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EARLY EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

WAS IT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MEGALITHIC MONUMENTS?

THE question of the influence of the Eastern Mediterranean on the Central and Western is not a new one, and an apology is perhaps needed for re-opening it. If so it must be taken to lie in the fact that the last five years have thrown a new light on the Eastern Mediterranean. It was easy to say that what seemed strange or new in Crete or Italy must be due to 'Oriental influence' so long as this alluring phrase remained without content. Now, however, when we are beginning to catch glimpses of what was really happening in nearer Asia in remote days, we are almost daily finding that something of that which was so readily labelled 'oriental' is not oriental at all.

It is, then, a time for reconsidering this question, and no doubt it will be discussed in all its bearings at the coming Archaeological Congress in Rome, where the following problem is to be dealt with: 'In what consists the evidence of the influence of the pre-Hellenic East on the countries of the Western Mediterranean?' Here I shall confine myself mainly to a single aspect of the question. It is an aspect which has lately been brought into prominence by Professor Elliot Smith's book on the Ancient Egyptians.¹ This book is of course mainly concerned with Egypt and the Egyptians, but its last chapter is an attempt to reconcile the craniological evidence available for Egypt and the Mediterranean with the archaeological.

¹ G. Elliot Smith, *The Ancient Egyptians and their Influence upon the Civilization of Europe* (Harper and Brothers, London, 1911).

It is with this last chapter that we shall be most nearly concerned here. Professor Elliot Smith, in addition to being an authority on anthropometry, took part in the capacity of anthropologist in the work carried out for the Hearst Fund by Reisner and others at Gizeh and Naga ed Der, so that his information is in all cases first-hand.

He accepts at the outset Sergi's proposition that in the early neolithic period the shores of the Mediterranean were occupied by various branches of a single long-headed brunette race which included the Egyptians.¹ Now it has been for some time well known that during the early dynasties a broad type of head began to intrude among the long types which were invariable in the predynastic race of Egypt. Professor Elliot Smith does not accept the hypothesis that this is to be accounted for by a Semitic or other invasion at the beginning of the dynastic period. If we read him aright, he is much more inclined to see in it the sign of a gradual infiltration of an Armenoid element. He brings this into connection with the great westerly movement which flooded most parts of Europe at the end of the neolithic period with a broad-headed people ; Egypt, he says, did not entirely escape this movement, though it was much less affected by it than Europe, while even the most westerly parts of the Mediterranean shore of Africa were not free from its effects, as is shown by the occasional short types of head which occur there.

With these hypotheses we have no desire to disagree, and they certainly contain a very simple explanation of a number of facts difficult enough to reconcile. However, Professor Elliot Smith does not stop here. He proceeds to give us a very careful account of the way in which civilization developed in the Mediterranean. It was in Egypt, he tells us, that the use of copper was first discovered, and it was this discovery which enabled Egypt to forge rapidly ahead of the less fortunate kindred nations of the Mediterranean. These 'were still in the neolithic age for centuries after Egypt had left it behind ; and there can be no doubt that her influence must have slowly passed from tribe to tribe, until the whole Mediterranean litoral became permeated with the leaven of Egyptian culture, which thus affected at their source the very springs of European civilization.'²

These influences upon Europe, he tells us, were exerted partly 'by the Egyptians themselves, or by people who had actually seen their achievements in the Nile valley,'³ and partly through the Armenoid invaders of

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 18.

² *Op. cit.* p. 161.

³ *Op. cit.* p. 162.

Europe, who had already learnt the use of copper from the Egyptians on the battlefields of Syria.

As long as Professor Elliot Smith speaks in general terms of Egyptian influence we can hardly gainsay him, for there is so little archaeological evidence either one way or the other and natural probability is in his favour. It is when he comes to detail that we find ourselves obliged to part company with him.

Two of the greatest problems of Mediterranean archaeology are and have long been the place of the discovery of copper and the origin of and connection between the megalithic monument and the rock-sepulchre. Professor Elliot Smith has a definite answer to both problems. With regard to the discovery of copper he follows Reisner and places it in Egypt. On this he bases his answer to the second problem which is as follows: 'The inspiration to make rock-cut sepulchres came from Egypt, and such tombs were not made until aeneolithic times because they followed the invention of copper tools in Egypt.' The dolmen and other megalithic monuments are, according to him, attempts to emulate the great stone edifices of the Egyptians. 'It is not *necessary*' (the italics are mine) 'to postulate any great racial movements to explain such transmission of customs,' for 'it may have been the mere idea that spread.' He agrees, however, that in any particular case the appearance of such monuments might well be due to an immigration of people who had already fallen under Egyptian influence.

This theory has the merit of simplicity. It would explain why megalithic monuments and rock sepulchres so often appear side by side, and further why they so often appear at the beginning of the copper age. It has many other advantages which have been carefully worked out and set forth by its author, and yet it is not convincing.

Many, for instance, of those who are best acquainted with both the European and Egyptian evidence, will find themselves unable to accept outright Professor Elliot Smith's initial assumption that Egypt was the home of copper-working, and it is upon this assumption that most of his superstructure is based, as he himself assures us in his introduction. However, it so happens that this point barely affects the question with which we are here mainly concerned, for all will readily admit that at the time of the VIth Dynasty, to which period Professor Elliot Smith attributes the origin of the megalithic monuments, Egypt had long been in possession of copper

and was one of the most civilized nations in the Eastern Mediterranean. We shall therefore leave the question of the origin of copper undiscussed and pass on to the direct influence of Egypt on the Mediterranean, an influence to which Professor Elliot Smith attributes the megalithic monuments.

Before dealing with theory we shall do well to put ourselves on firm ground with regard to fact. What signs have we of Egyptian influence in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean previous to the XIIth Dynasty? This is a question which has usually been discussed from the Egyptian standpoint, with unsatisfactory results. As far as regards Italy and all those parts of the Western Mediterranean where megalithic monuments occur I cannot see a single proof or even sign of Egyptian influence. For Italy and Sicily in particular I speak with confidence, for, although reference to the vague east was dear to the older school of Italian archaeologists, there is no case in which contact with Egypt can be proved. For Crete there is more evidence, and it has been excellently treated by Mr. H. R. Hall in a series of important articles.¹ Yet for the early periods there is little that is conclusive.

The earliest evidences which have been suggested of a commercial connection between Egypt and Crete are certain black vases found by Petrie on the early temple site at Abydos, and probably dating from the Ist Dynasty.² Some of these are small cups and are not polished. Others, of various forms, are polished. Petrie, having compared a single specimen of this ware with the Cretan black polished pottery of the late neolithic and Early Minoan I. periods, finds the two indistinguishable in 'colour, burnish, and general appearance,' and therefore considers these vases to have been imported from Crete into Egypt. It is a paradox in the study of pottery that, in dealing with primitive wares, the finer, so long as there is no decoration, have often fewer distinguishing characteristics than the rougher. All black polished ware has a close resemblance, and it is only after a minute comparison and analysis of a large number of sherds from two groups that we can safely declare them to belong to the same fabric. Thus sherds belonging to certain black polished wares of Italy and Malta are practically indistinguishable from those of Crete. Unfortunately, we know little of the forms of the early Cretan series. The form with hollow conical foot which

¹ See especially *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1909, pp. 135 ff.

² Petrie, *Abydos II.* p. 38, Pl. XLII. Figs. 20-36; *B.S.A.* x. p. 23.

Petrie appeals to as being 'specially western,' occurs in almost every pottery series that exists. The other two vases which he mentions as western are certainly not known early shapes in Crete or the Aegaeon. For the present, though we cannot disprove the Cretan origin of these vases, we have no right whatever to accept it as certain or even probable.

The incised and 'white-filled' vases of predynastic Egypt, so often referred to as having Aegaeon affinities, belong to a type of pottery which occurs in many parts of Europe and the Mediterranean at very varying dates. It is found in Spain, in Bosnia, in Italy, in Hungary, in the Aegaeon and elsewhere. In each case there are local characteristics, and even if, as is hardly likely, all these wares had a common origin, we have no right to connect any one of them directly with any other. The Egyptian vases have no more affinity with those of the Aegaeon than they have with those of Bosnia or Spain.

The painted vases found by Petrie in the tombs of Zer and Mersekha at Abydos belong to no fabric as yet known in the Aegaeon, and, what is more, the shape of the jugs is not one for which there is a place in the development of the jug form as we see it in the early Aegaeon. We now know from the excavations of Elam, Persia, and Asia Minor, that painted pottery appeared early in these districts, and there is not the least reason for assigning the Abydos vases to the Aegaeon rather than to Syria or elsewhere in the East. As for the unpainted vases of the same shape as these and found with them, the shape is again an argument against an Aegaeon derivation, and in any case they stand or fall with their painted fellows.

Much has been made of the stone vases found by Seager at Mochlos in Crete, which are said to shew close similarity to those of early Egypt.¹ These vases make a rather sudden appearance in E. M. II., and the argument is that stone vase making was inspired by imported Egyptian vases and that even the shapes of these were in some cases directly copied. Seager himself says 'Several vases bear slight resemblances to the early stone vessels of Egypt as regards shape, but on the other hand many of them are absolutely un-Egyptian in every respect.' This is a very fair statement of the case. The shapes found at Mochlos are fairly numerous and it would be remarkable if there were none which resembled some of the many forms known in early Egypt. But to prove that Egyptian

¹ Seager, *Explorations in Mochlos*, pp. 99-104, Pl. I.-VII. and IX.

originals were copied it would be necessary either to find such originals in Crete or to point to imitations there of several forms belonging to a single period in Egypt.¹ Even then, in the second case, we should speak of strong probability rather than of proof.

We now come, however, to much more tangible evidence. In the palace at Knossos were found two fragments of stone bowls (one of diorite and the other of liparite), of a form which occurs in Egypt in the IIIrd and IVth Dynasties.² It would seem almost fantastic to question this evidence of Egyptian trade with Crete, for the form of both vases and the material of one (diorite) seem to point clearly to Egypt. But it is just worth while to remember that although the fragments, if Egyptian of the IVth Dynasty, should be Early Minoan in date, neither was found with Early Minoan objects, for they occurred near (though not in actual association with) Middle and Late Minoan objects respectively. It is further curious that one is of Aeolian liparite, a material much more accessible to Crete than to Egypt. At the same time this by no means disproves the Egyptian origin of the bowls. One can only regret that our first tangible piece of evidence for trade relations in pre-XIIth Dynasty times is not more absolutely secure.

More certain is the evidence of the seal-stones of Crete and Egypt. Setting aside the possibilities suggested by various similarities between figures on the early cylinder-series,³ which, if definite enough to make us suspect relations, are certainly too indefinite to prove them, the earliest proof of connection is to be seen in a type of button-seal of which a good example was found in the Hagia Triada tholos.⁴ The design on this seal seems beyond all reasonable doubt to be a copy of a design which occurs first on the button-seals of Egypt in the VIth Dynasty. The circular surface of the seal is divided into two halves by a straight line, on each side of which is a couchant lion with legs toward the diameter. On the later Egyptian seals of the VIIth to XIth Dynasties the motive is partly misunderstood, and the diameter combines with the two tails to form a curved Z motive, while the lions' bodies become almost shapeless. It is this later form of the motive that is copied on the Hagia Triada seal.

¹ *Op. cit.* Pl. I. M. 3, resembles to some extent the so-called Pepi jars, while others recall Egyptian vases of much earlier date.

² *B.S.A.* viii. pp. 121-123.

³ *Scritta Minoa*, pp. 121-125.

⁴ *Op. cit.* pp. 125-129 and Fig. 65.

We have therefore evidence of connection between Egypt and Crete not later than the XIth Dynasty.

Here our evidence comes to an end.¹ It may be summed up as follows. There are no absolutely certain proofs of Egyptian influence in the Mediterranean before the XIth Dynasty, and such signs as there are all come from one place, Crete. It is thus possible, though not certain, that the relations between Egypt and Crete which we know to have existed in later times, *e.g.* XIIth Dynasty, had been established much earlier. That the Egyptians traded with the great naval kingdom of Crete does not however make it certain or even probable that they were in anything like close contact with the more barbarous and less advanced inhabitants of the Mediterranean, from whom they had clearly so much less to gain. Thus it is difficult to see how the influence of Egypt should have been responsible for the creation of megalithic monuments in Malta or the Balearic Isles. To this it may be replied that the influence was not direct, but that the Egyptians taught the use of stone to some of their nearer neighbours, *e.g.* the people of North Africa, and that the custom spread from one country to another. The answer to this objection is to be found in the nature of the megalithic monuments themselves which makes it clear that they represent an entirely different tradition and type of architecture from any which ever existed in Egypt. Thanks mainly to the work of Duncan Mackenzie,² we are able to trace, in all countries where megalithic monuments occur, the elements of a definite system of building both for houses and tombs.

Let us consider what these elements are. In the first place we find, in the earliest period of which we have any knowledge in the megalithic area, two forms of structure in juxtaposition, whether for hut or for tomb, viz. the round and the rectangular. The concomitant occurrence of these types over such a vast area shews that they must have existed side by side from a very remote period in the history of the megalithic race, a period previous to their expansion in the Mediterranean. Thus in Sardinia the

¹ The evidence of the early cults, which has been so well worked out by Professor Newberry in *Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, vol. i., certainly seems to point to the racial affinity of the early Cretans and the Proto-Egyptians, though not necessarily to the existence at that remote period of commercial relations. Both Newberry and Hall—who curiously misunderstands Newberry on this point—are perhaps overbold in speaking of a Nilotic colonization of Crete. (See Hall, *op. cit.* p. 144.)

² See *Memnon*, ii. 1908, pp. 180 ff. *B.S.A.* xiv. pp. 345 ff.

huts are of the round type, whereas the rectangular type is preferred for the tomb. Two elliptical dolmens near Birori form exceptions to this last rule. Again, in Corsica there is a village of rectangular huts beside a series of rectangular dolmens. On the other hand, in Pantelleria we find in the village of the Mursia rectangular huts, whereas the burial chambers of the *sesi* on the same island are round.¹ In Malta we have the rectangular dolmen in juxtaposition with the apsidal type of building in the so-called 'temples' and in the hypogeum of Halsaflieni. Instances might be multiplied without end to shew how these two forms, the round and the rectangular, exist side by side throughout the megalithic area from Africa to Scotland.

The second element of megalithic architecture is the use of large orthostatic slabs. This might perhaps be called the most vital element in the whole. On it depends the existence of the simplest and most important of all megalithic monuments, the dolmen. This type occurs in practically every region where there are megalithic monuments at all. Even in Sardinia² and Malta,³ where its existence was formerly denied, it has lately been discovered. Moreover the dolmen appears to be the germ of most of the more complicated types of megalithic monument. Thus many of the Scandinavian forms are simple developments of the dolmen. The same may be said of the *allées couvertes* of France, and in Sardinia Mackenzie has found types intermediate between the simple dolmen and the elaborate *Tombe dei Giganti*.⁴

Side by side with the orthostatic slab technique we have a third element, the use of dry masonry, often made of smaller stones placed more or less horizontally. It is difficult to say whether this is so essential and so ancient a feature of megalithic architecture as the last. All we know is that we see it in full use in the *nuraghi* of Sardinia, in the *talayots* of the Balearic Isles, and almost everywhere in the megalithic area of Europe, often combined with the orthostatic technique in one and the same building, as in the 'temples' of Malta. With this horizontal method of building is closely associated the corbelling of the walls to form a roof as in the *nuraghi*. Moreover in the *Tombe dei Giganti* of Sardinia and the *talayots*

¹ *Mon. Ant. Lincei*, ix. 452 ff.

² *B.S.R.* v. pp. 133-5, Fig. 17.

³ Cf. the two dolmens discovered by Professor N. Tagliaferro, one near Musta and the other near Krendi.

⁴ Cf. the dolmen tombs of Su Coveccu and s'Enna sa Vacca, *B.S.R.* v. pp. 106 and 129, Figs. 6 and 15.

of the Balearic Isles we have a very natural combination of this with the simple slab roofing which usually goes along with the plain orthostatic technique, the walls being corbelled up to a certain point and the roof then completed with slabs.

A fourth element of megalithic architecture presents much more difficult problems. It is the principle of hewing chambers in the rock. That this was known to the builders of the megalithic monuments and commonly used by them, is beyond all doubt. To be convinced of this we have only to compare the form of the rock sepulchre of S. Vincent in Majorca¹ with that of the *allée couverte* called the Grotte des Fées² near Arles in France, where rock-cutting and slab-technique are combined; indeed, the mere fact of this combination of the techniques is enough to shew them to be the work of one people. In Sardinia, the builders of the *Tombe dei Giganti* were quite ready, when necessary, to imitate them in solid rock, as they did in the case of the Molafà and St. George tombs.³ In Malta we find an even more certain case, for the men who hewed out the hypogeum of Halsafieni made every effort to imitate in the solid rock the separate blocks of an above-ground megalithic building. Their ability to do this shews that they were quite at home in hollowing out the solid rock, but their careful insistence on the imitation inclines one to think that the above-ground type of work was more familiar to them.

We cannot therefore say whether the rock-sepulchre was an original element of megalithic architecture in the sense that the orthostatic slab technique was. It is possible that even from early times this race worked underground when blocks suitable for above-ground building did not lie ready to hand, but it is far from certain. Nor can we at present accept the suggestion sometimes made that a dolmen was an imitation of a rock tomb, large rough blocks being used to represent solid rock. Excavation in Africa may go far towards solving the question, but for the present all we know is that the dolmen and the rock-sepulchre appear in most parts of the megalithic area side by side at a comparatively early period.

The system of architecture we have described is a remarkable one in many ways. It is clearly very old and primitive and it preserves its nature even in small details in almost all the countries in which it occurs. Thus

¹ Cartailhac, *Monuments primitifs des Baléares*, p. 47.

² Déchelette, *Manuel d'archéologie préhistorique celtique et gallo-romaine*, Fig. 145.

³ *B.S.R.* v. pp. 123 ff. Fig. 13.

we have for example in Sardinia a type of grave, the *Tombe dei Giganti*, in which the entrance is in the centre of a kind of concave façade. This we find reproduced in the slightly curved front of the *navetas* of the Balearic Isles, in the tomb of Los Millares in Spain,¹ in the 'temples' of Malta,² in the so-called horned cairns of Caithness,³ in the tombs of Annaclochmullin⁴ and Newbliss⁵ in Ireland, in a tomb at Maughold in the Isle of Man, and in a barrow at West Tump in Gloucestershire.⁶ Again, the small hole which occurs in the front slab of some of the dolmens and *allées couvertes* is found in India, the Caucasus, Syria, Sardinia, France, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, and Scandinavia. Finally, the small cup-shaped markings on the stones occur in Palestine, North Africa, Spain, and Portugal, Corsica, France, the British Isles, Sweden, and Denmark.

These are things that cannot all be due to mere coincidence but which belong to the megalithic system of building. This system is one which in origin and development has little or nothing in common with the architecture of Egypt. Let us for a moment consider the origin of the latter. It appears first in the mud brick walls with which at the opening of the first dynasty the predynastic surface tombs began to be lined. Shortly afterwards follow the granite floor of the tomb of King Den, and the limestone chamber of the tomb of Khasekhemui. This is the first stone building known in Egypt, yet there is nothing megalithic about it. The stones are fairly well dressed and laid in comparatively regular horizontal courses. Nothing could be more unlike the orthostatic technique which is essential in the megalithic monuments. From the first dynasty onward horizontal masonry continued to be the method of building employed in Egypt, always of course side by side with the use of mud brick. It is difficult to see how the influence of building of this kind could have produced the dolmens as Professor Elliot Smith supposes. It is true that in Egyptian, as in most other buildings, enormous blocks of stone are used, but an uncivilized 'foreigner,' seeing Egyptian mastabas and temples and returning to his own country, while he might speak of and wish to imitate the use of stone or the size of Egyptian buildings, would certainly not be foolish

¹ *Memnon*, ii. p. 204, Fig. 22.

² Mayr, *Die vorgeschichtlichen Denkmäler von Malta*, Plan II.

³ *Memnon*, ii. pp. 208-9, Figs. 26 and 27. Compare these with the Sardinian example *B.S.R.* v. p. 116, Fig. 9.

⁴ Borlase, *Dolmens of Ireland*, i. p. 303, Fig. 278.

⁵ *Op. cit.* i. p. 291, Fig. 269.

⁶ *Op. cit.* ii. p. 460.

enough to try to emulate the Egyptians by using huge blocks of stone at a vast expense of labour when smaller ones would have served equally well.

Moreover, it is not true to say that 'the varieties in the form of the Egyptian monuments were reproduced in the dolmens, menhirs, cromlechs, and all the other forms of megalithic architecture.' It is exactly the variety and the persistence of these forms which shews that they cannot be derived from Egypt. Thus the round type of building so common in the megalithic area, has no prototype in early dynastic Egypt. It is true that the earliest form of predynastic tomb is a round or oval trench, but this, long before the first dynasty, had entirely given way before the rectangular type, which stood without a rival from that time onward. Nor do the dolmen and its derivatives bear any resemblance to any Egyptian type of tomb. A dolmen is essentially a chamber built above the ground and afterwards in some cases covered partially or wholly with a mound. The Egyptian tomb is essentially cut *in* the ground. In predynastic times it is merely a trench cut in the surface of the desert, sometimes complicated by a shelf or a recess. In the first dynasty we find a brick lining and even a division of the tomb into several parts by means of brick walls. In the second and third dynasties a corbelled roof is added and the tomb is often entered by a flight of stairs or a slope. Finally the slope gives place to a vertical shaft and the tomb becomes a subterranean chamber or series of chambers. But in addition to the burial chamber the Egyptian tomb possessed a chapel above ground. This may originally have been of wood, or in the case of poorer tombs it may have been omitted; in either case there is no trace of it in the predynastic tombs. Yet it gradually became an essential part of the tomb, and by the time of the fourth dynasty it had developed into the elaborate mastabas and pyramids of Gizeh. Thus the typical Egyptian tomb of the sixth dynasty was a shaft and chamber below ground and a mastaba of brick or stone above. Nothing could be more unlike a dolmen and yet Professor Elliot Smith tells us that it was about the sixth dynasty that the dolmen was derived from Egyptian influence.

But it may be objected that dolmens are not unknown in the Nile valley. It is true that examples have been reported from near Ladò in the Sudan,¹ but the Sudan is not Egypt. To those who imagine that the dolmen developed in Africa it is not at all surprising to find dolmens in the Sudan. They are not likely to occur in Egypt itself, because there a very

¹ Wilson and Felkin, *Uganda and the Egyptian Sudan*, ii. p. 123.

different civilisation took root and developed at an early date. The fact that a dolmen with a stone circle has been found near Egypt in the desert near Edfu, does not prove that the Egyptians ever built dolmens.¹ It was clearly erected, not by Egyptians at all, but by the nomadic tribes who inhabited the desert then as now.

So far we have been concerned with shewing that megalithic architecture is a definite system derived from the most primitive beginnings and carefully preserved, especially for burial purposes, and that there is no need to derive it from Egypt. Further, we have tried to shew that Egyptian architecture, especially as applied to tombs, is so totally different from megalithic that even supposing we were forced to derive the latter from any other at all, it could not be from Egyptian. There is a further *a priori* improbability in Professor Elliot Smith's hypothesis. He tells us that the more uncivilized peoples of the Mediterranean erected megalithic monuments in emulation of the Egyptian buildings which some of them had seen, and he adds that it was in virtue of their possession of copper that the Egyptians were able to erect such buildings. Now it is most improbable that if these nations were in close enough contact with Egypt to imitate her great stone buildings, they would have failed to learn from her the use of copper, a thing of far greater value. Professor Elliot Smith has attempted no explanation of this phenomenon, though he does give an explanation of the contrary fact that, on his theory, the Armenoids of Asia Minor adopted copper, but not megalithic monuments,² a fact which would be far more simple and explicable. He admits, however, quite rightly, that the non-possession of metal does not preclude the building of megalithic monuments. This is indeed the weakest point in his argument, for if the dolmens could be erected by a people in the stone age, as in some cases they certainly were, there is no longer any need to explain them as due to the influence of a copper-using country. It may well be that the invention of stone building in Egypt was the direct outcome of the discovery of copper tools, though it does not seem to have followed that discovery immediately. The erection of the earliest dolmens, on the other hand, needed no tools at all, either of stone or metal. Why then make it depend even indirectly on the appearance of copper in Egypt? The first dolmens were doubtless raised by men who

¹ De Morgan, *Recherches sur l'origine de l'Égypte*, 1896, p. 239, Fig. 598.

² *Op. cit.* pp. 180-1.

knew no metal, but who seized upon this way of making an imperishable tomb and monument to their dead. Perhaps great stones in themselves were in some way sacred to these people and so peculiarly suitable for funeral use.

The very fact that megalithic architecture was in the main funerary is an argument against ascribing it to Egyptian influence. What the 'Egyptian' theory comes to, when stated in all its baldness, is this. At some period about the VIth Dynasty certain natives of some region near Egypt, *e.g.* North Africa, who had heard of and perhaps even seen the great stone temples and tombs of Egypt, abandoned their old method of burying the dead (probably in the bare earth or in caves) and began to bury them in dolmens, for no other reason than that the Egyptians were in the habit of using stone to build with, whether for tombs or temples or other structures. Had these North Africans begun to build houses of stone we should have called it a natural phenomenon, but when tombs are concerned the case is different. There is nothing with regard to which a tribe or a race is more conservative than its rites of burial, bound up as they are with the whole of its religious beliefs. Thus it is unlikely that mere Egyptian influence could have caused such a change in the burial custom of these peoples, and it is, if possible, the more unlikely from the fact that the new type of tomb was far more difficult to construct than the old, and when made was far less secure as an abode of the dead. The very fact of the use of such huge blocks of stone, when smaller ones would have given an equally good result with less labour, is in itself a proof that the megalithic system of building was original and self-created, and not produced by influence from elsewhere.

It may, however, be asked if there is any more satisfactory explanation of the origin of the megalithic monuments. This is not a question which was proposed for discussion in this article and it would need far more than the space at our disposal. Moreover it is a problem which has not yet been solved and which perhaps never will be. There are, however, certain lines which every attempt at solution must follow. It must decide first of all whether all the megalithic monuments from Spain to Japan had a common origin, and, if not, into what separate groups they are to be divided. It must further go into the question of the relation of megalithic monuments to rock-hewn sepulchres, explaining why, if they have a common origin, rock sepulchres alone occur in Egypt, Caria, Lydia, Sicily,

Crete, Greece, and certain other places, and why, in any case, neither occur in certain parts of Europe and Asia. It must finally discuss the difficult question whether the appearance of megalithic monuments in any region can be explained by mere influence from abroad, or whether it must be due to an actual immigration of new people.¹

T. ERIC PEET.

¹ Of the enormous mass of literature on the subject we may quote: Bonstetten, *Essai sur les Dolmens*, Geneva, 1865; Bertrand, *Archéologie celtique et gauloise*, 2nd edit. 1889; Reinach, S., 'Le Mirage oriental' in *L'Anthropologie*, 1893, pp. 557 ff.; Montelius, *Orient und Europa*.