme common to both books, with objects such as Sueno's stone used to show how the artistic predilections of the "invading" cultures influenced those already on the scene.
Anna Ritchie's *Picts* is the more useful of the two books, if only because it concentrated on one "people". Admittedly, like most works on the Picts, it concentrates heavily on stone carvings, and the reader is left with the feeling that Picts spent little time doing anything else but carving them - one wishes a Pictish Lindow Man would emerge from the northern peat and diversify the archaeological record.

The best feature of this little text is, in my view, its insistence on viewing the Picts not as mysterious troglodytes who suddenly appeared in late-Roman times (unaccountably speaking a Celtic tongue and carving largely Christian monuments), but simply as "descendants of indigenous iron-age tribes given a new name" - essentially still Caledonians. The book quite rightly stresses those things that the Picts had in common with other Celts, with the rich cultural heritage of the Irish Gaels and the Britons, and not their supposed primitive qualities.

Useful as well is its treatment of the spread of Christianity, from both Whithorn and Iona, and its classification and analysis of the motifs and narratives embodied in Pictish sculpture. Certainly a reader would never visit Burghead, Aberlemno, or the Brough of Birsay without a special interest in their Pictish associations and in the early evidence they provide for the cultural influence the founding peoples of Scotland had on one another.

As one might expect, given the purpose and size of the works in question, there is little that is ground-breaking here (no pun intended). Further, for someone familiar with the archaeology of Gaul or of Southern Britain, where the genius of Celtic metalworking steals the show, even a casual turning of pages will reveal the extent to which Scottish archaeology is, in the real rather than the metaphoric sense, cast largely in stone.

A final admission! For a North American interested in exploring Scottish prehistory, there is no real substitute for a "hands-on" visit to at least representative sites: these books are at best a reliable stopgap until that proves possible.

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