



---

The Dolmens and Burial Mounds in Japan by William Gowland; *The Dolmens of Japan and Their Builders* by W. Gowland  
Review by: T. V. H.  
*The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 29, No. 1/2 (1899), pp. 183-184  
Published by: [Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland](#)  
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2842591>  
Accessed: 15/06/2014 05:28

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

word *ardûru*, "all." But few get as far as this, and the process usually breaks down at *six* or *seven*.

While indispensable to the student of language, Mr. Portman's book will also be prized by the folk-lorist for the specimens it gives of the Andamanese myths and legends. Several variants are given, all at first hand, of the curious fire-legend, in which *Pûluga*, head of the native pantheon, plays a part singularly inconsistent with the idea of a Supreme Being current amongst less primitive peoples.

A. H. KEANE.

THE DOLMENS AND BURIAL MOUNDS IN JAPAN. By William Gowland, Esq., F.S.A., etc., *Archæologia*, vol. iv, pp. 439-524 (1897).

THE DOLMENS OF JAPAN AND THEIR BUILDERS. By W. Gowland, Assoc. R.S.M., F.C.S., F.S.A., *Trans. and Proc. Japan Society*, vol. iv, Part III (1899).

In these two papers we have a clear and well-illustrated account of the Dolmens of Japan by Mr. Gowland, late of the Imperial Japanese Mint. While they have much in common, they are by no means identical as regards either the letterpress or the illustrations, though alike in general treatment and conclusions.

The author remarks that he uses the term "dolmen" in its broad or generic sense to signify "a stone burial-chamber, generally of rude megalithic structure, larger than a cist, and whether covered by a mound or not." They are numerous in Japan, where he has "carefully examined 406 and made drawings of or measured 140." Simple mounds preceded the dolmens. Burial in chambers hewn out of rock was also largely practised by the early Japanese. But standing-stones, either single as "menhirs" or in "avenues" or "circles" have not been discovered in Japan.

The simple burial mounds have been mostly destroyed either "by the hand of time or in reclaiming land for agriculture." The remains found in them consist generally of stone beads and ornaments with swords and arrowheads of bronze. No stone weapons or implements have (in Mr. Gowland's experience) been found in these ancient burial mounds, the evidence tending to show that the Japanese had passed out of the Stone Ages before they migrated from the mainland, and were, when in Japan, in the last stages of their Bronze Age.

A map in the paper from *Archeologia* illustrates the distribution of Burial Mounds, Dolmens and Rock-Hewn Tombs in Japan. We learn that they occur chiefly "in the basins of the greater rivers, on the margins of the more important plains, and near the coasts of the inland and Japan Seas." From their distribution the author thinks that during the dolmen-building period the extreme north-east and some of the wilder tracts of the interior were still held by the Ainu aborigines: this view being confirmed by the increasing numbers of aboriginal stone weapons found as we proceed towards the northern extremity of the island. The situations in which dolmens are usually found are "the lower flanks of a mountain range, and the crests and slopes of the lower hills and upland tracts which bound the plains; sites commanding extensive views being preferred.

The author divides the Japanese dolmens into "four great typical classes according to the general form or plan of their interiors, beginning with the most simple and ending with the most highly differentiated structures." He then gives accounts, illustrated by plans, sections, etc., of examples of these classes and of the weapons, ornaments, etc., discovered in them. No well or even moderately preserved skeleton (he says) has yet been found in any dolmen, owing to the damp atmosphere and free infiltration of water; and this is true even of those in which there is a sarcophagus.

As to the period to which they belong, he remarks that "the dolmens are certainly all of the Iron Age." No bronze swords have ever been found in them, though bronze arrowheads associated with iron swords are said to occur occasionally. And as iron was known in China as early as the year 1000 B.C., and as there was communication between China and Japan at least as early as the year 265 B.C., Mr. Gowland thinks the beginning of the Iron Age in Japan may date from about the last-named year; and that shortly after dolmens began to be built. And he states that the total abolition of burial in dolmens was decreed by the Emperor Mommu (697-707 A.D.) and cremation introduced about the same time.

There is no evidence that the dolmen builders had any metallic currency, and no indication that they possessed a knowledge of writing. As to their religious belief:—

"The arms and armour, the ornaments, and the vessels for food and drink, show conclusively that there was a belief in a future state of existence for the dead, not widely different from that they had left behind, and in which they required all those things which they had been accustomed to use in their life on this side of the tomb. The sacrifice of retainers and the subsequent substitution for them of terra-cotta images also bears out this view."

T. V. H.

ETHNOLOGY, in two parts. By A. H. Keane, F.R.G.S., 2nd edition, Cambridge, 1896.  
"Man, Past and Present." By the same author. Cambridge, 1899.

In these two volumes, the work of Professor Keane, we have at last a comprehensive treatise on the Science of Man, which may safely be placed in the hands of English students of Anthropology. The existing English literature of the subject includes pre-Darwinian books, such as those by Dr. Prichard, Messrs. Nott and Gliddon, and Dr. Latham. Since then English scholars, such as Professors Huxley, Tylor, and Boyd Dawkins, Mr. Darwin, Sir John Evans, Sir John Lubbock, and many writers in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, have made important contributions to the knowledge and evolution of Early Man. But while continental writers have provided many valuable works of a comprehensive character, the English student has hitherto possessed no standard treatise of the subject as a whole, except the *Anthropology* of Dr. Tylor and Dr. Brinton's *Races and Peoples*, both admirable works, but of a less comprehensive range than Professor Keane's Manuals.

The new Cambridge Geographical Series thus supplies an obvious want. The author is one of the most learned members of the modern English Anthropological school. His range of reading in the highways and byways of Ethnological literature is immense; his manuals are brightly written, well arranged and excellently illustrated.

The treatise on Ethnology consists of two parts—the first dealing with those fundamental problems which affect the human family as a whole; the second discussing the several main branches of Mankind. In "Man, Past and Present," the range is wider and the author discusses in detail the origin and inter-relations of the main groups of the Hominidæ, and attempts to bridge the gulf between the past and present of the Human Race.

It is, of course, impossible to review in detail the vast amount of information thus brought to bear upon the physical and psychical development of Man. Mr. Keane is naturally a follower of the evolutionary school; he dismisses the theory of a special creation and concludes that man has been developed from a Pliocene ancestor. He is not "descended" from the gorilla, the chimpanzee, or some other member of the Simiidæ, his nearest congeners; but his ascent is referred to some long extinct