

Continuum of Consciousness

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Extract:

Men with higher knowledge have always been in the position to see the average intellectual level and the spiritual sleep of mankind, and have sought ways of transmitting their knowledge to posterity in such forms as to attract the attention of those capable of receiving it but going unnoticed by those who could never make use of it. Music, literature, sculpture, pottery, painting, architecture, landscaping, religion, mathematics, certain games of skill, and sometimes folklore have been used for handing on laws, data, indications, and instructions from generation to generation, and more often than not those persons who act as the custodians, priests, archivists, teachers and responsible officials having charge of these 'instruments' are totally unaware of the tremendous importance and value of the things and teachings temporarily in their keeping.

One of the fantastic weaknesses of human beings is that they very often seek for the means of spiritual regeneration in far-away places, in exotic formulae and practices, or in some impossible situation which only an excited imagination could conjure up, whereas the very things they seek are not infrequently close at hand awaiting use by those conscious enough to notice them.

Scattered throughout many parts of the world are architectural constructions which are unique works of art made in a special manner to attract attention, to create a definite emotional impression, and to reveal a psychological or cosmic principle. Among these are some of the monuments made by megalithic artisans of prehistoric times. Thousands of years ago there spread through Mediterranean regions a set of ideas, beliefs and practices which led to the construction of graves and temples composed of huge stones whose mass and size must have taxed the strength, skill and ingeniousness of the men who gathered, transported and then erected these mighty units in accordance with a definite plan.

A characteristic structure was the dolmen, a burial chamber consisting of several vertically arranged stones which supported a single large capstone that formed the roof. Some of these capstones weigh up to 40 tons and their sheer mass and irregular shape must have made them very difficult objects to drag into position and balance upon several upright stones. Many dolmens have been located in Europe, England, Ireland and they all express the same complex of ideas, emotions and beliefs. To spend some time studying a typical and well-preserved dolmen, making an effort to sense its function, is worthwhile because one may gain an insight into the meaning of a practice now forgotten in modern times, but of enormous significance to Stone Age man. The massive stones protected the grave and the various personal belongings that

were placed with the deceased, yet the dolmen was more than a shelter for the body. It was a meeting place between two worlds, the natural and the spiritual, and in its original function it served as a place where the soul of the deceased received the concentrated spiritual assistance of his colleagues, relatives and descendants.

It was well known to many of the ancients that no man leaves the planet Earth in a completed or perfected form. Yet his progress in the spiritual world depends upon the perfecting of his being and his disentanglement from emotional and psychic involvements with various planetary dwellers. When a man died it was important to help him to complete his growth in order to advance heavenwards, and those left behind took it upon themselves to construct (or cause to be constructed) an instrument for intensifying the psychic link between the spirit of the deceased and his brethren. The emanations associated with the body and personal belongings of the deceased resonated with the life-forces in his spirit, and these same emanations could be reinforced and amplified by certain conscious efforts on the part of those who sought to promote the welfare and advancement of the deceased.

Many megalithic dolmens, gallery graves, passage graves and temples were sanctified regions where men and women could assemble, unite their thoughts and feelings, and direct their combined energies towards a deceased person for the purpose of aiding his spiritual development. The elaborate graves thus served several functions, including that of being a meeting place for small groups assembled for the purpose of helping themselves by assisting their ancestors and deceased relatives, acting as a visible memorial for the deceased, and acting as a 'sounding board' for the concentration of psychic forces generated in an effort to bridge the gulf between two worlds. The earliest megalithic dolmens are much older than the pyramids of Egypt and it seems that they were originally constructed in Palestine and Jordan during the fourth millennium. They are the tangible expressions of a very old culture whose influences spread far and wide throughout Mediterranean countries and even reached England, the Isle of Man, Ireland, and the Orkney Islands.

The megalithic builders used large stones to express important ideas, to communicate special events, to mark boundaries, and to function as mnemonic devices. Swedenborg makes the valuable contribution (in *The Arcana Caelestia*) to a better understanding of these ancient works by pointing out that stone has always represented truth; unhewn stone portrays truth received from God, hewn or dressed stone portrays received truth that has been 'reshaped', 'corrected' or otherwise adapted by man for his own ends. Bearing this distinction in mind it becomes a matter of great interest to study megalithic structures in Europe. The gigantic ring of stones at Avebury seems to have been composed of unhewn stones. Many stones are missing,

but those remaining are not shaped by tools; the alternate diamond and upright stones show a careful selection and arrangement of meaningful shapes whose juxtaposition spells out a spiritual truth for all men to see. By contrast, the stones at Stonehenge have been shaped, worked and polished. A different philosophy lay behind this impressive structure which seems to have been built according to some big, but artificial ideas concerning religion and the spiritual life.