THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANNELLED WARE IN NEOLITHIC WESTERN EUROPE

By JACQUETTA HAWKES

ABBREVIATIONS

Arch. J. ... Archaeological Journal.
Ceramica Incisa ... La Ceramica Incisa de la Cultura de las Cuevas de la Peninsula Iberica y el Problema de Origen de la Especie de Vaso Campaniforme. By A. del Castillo.
Collum and le Rouzic ... Forthcoming Publication:—Corpus of South Morbihan Megalithic Monuments, by Miss V. C. C. Collum, based on Z. le Rouzic's unfinished geographical handlist.
B.S.P.F. ... Bulletin de la Societe Prehistorique Francaise.
Dawn ... The Dawn of European Civilization. By Prof. Gordon Childe.
J.R.S.A.I. ... Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.
Materiaux ... Materiaux pour l'Histoire Primitive de l'Homme.
P.B.N.H.P.S. ... Proceedings of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society.
P.P.S. ... Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. New Series.
P.P.S.E.A. ... Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia.
P.S.A.S. ... Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.
Real. ... Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte, edited Ebert, 1924-29.

Since 1932 when Professor Gordon Childe¹ and Mr. Stuart Piggott² laid the foundations of a scientific study of British neolithic pottery with their papers in this Journal, great progress has been made in the subject and vital new material come to light. England has been well served by Mr. Piggott,³ and recently by Miss Newbigin,⁴ but perhaps even greater interest has

² The Neolithic Pottery of the British Isles. Ibid., pp. 67-158.
³ Particularly in 'Mutual Relations of British Neolithic Ceramics,' P.P.S.E.A. vii, 3, pp. 373-81.
⁴ P.P.S. iii, 2, pp. 189-216.
centred in Scotland and Ireland. On one side this has been largely due to Professor Childe’s *Prehistory of Scotland* and his numerous stimulating papers,¹ and to the excavations of Mr. Lindsay Scott;² on the other to the great growth of Irish archaeology in general and to the researches of Mr. Estyn Evans,³ Mr. Davies, and Miss Gaffkin on northern megaliths in particular. Such intensive activity in the Highland zone has naturally helped to focus attention on the distinctive Hiberno-Scottish varieties of British Neolithic A pottery which were first classified in 1932. These are the Beacharra and Unstan wares, differentiated from the more normal forms of Neolithic A by several peculiarities, particularly of ornament. It is my object here, while publishing some little-known material, to deal as exhaustively as possible with the west European ceramic tradition to which these wares belong, not from the British point of view but as a whole. This method will, however, suggest a need for slight adjustment in the present British classification.

To find a comprehensive name for the type of pottery under consideration is a hard task; its most universal criterion is an engraved ornamentation, with a tendency towards formal arrangement, that is often built up from groups of concentric semicircles and panels or bands of horizontal and vertical lines. There are also features of paste and form that are prevalent over large parts of the total range, but these are not quite everywhere consistent, and it is therefore necessary for the title to refer to the decoration. This may be executed in deep narrow grooves, or in shallow broad ones, in a variety of stab and stab-and-drag techniques, or even, in a hybrid form, in cord; while

---

the semicircle motive, though widely characteristic is not an absolutely essential element. I have been driven at last to select the inadequate but inclusive term of channelled ware, as it is suggestive of the French term cannelure, already associated with some branches of this pottery, without excluding any of the other variants. The common ornamental scheme of panels of alternating vertical and horizontal lines will be referred to as hurdle pattern.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Before going further it may be as well very lightly to sketch in the general background against which channelled ware is to be viewed over its extensive range from the West Mediterranean to Orkney. This can be followed by a regional survey of all relevant material known to me, and then by an attempt to provide some chronological and cultural framework for this scattered and vagrant ware. Finally, very ill at ease, I shall discuss the meanings that may lie behind some of its peculiar designs, in the hope of explaining a persistence of tradition over wide areas and in diverse settings that may otherwise appear unlikely, if not incredible.

The beginnings of neolithic civilisation in the western Mediterranean can be said, with some danger of over simplification, to have two major divisions, both of them ultimately due to Egypt, but ever open to sea-borne influences from more easterly parts of the Mediterranean. The first of these originated in the spread at second hand of simple elements of Egyptian culture among the cave-dwelling peoples of North Africa, who in turn seem to have been responsible for introducing them to the similarly troglodyte and probably related inhabitants of southern and central Spain. The aspect of this pastoral and hunting culture that is here chiefly of concern is its elaborately incised pottery, known to Spanish archaeology simply as ceramica incisa. The spread of the new ideas in the north of the peninsula produced the rather different Northern Cave Culture, in which the pottery is
decorated not by incision but by the application of clay strips to form patterns in relief.

Wares related to the Iberian *ceramica incisa*, but later complicated by eastern elements, occur in south Sardinian caves and in east Sicilian settlements such as Stentinello, while in time a descendant branch, usually known as Chassey ware, spread from the south over large parts of France as far as Brittany and Normandy. Sardinia received further influences from Malta, where an early immigration with strong Asiatic elements seems to account for many of the island's distinctive cultural features, among them pottery that has much in common with Near Eastern ceramic traditions.

Meanwhile the second and much higher civilisation was establishing itself in south-east Spain. The absolutely plain, round-bottomed pottery of this Almerian culture is so reminiscent of neolithic Egyptian ceramics like the Merimdian, as to make it virtually certain that its owners had had direct contact with Egypt, though their immediate source and the route by which they came remain uncertain. The Almerians represent the earliest manifestation in Europe of that Western Neolithic that was to extend over France and Switzerland and South Germany, and to produce the Windmill Hill (Neolithic A) culture of the British Isles.

Before very long their civilisation in south-east Spain was stimulated by fresh influences coming apparently from the Aegean, the most conspicuous and important effect of which was upon burial custom. The tholos or beehive type of communal tomb that was prevalent in central Crete in Early Minoan times spread westward with various elaborations; in Sicily and Sardinia rock-cut derivatives appear, represented in their most complicated form by the Sardinian tombs of Anghelu Ruju, with multiple chambers approached by a relatively narrow passage-way. The Almerians, who had previously practised single and communal burial in simple cist and trench graves, now adopted imposing communal monuments of the tholos-passage grave type. A famous group of such tombs forms the necropolis of the fortified settlement
of Los Millares. In this primary centre the building was usually in drystone walling, but when Almerian traders began to push elsewhere round the peninsula, particularly westwards, this method tended to be replaced either by megalithic construction as at Alcalá, Algarve, or by rock-cut chambers like the great Portuguese necropolis of Palmella; in poorer regions, notably northern Portugal, proportions were naturally reduced, and small megalithic graves were the rule. Accompanying these burial practices went a variety of ritual objects, stone plaques and idols, pottery magically decorated with human faces and animals, and rock—carved and painted—symbols.

From the west Iberian expansion of megalithic building followed the familiar spread of passage graves to Brittany, central Ireland, north Scotland and Scandinavia. But probably before these passage grave folk were able to establish themselves in the British Isles another megalithic form had reached there by a short cut. In Catalonia, both flanks of the Pyrenees and south-east France, a blending of Almerian cist grave tradition with megalithic passage grave ideas appears to have promoted the building of rectangular megalithic cists, sometimes with multiple compartments divided by low septal slabs. Such rectangular cists also appear in Sardinia, where in time the highly specialised type known as Giants' Graves emerges, with their long narrow chambers, and semicircular forecourts giving the curious 'horned' effect. These were probably not fully evolved before the Bronze Age, but there were almost certainly simpler forms at a much earlier date.

Meanwhile long cist builders seem to have spread rapidly across to the west French coast, their route marked by such famous monuments as La Halliade and other tombs of the Plateau de Ger, and thence to have sailed up St. George’s Channel and the Irish Sea to instigate the horned cairns of north-east Ireland and the similar segmented cists of the Clyde-Solway type in south-west Scotland. To the same movement was possibly due the appearance of the first Scandinavian megaliths, the simple dolmens.
But in Iberia a still more far-reaching event was preparing among the once primitive cave-dwellers of the interior. Under the influence of the surrounding coastal colonisation of the Almerians, these people greatly developed their culture, and from a refinement of their original ceramic incisa developed the bell-beaker form which was soon to be diffused across half Europe. In the Peninsula early forms spread westward, and are found in the rock-cut passage tombs of Palmella. Fully evolved forms appear also in the east, even in the Almerian stronghold of Los Millares, and there is a large concentration in Catalonia and south-east France. Still further east beakers are found in the rock-cut chambers of Sardinian Anghelu Ruju. Their subsequent extraordinary diffusion, on the one hand to Brittany, where they occur in megalithic tombs with the Western plain ware and Chassey pottery, and on the other to Italy, Central Europe, and ultimately in hybrid form to Britain, is too well-known to need further remark.

This, then, in crudest outline, is the world in which the particular form of pottery that we are calling channelled ware developed, spread, and for a time maintained itself.

**REGIONAL SURVEY**

It will be best to start the regional survey of channelled ware with the West Mediterranean where its distribution is wide, including North Africa, Iberia, Sardinia, north Italy, and the south of France.

**AFRICA**

In North Africa deeply grooved semicircles are among the motifs of the incised pottery from the cave Rio Salado, Oran;¹ other designs found at this site are parallel incisions filled with close-set finger nail impressions and herring-bone patterns; there is also a good tubular lug. Further west semicircle ornament occurs again at the cave of Ali Bacha, Bougie,² where

---

¹ Bosch Gímpére, *Etn. de la Pen Iberica*, p. 49, Fig. 29.
² E. Baumgärtel in *Real.*, p. 456, Fig. 77.
the arcs are centred on a single short straight line, and set between vertical incisions (Fig. 1).

![Sherd from the Cave of Ali Bacha, Bougie, North Africa](image)

**FIG. 1**

**SHERD FROM THE CAVE OF ALI BACHA, BOUGIE, NORTH AFRICA**

(After E. Baumgartel)

**SPAIN**

Crossing the Straits of Gibraltar one finds the same design among the related *ceramica incisa* (p. 128) of the southern Spanish Cave Culture. It is particularly abundant in the Gibraltar caves of Genista and St. Michael,\(^1\) whence come the large and deeply grooved examples shown in Pl. i and Fig. 5, 4; the upright neck, rounded body and tubular lug, occurring elsewhere in Spain as well as in southern France and Brittany, can be regarded as characteristic. This form is present again at the Hoya de la Mina cave, Malaga,\(^2\) where it is well shown by a pot (Fig. 2, 1) with pendant semicircles low on the belly, bands of ladder pattern above, and a form of hurdle pattern round the neck. The decoration is here carried out in the stab-and-drag *Boquique* technique that is so common in the western and eastern centres of this Cave Culture. Another vessel from Hoya de la Mina is of interest as its form as well as the style of its incised ornament connect it with channelled ware; the curious series of angular hoops one inside the other with a hanging

---


(1) St. Michael's Cave, Gibraltar; (2) Genista Cave I, Gibraltar; (3) Gibraltar Caves (exact provenance uncertain); (4-8) Genista Caves I, II, or III; (9-15) La Pileta Cave, Malaga.

(Photograph: British Museum)
fringe on the innermost is almost exactly paralleled at the well-known Cueva de la Mujer, Granada. The latter site also yielded a sherd with the rayed circle or sun motif (pp. 135, 167). Some examples of the Boquique technique are noted from another cave in Malaga, La Pileta, but the semicircles on the sherd from the British Museum shown in Pl. i, 9 are executed in the deep grooving more usual in this area. In all these southern sites without exception, channelled ware with its pendant loops is associated with ceramica incisa of orthodox Cave Culture type, and in particular with the ladder pattern already recognised in the African caves and illustrated in Pl. i, 12–15.

It is hard to judge whether the well-known ‘eyed’ bowls from Los Millares (Almeria) should be included in a survey of true channelled ware, but their connexions with it are undeniable (p. 167). It should not be forgotten that both the finest eyed bowls have columns of short arcs (on one of them merging with the curved bodies of the stags), and that there are less perfected examples, one (Fig. 9, 25) with roughly incised rayed ‘eyes’ similar to the sun motif just noticed at the Cueva de la Mujer, and another with the ‘angled chin line’ (p. 167) seen on the idols and shortly to be encountered on a pot from Portugal. Another Almerian vessel that cannot be ignored comes from Velez Blanco; it is of the upright-necked form, and in addition to the feminine symbol of the double triangle it bears groups of incised zigzag lines identical with those which will be found in frequent association with channelled ware designs in Brittany (p. 147).

There is a considerable eastern group of channelled ware in the caves and megaliths of Catalonia. Grooved concentric semicircles appear among the decorated pottery from the Cueva Fonda of Salamo, fringed with an outer line of crescentic impressions. The same fringed effect, although here procured by short straight lines, occurs also at the collective grave, part natural
cave and part megalith, of Aigues Vives, Brics,¹ and again on a vessel more or less of the high-necked shape at the Escornalbou cave, Tarragona² (Fig. 2, 2). Both at Salamo and Brics channelled ware is associated with fully developed beakers and shallow bowls with radiate designs on the base (Palmella type), and at Brics with a bronze dagger and bone plaques with V perforation; no true beakers occur at Escornalbou, but there are Palmella bowls, and also applied strip finger-printed ware showing admixture with the Northern Cave Culture (p. 128). This culture is more

FIG. 2

(1) Jar from Hoya de la Mina, Malaga, South Spain
(After M. Gomez-Moreno)

(2) Pot from the cave of Escornalbou, Tarragona, Catalonia. Ht. 11.5 cms.
(After J. Serra Vilaro)

fully represented at the cave of Joan d’Os, Tartareau,³ where semicircle designs are executed in a punctuated technique; the same design in Boquique stab-and-drag is recorded from the Cueva Negra and the Cueva del Tabaco,⁴ both in Lérida.

The fringed edges of the semicircles at Escornalbou,

¹ J. Serra Vilaro, El Vas Campaniforme a Catalunya i los Coves Sepulcrais Eneolitiques, Solsona, 1923, pp. 39–58.
² J. Serra Vilaro, Escornalbou Prehistorich, 1925.
³ Bosch Gimpera, op. cit., p. 74, Fig. 44.
⁴ A. del Castillo Yurrita, La Ceramica Incisa, pp. 7–8.
Salamo and Brics are suggestive of the rayed circles, or suns, already recorded in the south, and which appear again in two Catalan megaliths, Puig Rodo, l’Estany,¹ and Puig ses Pedres, S. Maria de Corco, as well as at two cave sites near Madrid, Perales de Tajuna² and Las Carolinas.³ Their evident connexion with the rayed ‘eyes’ of the Los Millares bowls has already been mentioned (p. 133) and will be further discussed later (p. 167). The Puig Rodo is the only megalithic cist with true septal slabs (giving a segmented plan of three compartments) that has been recognized in Catalonia.

Moving westwards there is a small central group of channelled ware in the Avila-Salamanca region and south of it. Here the earliest pottery at the cave of Las Cogatas ⁴ includes many examples of pendant semicircles in Boquique technique, apparently associated with ladder pattern, serried lines of finger-nail impressions, and herring-boning, recalling the material from the southern caves. But there are also bands of criss-cross incisions and zigzag ribbons reserved between cross-hatched triangles that look like bell-beaker decoration. A second site on the borders of Avila and Salamanca is Cerro de Berrueco,⁵ where plentiful surface finds comprise numbers of sherds with semicircles either grooved or in stab-and-drag. Farther south, at the cave of Boquique, near Plasencia, type site for the stab-and-drag technique, the motif occurs once more.

PORTUGAL

In Portugal a western group of channelled ware is represented at a number of sites, Alcobaca, Pavia, Peniche, Casa de Moura, Guimaraes and Palmella. The excavators at Alcobaca noted that incised semicircles were present on the pottery from one site in

---

¹ L. Pericot y Garcia, La Civilizacion Megalitica Catalana y la Cultura Pirenaica, p. 37.
³ 'Yacimiento Prehistorico de las Carolinas,' Mem. de la Comision de Investigaciones Paleontologicas, Madrid, 1917. Figured in La Cultura del Vaso Campaniforme, Pl. xxi.
⁵ Cesar Moran, Junto Superior de Exc. y Ant., Num. 65, 1923.
the district only, the Cabeço da Ministra, a natural cave with megalithic additions; associated finds included other incised and punctuated wares, flat schist idols, and bone pins with grooved cylindrical heads. On one sherd a vertical band of chevrons adjoins the semicircles (Fig. 9, 29). At Peniche the cave of Furninha yielded a remarkable assemblage of pottery, among which was a deep bag-shaped vessel with vertical tubular lugs set below the lip, and enwound with incised ribbons filled with rough pricks and jabs, and another decorated with rough zigzags reminiscent of Velez Blanco (p. 133). The pendant semicircle is rather poorly represented on what seems to be a lugged bowl. Schist idols and bone pins are among the associated finds at Furninha as at Cabeço da Ministra, also a wide range of arrowheads—transverse, leaf-shaped, hollow-based and tanged. At Palmella a little bowl is decorated with curved lines terminating in chevrons (Fig. 9, 26), a design obviously representing the "angled chin line" of the idols (p. 167), yet not unconnected with the sherd from the Cabeço da Ministra mentioned above and also illustrated in Fig. 9, 29. At Pavia the occupation site of the Castillo, which it seems must be contemporary with the surrounding astonishingly numerous group of passage graves, yielded a single sherd with half circles, and also an interesting bowl with a kind of hurdle pattern, which appears from the published drawing to be carried out in whipped cord or some similar technique. Two of the neighbouring passage graves produced carinated bowls, each with a pair of double arched lines, plainly representing 'eyebrows'; other pottery from the Castillo and the graves was of the plain Almerian type. At Monte da Penha, Guimaraes, curved lines were fringed with shorter ones in the same manner as the Catalonian examples already described.

This completes the list of Iberian sites known to

---

1 *Portugalia* i, p. 438.
2 J. F. N. Delgado, 'Grotte de Furninha a Peniche,' *Congres de Lisbonne*, 1880, p. 207.
3 J. J. Delgado, 'Grotte de Furninha a Peniche,' *Congres de Lisbonne*, 1880, p. 207.
4 V. Correia, El Neolitico de Pavia.
me to have yielded the semicircle and allied motifs, and although there are others where the ornamental technique recalls our ware, it has seemed best to limit the account to this distinctive design, as in the Peninsula channelled ware is less sharply differentiated from other *ceramica incisa* than it is elsewhere, notably in the south of France.

**SARDINIA**

Sardinia is another important Mediterranean centre for channelled ware. It is best represented at the cave of San Michele at Ozieri, where vessels are ornamented with closely packed groups of concentric semicircles (Fig. 9, 30) or complete circles (*ibid.* 28). Tunnel lugs are a conspicuous feature, and these may be emphasised by a surround of concentric circles (*ibid.* 28, 30); several stages between broad tubular lugs and the fully formed tunnel type are also present. There is little doubt that in some instances the eye-like effect of the pairs of openings of the tunnel lugs is deliberately enhanced, and the third group of circles (*ibid.* 28) added to represent the mouth. Other pottery from the same cave includes elaborately incised ware with spiral and volute ornament in plain ribbon or ladder pattern, that would seem to indicate a Maltese element.

Bowls embellished with concentric semicircles appear in the rock-cut passage graves of Anghelu Ruju, as does the spiral pottery, beaker, and a late type of plain ware. Channelled ware has not been recorded from the megalithic Giants' Graves.

The channelled ware at San Michele is likely to be contemporary with the lower occupation level at another cave, S. Bartolomeo de Cagliari, that is characterised by ladder patterned pottery, and may well be the earliest site in the island. This occupation is overlain by one containing bell-beakers.

The technique of this Sardinian group is exceptional; the lines are not formed in stab-and-drag or

---

3 *Bull. de Palaeontologia Italiana*, xxiv, PIs. 17-19.
plain grooving, but by tiny close-set jabs often of crescentic shape.

ITALY

In the Ligurian caves of Italy a rather feeble offshoot of channelled ware can just be detected; semicircles and complete concentric circles are grooved on at least one sherd from the Pollera cave, and the same site supplies a very shallow bowl with curved grooved lines and a long tubular lug.

SOUTH-EAST FRANCE

It is in the south of France that we encounter another major and distinguished branch of our ceramic family. Centred in the Department of the Gard,

![Image](1) Jar from the Cave Shelter of Foissac, Gard. (After S. l'Hermite)

![Image](2) Bowl from the Grotte St. Veredème, Gard. Ht. 12 cms.

and more particularly the Valley of the Gardon, there is a large body of material coming from over a dozen sites, of which the majority are caves, but

1 Morelli, Econografia de la Prehistoria Ligustica, pt. i, Pl. 100. Atti de la Universita de Genoa xvi.

2 In the Gardon Valley: Caves—des Bohémiens, de Firole, Fromagerie, Salpétriere, Sartanette, St. Veredème; elsewhere in Dept. Gard: Cave of Baron, allée couverte de Castellet, cave shelter of Foissac, fond de cabane at Villeneuve les Avignons, the Dolmen de Viala; in Dept. Aude: Caves—de Bize, de la Crouzade, Trou-du-Loup.
A. BOWL FROM EILEAN AN TIGHE  Scale $\frac{1}{3}$
(By courtesy of Mr. Lindsay Scott)

B. SHERD FROM PEU-RICHARD, CHARENTE-INFERIEURE; BOWL FROM THE 'DOLMEN DE VIALA,' GARD.
(Photograph: Musee des Antiquites Nationales, St-Germain-en-Laye)
two are megaliths and one a *fond de cabane*. The range extends northwards as far as Villeneuve les Avignons\(^1\) and west into the Aude Department, where I know of only one certain site, the Trou-du-Loup cave, Armissan,\(^2\) but the Grotte de la Crouzade, Gruissan, and the Grotte de Bize,\(^3\) might also be included. The megalithic sites are the 'Dolmen de Viala,' Campestre, whence came the bowl shown in Pl. ii, b, and the subterranean long cist of Castellet,\(^4\) near Arles.

In this region channelled ware is so well distinguished from all associated pottery by a number of characteristics, that it is here unnecessary to treat the semicircle motif as the sole reliable criterion for its recognition. The ornament is executed in grooves that are broader and relatively shallower than anything hitherto described; the most usual motifs are concentric semicircles (six sites), hurdle pattern (at least five sites), continuous bands of vertical and horizontal grooves (as on the Viala Bowl and the jar from Foissac), and chevrons probably derived from semicircles (two sites, including the Grotte de Castellet). In the best finished examples these designs are combined to make a formal and well-balanced whole. The paste is almost always dark greyish in colour, with a well smoothed, even glossy, exterior. Two pot forms can be recognised as characteristic: one, already encountered in Iberia (p. 132) is the jar with rounded body and upright neck, which is best represented by the well-known specimen from the cave shelter of Foissac\(^5\) (Gard) (Fig. 3, 1), and a very similar vessel from the Grotte des Bohémiens near the Pont du Gard, now in the Montpelier Museum. The second form is the round bottomed bowl, perhaps most usually with wide expanded top like Pl. ii, b, but also with deeper straight sides, as illustrated by Fig. 3, 2 from the Grotte St. Veredème (Gard). Long tubular lugs, noted in North Africa, Iberia and Italy, are present at five or more

\(^{1}\) S. Gagniere and L. Germand, 'Fonds de Cabanes a Villeneuve les Avignons,' Congres de Lons-le-Saunier, 1928, Pl. ii.

\(^{2}\) P. Hélène, *Les Origines de Narbonne*, p. 73.

\(^{3}\) Ibid., Fig. 31.

\(^{4}\) Real., iv, 1, Pls. 19c, 20e.

sites in the Gard and certainly rank as a typical feature. At many of these sites in Languedoc (the caves of St. Veredeme, Fromagerie, Sartanette, de Firolle\(^1\) in the Gard, and Trou-du-Loup, Aude) channelled pottery is associated with the finely incised and punctuated ware that is so closely akin to decorated Chassey; this frequent association makes it the more remarkable that the two ceramic traditions remain sharply differentiated in every respect: paste, form and decoration. Hybrids are rare and I know of only two clear examples in this region: a sherd from the Grotte Fromagerie in the Gardon Valley on which

![sherd from the grotte de bize, aude. scale 1/4.](image)

pendant semicircles in *cannelure* abut on to a long *flûte de Pan* of the familiar Chassey type, and a fragment from the Grotte de Bize (Aude) that is predominantly in the finely incised Chassey style, but combined with grooved curvilinear elements (Fig. 4). There is also a remarkable sherd from the Grotte de la Crouzade\(^2\) (Aude) that is in some sense intermediate: a depression is here surrounded by a ring of punctuations, and below it a pendant loop is outlined by a groove and a line of punctuations and filled with vertical grooves; some connexion with the Sardinian or Iberian ‘eye’ design seems probable. But in general the division between the two traditions is complete,

---

\(^1\) *B.S.P.F.*, 1930, pp. 342–56.  
\(^2\) P. Héléna *op. cit.*, Fig. 31.
PLATE III. 

LUG FROM PEU-RICHARD, CHARENTE-INFERIEURE

Scale \frac{1}{4}

(Photograph: British Museum)
and its significance will be emphasized when it is shown that they were able to diffuse separately.

**SOUTH-WEST FRANCE**

Following an historic route from the Mediterranean across Gascony and Guyenne, we encounter channelled ware at the unusual fortified camp of Peu-Richard (Charente-Inférieure). The sherd illustrated in Pl. ii, b, leaves no doubt of its close relationship with the Languedoc material, both paste and ornament are similar. Identical paste and grooved technique are employed for the famous ‘eye’ pottery from this site, and there seems no doubt that it was made by the same people who designed the ordinary channelled ware. The most usually figured specimens of the ‘eye’ form show the circles inscribed round mere dimples, or

![FIG. 5](image)

(1–3) Pottery from Moulin des Oies, Morbihan. Scale 1/3
(4) Fragment of jar from the Cave of Genista, Gibraltar. Scale 1/3
(5) Tunnel lug from Peu-Richard, Charente-Inférieure. Scale 1/3

nothing at all, but Pl. iii and Fig. 5, 5, illustrate a sherd now in the British Museum which explains one factor in the origin of this design. The ‘eyes’ here encircle the two openings of a semi-tunnel lug resembling the Sardinian examples already described. The third distinctive type of pottery from the camp is incised with rough zigzag lines like those on the Breton vessel, Pl. iv. This zigzag style is again associated with eye pottery at the ‘Dolmen de Availles-sur-

Chizé,' a megalithic tomb with long mound in the department of the Deux-Sevres.

Before leaving the south-west another vessel must be mentioned, a footed bowl of the La Halliade type from the megalithic long cist, Tumulus A, Taillan, Plateau de Ger (Haute-Pyrénées). This vessel cannot be said to belong to the channelled ware family proper, but its connexion with the neighbouring segmented long cist of La Halliade may give it some significance. It is of the biconical shape found in other of the footed bowls of the region, but it is ornamented above the angle with panels of vertical and horizontal lines that recall the hurdle pattern of channelled ware, although they are executed in impressed cord or a close imitation of it.

BRITTANY

In dealing with the important Breton material, almost all of it from the Morbihan, attention can first be called to the potsherds illustrated by Pl. iv. They form part of the Lukis Collection in the department of British and Medieval Antiquities in the British Museum, and it is by the courtesy of the Keeper, Mr. Kendrick, that I am able to publish them here. They come from a megalithic chamber known as 'Le Petit Bossen,' Moulin des Oies, Bocennic Vras, on the shoreline between Belz and St. Cado. The plan of the monument reproduced in Fig. 6 was made by W. C. Lukis of Guernsey in 1866, and shows it to have been a passage grave with well-formed circular chamber and relatively short entrance passage. A note under the plan in the Lukis Museum, Guernsey, states that W. C. Lukis explored the grave in 1872, and it was presumably at that time that the potsherds were recovered; three years later the collection was purchased by the British Museum. The little pot represented by the half dozen sherds at the top of Pl. iv and sectioned in Fig. 5, 2, is of great interest. It has an inward-sloping, slightly concave neck rising from rounded walls, and must

---

3 Collum & le Rouzic, B. vi. 6.
FRAGMENTS OF TWO VESSELS FROM MOULIN DES OIES, MORBIHAN

(Photograph: British Museum)
have had a round base; a tubular lug is set vertically below the neck. The decoration, in strong but narrow grooves, consists of a varying number of horizontal lines round the neck, interrupted at irregular intervals by single upright lines, producing a rough panelled or metopic effect (a form of hurdle pattern); below this several groups of pendant semicircles occupy the upper half of the body, two of them abutting one on either side of the tubular lug. The ware, like that of all sherds from the site, is dull greyish with a very smooth exterior, and of exceptional thinness. It is clear that in all respects this vessel recalls, on a miniature scale, features that have been noticed both in Languedoc and Spain. The other vessel shown in Pl. iv and Fig. 5, i is a curious one. In plan it is partially angular, the rounded angles are emphasised by vertical ribs rising from what appears to have been a shallow rounded base, and the four panels between them filled with tiers of zigzag lines crudely incised;
above the decoration the walls are sharply inturned and have evidently been finished by an upright neck or rim; half way between shoulder and rim a single perforation is preserved that has been made while the clay was soft, almost certainly forming part of a suspension device. These two decorated pots are associated with a plain round-bottomed bowl (Fig. 5, 3) with two tubular lugs, one set horizontally along the shoulder and the other vertically below it.

This Moulin des Oies pottery is hardly less important than the now familiar bowls from Conguel,¹ with their

![Bowl from Mane Braz, Kervilor, Morbihan](image)

arched concentric semicircles, zigzagging and hurdle pattern, all in deep but uneven grooving. They accompanied a primary interment in an unusual type of passage grave with a roughly rectangular chamber formed from a combination of natural rock shelf with megalithic building, and a short, crooked passage; they were separated by a slab paving from an overlying beaker horizon.

Another site comparable with Moulin des Oies is Mane Braz, Kervilor² (La Trinite) which yielded the carinated bowl with pendant semicircles sketched


in Fig. 7, and also a plain round-bottomed bowl very like that from Moulin des Oies but with a trumpet lug instead of the simple tubular form. These finds come from a passage grave, one of three megalithic chambers under a single mound.

A pot that has been frequently illustrated is that from a ruined megalith of doubtful form known as the 'Dolmen de Baden,' almost certainly a monument at Larmor-Baden; here the concentric semicircles ranged irregularly on the shoulder and neck of a slightly carinated round-bottomed bowl are in some instances cut by radial lines which project beyond them.

From the stone circles of Er Lannic comes a single sherd grooved with two concentric loops, and another with pendant chevrons; there are also several pieces with scraps of curvilinear grooving, and others with the rough zigzag ornament. These are associated with the famous Chassey vase supports, and a large number of plain round-bottomed bowls; it will be remembered that the vase supports include among their punctuated decorations many curvilinear forms, circles, semicircles and deeply undulating lines, that are alien to the usual rectilinear Chassey tradition. This is the place to recall the vase support ornamented round the rim with concentric semicircles, from the long mound with closed megalithic cists of Moustoir, Carnac, which provides another example of the mingling of Chassey and channelled ware ideas.

A pot with upright neck and rounded body ornamented with horizontal lines and chevrons in broad grooves (Fig. 8) comes from the passage grave, Mane Kerioned, Keryaval, where it was associated with round-bottomed bowls and burnished blackish beakers with coarse white-filled decoration. This site is like that at Kervilor in having three chambers under one mound—but here the mound is elongated with a quadrilateral stone curb.

1 P. du Chatellier, La Poterie aux Epoques Prehist. et Gauloises en Armorique, Pl. 5, Fig. 7. Dechelette, Manuel i, Fig. 206, 7. Collum & le Rouzic, H. xxix, 19.
2 Z. le Rouzic, Les Cromlechs de Er Lannic, Vannes, 1930, Pls. i–xx.
The elaborately patterned bowl from Mané Hui, Kerlearec,¹ Carnac, has double arched lines suggesting the 'eyebrows' on the Pavia bowls, a comparison which is made in Fig. 9, 35 and 37. This monument is a ruined long mound with closed chambers very much of the Manio² type.

F. Gaillard³ describes what must have been a very similar vessel excavated by him from a ruined megalith near Castellic, Carnac, but there the central triangular space (cf. 9, 37) was occupied by three concentric semicircles, and one side of it fringed like the feathering of an arrow. The excavator compares with this another pot that I have been unable to trace, rescued from the ruins of a supposed megalith, Mané Roguellec,⁴ Plouharnel, decorated with pendant semicircles.

Although not in the channelled ware technique, mention must be made of the little bowl from the ruined passage grave, Ro'h-parc-Nehué, Riantec,⁵ on which concentric loops are carried out in the hatched ribbon or ladder pattern that has been found (pp. 132-5, 137) in frequent association with channelled ware in the

² Z. le Rouzic, l'Anthropologie xliii, p. 226.
⁴ Ibid., 1894, p. 175.
West Mediterranean. A deep bowl from Penker ar Bloa,¹ Finistère, is evidently related to this Parc Néhüé variety, but the ribbon ornament is only partially curvilinear.

The one domestic site in the Morbihan to have produced channelled ware is Croh-Collé,² where much of the other decorated pottery has Chassey affinities. Here all the usual motifs recur—pendant semicircles, hurdle pattern, and zigzags.

The Morbihan group as a whole differs from that of Languedoc in that the ornament is commonly in narrow grooves or incisions, unlike the broad, shallow canaléures of the south. The crudely executed zigzag, quite distinctive despite its simplicity, that has been noticed in association with orthodox channelled ware at Moulin des Oies, Conguel (on the same pot with the arched semicircles), Er Lannic and Croh-Collé, as well as at Peu-Richard and Availles sur Chize in the south-west, is another feature that does not occur in the same form in Languedoc,³ though parallels have been recorded in Iberia (pp. 133, 136).

NORTHERN FRANCE

A single site in the Paris region has to be noted, the settlement of Haute Bruyere, Villejuif.⁴ The pottery ring encircled with several grooves that was originally published as a bracelet is evidently a vase support, and with it was a sherd with triple undulating lines, and another with an arc in ladder pattern.

BRITAIN

Turning now from the continent to Britain, the principal centres of channelled ware are to be found in western and northern Scotland, and in north-east Ireland.

As we have said, Scottish neolithic pottery has been

---

¹ P. du Chatellier, op. cit., pl. vii, 3. Dechelette, Manuel i, Fig. 206, 9. ² Z. le Rouzic, l’Anthropologie xliv, p. 496, Fig. ix, 8, 14. ³ There is a bowl from the Grotte Hirondelle de Firolle decorated with zigzags as shown by Louis, ‘La Préhistoire dans la Gard,’ Cahiers d’Hist. et d’Arch, cahier 7, p. 93. I failed to notice this pot, but from the illustration I suppose the design to be carried out by a method quite unlike that used in Brittany and the south-east. ⁴ l’Anthropologie viii, 1897.
much studied of late, and Childe's work has made familiar its division into the two sub-types of Beacharra and Unstan wares, which are to be associated respectively with segmented cists and passage graves. He and others have further shown that the same two classes are to some extent repeated in the parallel tomb types of Ireland.

In the area from Galloway to North Uist over which long cists allied to the Clyde type occur we have pottery of ... the Beacharra class, and it is here that the closest similarities to certain forms of continental channelled ware are found. The two sites most significant in this respect are already well known: the closed tripartite long cist without forecourt of Beacharra (Kintyre) itself, and Clettraval (N. Uist), predominantly a long segmented cist, but with evident passage grave influence; Unival, a true passage grave, also has pottery which can be assigned to the Beacharra class. Another familiar monument of concern here is the closed bipartite cist of Clachaig. At Beacharra a pot of Piggott's form J is decorated in broad and relatively shallow grooving with both upright and pendant semicircles, and another, of the exaggerated version of Form J that Childe calls the collared urn, has a formal incised design composed of three or four vertical lines sometimes enclosed in loops, with panels of horizontal lines between them; a third carinated pot has broad grooved hurdle pattern on the neck.

A large number of neolithic vessels was obtained by Lindsay Scott from Clettraval, the majority of more or less orthodox Neolithic A forms, but including a few pieces decorated in the Beacharra manner. A deep bowl (form H) has a band of hurdle pattern incised round the neck, while of two little form J pots, one is encircled from top to bottom with horizontal grooving, while the other has wide shallow grooved chevrons probably representing a degeneration of curvilinear forms (pp. 139, 156). These vessels were all found in the lowest horizon at Clettraval,

1 The Prehistory of Scotland, p. 66. 
2 P.S.A.S., xxxvi, pp. 103 ff. 
3 Ibid. lxix, pp. 480–536.
stratified below a layer containing beaker. A flat-bottomed vase of beaker-like profile from this upper level still shows a strong survival of channelled ware ideas in its horizontal bands of deep grooving and the enclosed chevrons.

The collared urn from Clachaig has already received much publicity; it is ornamented on the neck with hurdle pattern made by the impression of whipped cord—the only known example of cord technique on Scottish Beacharra ware.

The Unstan class which is ‘effectively confined to those areas where passage graves occur—Caithness, Orkney and the Hebrides’ is, in its most specialised form, absolutely unlike Beacharra ware. This is a wide, shallow bowl, with a deep overhanging rim ornamented by alternately hatched triangles in stab-and-drag, and sometimes (at Taiversoe Tuack) surmounted by a band of horizontal grooves. Unstan and Taiversoe Tuack, both Orkney, which are the two principal sites where such bowls have been found, are typologically late forms of passage grave, and so also is Kenny’s Cairn, Caithness, where sherds with similar ornament occurred. At the remarkable long ‘stalled’ chamber of Midhowe, Rousay, Orkney, a few scraps of stab-and-drag pottery were excavated, but the chief ceramic find was a bowl representing a variety of pottery that does not easily fall into either the Unstan or Beacharra category, although it has in fact been assigned to the former. The shape is the Unstan overhanging rim type, but the decoration is distinctive. The execution is different—broad, shallow grooves much as at Beacharra and Clettraval instead of stab-and-drag—and the design consists of a band of horizontal lines with a broader band of short vertical ones below it. Practically identical bowls, although with the vertical grooves somewhat narrower, have been found by Lindsay Scott at the domestic site with kilns of Eileen an Tighe, North Uist, an

---

1 Ibid. xxxvi, p. 87.
2 The Prehistory of Scotland, p. 67.
3 P.S.A.S. xix, pp. 341 ff.
4 Ibid. xxxvii, pp. 77 ff.
area of segmented cist-passage grave overlap. They
are associated with a variety of deep baggy forms and
the wide rims so common among Neolithic A pottery
in the Highland Zone; many of these vessels have
shallow grooved curvilinear ornament, short groups of
concentric arcs set close to one another and running in
alternating directions (Pl. v, b). Various stages between
this genuine though already degenerate curvilinear
style and its complete disintegration into rough
chevrons or groups of alternating oblique grooves are
represented at Eilean an Tighe. Mr. Scott believes
that the richly decorated pottery at this site was
preceded by an earlier phase with almost plain wares.

This account of the Scottish material calls for some
general comment. In the first place it will have been
noticed that fully typical examples of either Beacharra
or Unstan ware are few and derive from very few sites,
and further that these sites are generally megaliths
that are held to be typologically late within their
respective classes. In considering relationships with
continental branches of channelled ware, the broad
grooving of Beacharra and Eilean an Tighe-Midhowe
decoration is certainly most nearly matched in the
south of France; with the Eilean an Tighe-Midhowe
variety this is true also of the form of design, but with
Beacharra ware, while none of its motifs is absent in
the south, they undoubtedly find their nearest parallels
in Brittany. Unstan bowls of the stab-and-drag
triangle type have no direct connexion with any
continental channelled ware, although a few more or
less convincing parallels (not in stab-and-drag) can be
found in Iberia and Brittany.

In Ireland, pottery that has much in common with
the Beacharra type comes from the horned cairns of
the north-east, the counterpart of the Scottish seg-
menced cists, and from occupation sites in the same
region. At Doey's Cairn, 1 Dunloy, Antrim, a carinated
bowl from the earliest deposit shows a panel of vertical
lines on the neck together with arched concentric
semicircles and a crescentic fragment that may
perhaps represent a tiny circle, all formed by the

1 Louth Journ. Arch., 3rd s. i, i, pp. 49-78.
A. SHERDS FROM EILEAN AN TIGHE  Scale
(By courtesy of Mr. Lindsay Scott)
B. SHERDS FROM EILEAN AN TIGHE  Scale c. \( \frac{1}{2} \)

(By courtesy of Mr. Lindsay Scott)
impression of whipped cord. Below the shoulder are moderately wide vertical grooves set close together and apparently continuous round the vessel. From Ballyalton¹ bi-partite cist comes a deep bowl with panels of horizontal lines divided by five pairs of vertical lines corresponding to five vertical lugs; this design is in imitation whipped cord made by jabbing with a pointed tool. Rather similar is the little bowl found in unknown circumstances at Lisalea,² Monaghan, which bears a deep belt of hurdle pattern jabbed with a blunt, square-ended tool; the pot is thick and clumsy, built up from a series of rings imperfectly welded together. While on the one hand suggesting the Ballyalton bowl, on the other, as Miss Newbiggin³ has remarked, it strongly recalls a vessel from Pavia (p. 136).

In a dolmen of the 'portal' type (a derivative of the horned cairn) known as the Stone House (Ticloy), Antrim, a sherd was found with a curvilinear pattern in very fine whipped cord. A much better known megalithic site in this county is that at Larne, the pottery from which was fully published by Childe and Piggott.⁵ Here almost all decoration is in plain or whipped cord, although there is one instance of shallow fluting; it includes hurdle pattern, concentric arcs which have recently been shown to have formed part of the base of a pot enwound with a spiral of cord, and true curved maggots of the type known on British Neolithic B pottery, as well as from the Baltic 'dwelling-place' sites.

In addition to these finds from megaliths, pottery of interest here comes from a number of occupation sites in Ulster. One of these is Lyles Hill, now being excavated by Estyn Evans, where in addition to huge quantities of plain Neolithic A pottery, decorated forms include four sherds with concentric arcs in whipped cord. The plain pottery from this site seems convincingly to demonstrate kinship with the distinc-

¹ B.N.H.P.S., 1933-34, pp. 79-
² J.R.S.A.I. xxxiv, p. 273, Fig. 3.
³ P.P.S. iii, 2, p. 201.
⁴ In Belfast Museum; information from Mr. Estyn Evans.
⁵ P.P.S.E.A. vii, i, pp. 62-6.
tive Neolithic A of Yorkshire. Among the sandhill finds from Dundrum, Down, sherds with grooved vertical lines and chevrons occur, as well as vessels having hurdle pattern on the neck combined with slashing or grooving below—a combination reminiscent of the bowl from Doey's Cairn. This same combination of cord and grooving is to be seen also on a sherd from Carrickfergus, Antrim, the corded portion of the design here comprising concentric arcs; corded loops are found again at another sandhill site, Portstewart, Derry.

Moving away from the primary north-eastern area of horned cairns, there is some evidence of a faint extension of channelled ware traditions being carried with a spread of these tombs to the west and south. At Carrowkeel, Sligo, a megalithic group reported to contain both horned cairn and passage grave elements, stab-and-drag and straight maggots are among the decorations on the pottery, as well as jabbed loops centred on a sunk pit, and a pair of concentric arcs formed from tiny crescentic impressions. These sherds came from a passage grave but they may show horned-cairn influence. For the south, at Ballynamona, Waterford, Powell has recovered from a cist with slight façade a number of sherds with grooved ornament that seems to have been arranged in loose horizontal panels; the form is a shallow bowl with heavy bevelled rim, approaching a common type in the sandhill sites of Ulster.

Pottery finds from Irish passage graves are extra-ordinarily and lamentably few, except for Carrowkeel, those from Carn R2, Loughcrew (Slieve na Caillighe) alone being of significance. Here in addition to a large number of heavy, coarse sherds covered with crude stabbing, and others with incised herring-bone design, there are pieces representing a large vessel with bands of short oblique lines all sloping in the same direction—some deep, narrow grooves, others in stab-and-drag. These, when published by Childe,
were likened by him to Unstan and Eilean an Tighe wares.

Very recently (1938) Mr. Kilbride Jones has excavated a most remarkable pot at Drimnagh, near Dublin. It is a hanging pot with points in common with that from Moulin des Oies (p. 143): without the same angular plan, it has raised ribs, sharply inturned neck, slight rim and perforation for suspension; it is decorated on the base with rough groups of lines in stab-and-drag sloping in different directions. It accompanied a primary inhumation in a rectangular slab cist under a large round mound.

In Ireland, then, we find the channelled ware element running very thin, although strongest where we should expect to find it—in the horned cairn region centred on Ulster, answering to the Beacharra-segmented cist territory across the North Channel. The familiar motifs reappear, but although the grooved technique survives here and there it is almost swamped by the entirely alien tradition of cord decoration; together with this go alien motifs such as straight and curved maggot pattern. There is also, except in a few individual pots like those from Ballyalton and Doey’s Cairn, a pervading current of the specialised northern Neolithic A with heavy bevelled, and often decorated, rims that is found in Yorkshire as well as Scotland and Ireland, and is thought to show Neolithic B influence.¹

**CHRONOLOGY**

Now that the distribution of channelled ware has been detailed and the peculiarities of its widely scattered local branches briefly analysed, it is time to see whether the whole can be supplied with the essential chronological support.

In Spain the *ceramica incisa* of the southern Cave Culture with which channelled ware is regularly associated is, as we have seen, regarded as ancestral to the bell beaker, so that there is reason to suppose that in the southern caves such as those of Malaga and Gibraltar the channelled ware is of pre-beaker age. On the other hand its diffusion through the peninsula

¹ N. Newbigin in *P.P.S.* iii, 2, p. 199.
must have been a slow one, for in Catalonia and the central Spanish area it is often found with beakers or their near relatives. In Portugal caves like the Cabeço da Ministra and Furninha are hard to date, but the occurrence there of schist plaques, croziers and groove-headed pins which feature in such passage grave sites as Palmella and Pavia suggests their approximate contemporaneity. Yet it can certainly be said that the pottery from these cave sites is absolutely distinct from that of the Palmella type, and it may look inland to the undeveloped *ceramica incisa* of the central Cave Culture. At Pavia we have channelled ware directly associated with the plain pottery tradition of Almerian origin (p. 130), and probably with simple round chambered passage graves.

In Sardinia, if the material from the San Michele cave can be equated with that from the lower horizon at San Bartolomeo, there is a strong case for the manufacture of channelled ware before bell beakers reached the island.

Similarly in the south of France the incised pottery with which channelled ware is so often found is held to antedate beakers in the region, while it post-dates the first plain pottery. There need be no question, however, that in Languedoc as in Iberia it survived to overlap with beakers; the two seem to have been associated at the Grotte des Frères, Bois de Gardon, and there is nothing to suggest that the beakers were deposited later than the channelled ware in the Grotte de Castellet. Déchelette assigned the *cannelure* pottery of Languedoc to the Bronze Age and others have even called it Hallstatt, but there is absolutely no evidence in favour of these views.

The pottery of Peu-Richard and Availles-sur-Chizé cannot be far removed in age from its near relatives in Languedoc, and the tunnelled lug from the former site, with its close Sardinian affinities, supports a fairly early dating. The eye pottery must be first cousin to that from Los Millares, and may be approximately contemporary.

The Breton evidence points in the same direction. The stratification at Conguel certainly suggests a
pre-beaker date for the introduction of channelled
ware, and the round-chambered passage grave of
Moulin des Oies should be early in the megalithic
sequence of the Morbihan. At Croh-Collé and Er
Lannic channelled ware is associated with decorated
Chassey pottery, and there is some indication at the
Pinnacle Rock\(^1\) site, Jersey, that the first appearance
of at least some forms of Chassey may have preceded
that of beakers in Armorica. It would be rash, though
not unthinkable, to claim an early date for Er Lannic,
but its plain round-bottomed pottery and the absence
of beakers allows it to be regarded as archaic, maintain-
ing an early tradition. At the important sites of
Conguel, Moulin des Oies, and Le Moustoir (Carnac),
channelled ware was associated exclusively with plain
round-bottomed pottery, and it is interesting to con-
sider its position relative to the supposed earliest
neolithic phase marked by plain pottery and long
mounds of the Manio type.\(^2\) It has not been found in
any of the recognised early long mounds, but it is
difficult to see what prevents the inclusion of Mané Hui
among them. The huge long cairn of Le Moustoir
Piggott assumes to be a later descendent of the smaller
Manio class, but it is perhaps unlikely that the
difference of antiquity is very great. It is also
significant that the ‘eyebrow’ pattern on the Mané
Hui and Castellic pots has with reason been likened\(^3\)
to the so-called ‘serpents’ on the menhir buried in the
Manio I cairn (p. 170). In short, it is justifiable to
claim that although channelled ware may not have
been made quite as early as the first long mounds,
it was introduced while they were still a living tradi-
tion. As for its lower limit of date, in Brittany, as
elsewhere (p. 154), it survived at least until the coming
of beakers, although it is directly associated with them
at only one site—Keryaval. It should be noticed that
at Keryaval and at the Grotte de Castellet, Arles, two
of the very few French sites where channelled ware

\(^1\) Archaeology of The Channel Islands, vol. ii, pp. 7, 160 ff.
\(^2\) Antiquity, December, 1937, pp. 443 ff.
\(^3\) Bull. Soc. d’Anthr. de Paris, 1894, p. 175.
occurs with beakers, the chief channelled motif is the grooved chevron that has on stylistic grounds been claimed as a degeneration from the more typical pendant semicircle.

In Scotland, Lindsay Scott’s excavations at Clettraval have proved Beacharra ware to have preceded beaker on the north-west coast, while at Eilean an Tighe he hopes to be able to demonstrate that the groove decorated pottery followed upon a plain ware phase.

Ireland has as yet offered no very satisfactory evidence for the age of its principal channelled ware group, but its pronounced divergence from continental forms should mean that all that has as yet been discovered, in the country is more recent than the first Scottish Beacharra.

This short survey of the evidence is enough to show that the chronology of the whole channelled ware family, though at points uncertain, is very reasonably consistent. The general history of Western Europe in neolithic times allows us to assume that it was from its centres in the West Mediterranean—North Africa, southern Spain, Sardinia and Languedoc—that the tradition was carried west and north. This spread away from the Mediterranean would seem to have taken place in the period between the diffusion of the earliest plain western pottery and that of beakers: which is to say that it was coincident with the earlier extensions of megalith building. The obscurity concerning the age of our ware in Portugal is particularly unfortunate as it hinders the interpretation of the internal relationships of the different groups and their lines of diffusion. To these subjects it is now time to pass, and in so doing we leave comparative order for baffling confusion.

THE CULTURAL SETTING AND INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

The cultural position of channelled ware can perhaps best be considered in relation to two things with which it has been seen to be often but independently connected—elaborately incised pottery, and megaliths. All round the West Mediterranean, in
Africa, Spain, Sardinia, France and Italy, we have found channelled ware in the company of various inter-related types of incised pottery, usually in cave sites, both domestic and funerary. What were the connexions between these centres? We have accepted the view that channelled and incised wares were introduced into Spain from Africa by way of Gibraltar, and from there spread inland and across to Catalonia and Portugal. There must also be African elements in the Sardinian San Michele-San Bartolomeo pottery, although the tunnel lug, of considerable importance for channelled ware, as well as some decorative features, seem to be of Maltese origin. It has been suggested that the south French *cannelure* ceramic may have been derived from Sardinia, and there are several points, such as the tunnel lug at Peu-Richard, that favour this opinion. But the differences in ornamental technique (p. 137), and also apparently of pot form prove that this cannot be the whole truth, and indeed the nearest known parallels, both in form and decoration, for the Languedoc group are to be found in south Spain in such vessels as Pl. i and Fig. 2. Probably there was contact and mutual influence between all these Mediterranean centres, and in Languedoc a substratum akin to the earliest south Iberian Cave Culture was affected by Sardinian elements. But the fine incised and punctuated Chassey pottery of Languedoc with which the *cannelure* is so frequently associated, is not easily derived from the much rougher Afico-Iberian *ceramica incisa*, but seems to look rather to the east, perhaps to Italy, Sicily and the Balkans. The mutual independence of these two associated types of French pottery has already been stressed (p. 140), and the best explanation may be that their origins were thus independent: *cannelure* derived from the southern cave cultures, and the Chassey pottery due to eastern trade connexions, probably at a slightly later date. But there still remains the possibility that both evolved on French soil from the southern *ceramica incisa* stock, the evolution of the Chassey style being a French parallel

1 *Dawn*, p. 106.
to the development of the beaker across the Pyrenees. The maintenance and emphasis of the distinctive grooved style of the *cannelure* pottery would then have to be attributed to the special significance of the designs suggested in the last section of this paper.

Acceptance of the former interpretation is encouraged by the fact that these two ceramic styles seem to have diffused separately: channelled ware by way of the Pyrenees to the Atlantic coasts and Scotland, and Chassey up the Rhone before spreading westward to Armorica. While on the one hand there is no sign of Chassey at Peu-Richard or anywhere in Scottish channelled ware contexts, on the other there is no *cannelure* at the important inland Chassey sites of Camp de Chassey, Catenoy, Campigny or Fort Harrouard, although the dubious site of Villejuif (p. 147) has to be conceded. There is still no need to doubt that this view of the diffusion of decorated Chassey is substantially correct, but I should now consider it unwise to ignore the possibility that there may have been some Chassey influence on Brittany also by way of Gascony and Guyenne, and with it some channelled ware elements may have gone too. But the Chassey history is not here of primary concern: far more important is the question of the spread of *cannelure* to Scotland, and this further introduces all the problems concerning the relations of channelled ware to megalithic forms. While Childe has long ago demonstrated the Pyrenean affinities of the Clyde type of segmented cist, this paper has already called attention to the fairly close similarities existing between Beacharra and Eilean an Tighe wares and the *cannelure* of Languedoc and Peu-Richard. Here then we are encouraged by a phenomenon all too rare in these studies: a particular type of megalith and a particular type of pottery diffusing together. This line from the Mediterranean coasts of France to Scotland marked by segmented long cists and chan-

---

1 A bowl with a design of irregular punctuated triangles reminiscent of Chassey tradition was found by Mr. Lindsay Scott stratified above Beacharra ware at Unival.

2 The grooved ware referred to in this context by Miss Newbigin, *op. cit.*, p. 200, is of late Bronze Age date.
nelled ware provides one of the main threads of our argument. But even this is not untangled. First, at the eastern end a very perverse state of affairs has to be encountered. For thirty years the resemblance of the Giants' Graves of Sardinia and Scottish megalithic tombs has been generally recognised,¹ and if it has been particularly stressed for the horned cairns of Caithness, it is at least equally true for the Clyde cists with semicircular forecourt. Yet although we have noted in Sardinia an important branch of channelled ware connected with that in the south of France, and so in turn with Scotland, it is not found in the Giants' Graves, but in caves and the rock-cut passage graves of Anghelu Ruju, the Giants' Graves yielding full Bronze Age furniture. Possibly the explanation of this unwelcome separation of pottery from tomb type may lie in the "continuous series" by which the elaborate Giants' Graves are linked to 'simple dolmens with a single capstone.'² If this series is in part one of evolution and not of devolution, it was perhaps at some unexplored stage before the production of the fully elaborated form that influences emanated to the north-west. Certain tombs³ at Abbasanta look as though they should be earlier than the extreme, attenuated type, and certainly come closer to the British plan. In short it is allowable to postulate a Sardinian element not only in the ceramic but also in the megalithic aspect of the Mediterraneo-Atlantic movement under consideration.

The direction of this movement across southern France seems clear enough: although there is no record of true channelled ware before the Atlantic coast is reached at Peu-Richard, there are the long cists, segmented and unsegmented, of the Plateau de Ger, and the pot with hurdle pattern that they yielded at Taillan (p. 142).

Once Scotland is reached there is further need of clarification. The bowls with bands of vertical and

² Childe, Dawn, p. 106.
³ Baux and Govin, Matériaux 1884, pp. 200–1, Figs. 116, 117.
horizontal grooving of Eilean an Tighe and Midhowe have, because of their shape, been classified as Unstan ware. Yet Pls. ii and v show how very close they come to the south French material, and whereas these French parallels are associated entirely with the long cist form of megalith, Unstan ware is to be linked with passage graves. There is something wrong here, and it may be in not distinguishing the Eilean an Tighe-Midhowe variety from the fully typical stab-and-drag triangle style of Unstan and Taiversoe Tuack. Midhowe, despite undeniable passage grave features, is essentially a parallel-sided long cist, while North Uist is a region of overlap between the two megalithic groups, in which the long cist on the whole predominates. Hence, if taken independently, there is no need for the pottery from these sites to be tied to passage graves. But a relationship with true Unstan is obvious, and I take it to be in some sense ancestral. It has been explained (p. 150) how on some of the pots from Eilean an Tighe the bands of short upright grooves are broken up into groups sloping in alternating directions. Now an increase in obliquity, accompanied by a decrease in the length of each group, naturally produces the scheme of alternately hatched triangles, and as it happens the later stages of this change are fully illustrated by bowls from Unstan itself. Taiversœ Tuack further retains the band of horizontal grooves above the triangles. The entirely new and unrelated element is the stab-and-drag technique. This technique, together with a tendency to employ short, broken lines is found in a passage grave at Loughcrew (p. 152) and in the passage grave area at Drimnagh, Dublin. Stab-and-drag and a variety of hatched triangle, herring-bone and chevron designs are extremely common in Iberia (although admittedly we know little of their association with passage graves), and it is possible that it was this decorative method, at home among the passage grave people of Caithness, that acted upon channelled ware of the Eilean an Tighe variety to give rise to true Unstan ware.

As for Beacharra ware, it has been shown that all its peculiar motifs, concentric arcs, hurdle pattern,
and panelled arrangement can find prototypes in southern France, and nowhere else is there so close a similarity to the technique of broad, shallow grooves displayed at Beacharra and Clettraval. But the resemblance of certain pots from these same sites with those from Moulin des Oies and Conguel, makes a powerful argument for some Breton influence on the pottery. Nevertheless it is difficult to say how far the similarities in decorative motifs are due to their common origin in a system of magic symbols (p. 164). It is just possible also that Breton elements may have been responsible directly for the long-shaped cairns of Scotland, if these were not derived from the English long barrow. Or this form may have come together with the long cists: long mounds occur in Sardinia, as in the case of the tombs at Abbasanta, and in France at Availles-sur-Chizé, but La Halliade and other long cists of the Plateau de Ger were covered by round tumuli.

To summarise, the best explanation of all the facts seems to be as follows. In south-west Scotland *cannelure* ware of the Languedoc type was introduced by the Pyrenean route together with early types of long cist, which to judge from the Sardinian, Catalan and Pyrenean evidence might be with or without semi-circular forecourt, and with or without elaborate segmentation. These were established in conjunction with a plain ware culture of Neolithic A type, and in this region Beacharra ware developed out of the *cannelure* under a Breton influence that may have been largely religious (see final section, p. 164). Meanwhile the rather specialised but still very Languedocian Eilean an Tighe variety extended further north into the area settled, or being settled, by a passage grave building people with Iberian antecedents, and there by internal evolution stimulated by the stab-and-drag, short-oblique-line decorative technique of these people, it made the true Unstan of the late passage graves.

In the vessel from Clachaig and the Irish material quite different problems have to be faced. It is plain from its decorative designs that this pottery is very closely allied to the grooved Beacharra ware, but it is
no less evident that its cord technique is altogether alien to the channelled ware family. That this foreign element is due to northern contacts seems an unavoidable conclusion: the assemblage of sherds from Larne would hardly look out of place at a Scandinavian 'dwelling place' site like Hammeren or Siretorp, and the pendant tassel effect below the carination of the Clachaig pot is also convincing. I am even inclined to think that the bowl fragment from Doey's Cairn may represent an example of impressed 'eyes' similar to those found in southern Sweden at Gillhog and Hoby. Against the mass of comparable material in Scandinavia it would be folly to set up the Taillan bowl with its hurdle pattern in an attempt to derive the whole cord style from the Pyrenees. If, as Childe has more than once suggested, the Scandinavian dolmens are indeed to be linked with the Pyreneo-Scottish long cist movement, then nothing is more probable than a reflex influence from the north to Britain in the dolmen-early passage grave period. Such a reflex might well account also for the Taillan bowl. At the same time I strongly support Miss Newbigin in urging that the southern influence on Scandinavian pottery long recognised for the passage-grave styles, is shown also in dwelling-place pottery, and particularly in the more formal concentric arches and hurdle pattern. There was of course a give and take along the whole Atlantic route from Iberia to the North, and currents from both directions reached Ireland and Scotland. It is very hard to see why the northern element should be so much greater in the former country, but it would seem to be Scotland that received the primary contact with the south. The picture is chiefly complicated by the concentric semicircle design. This paper can hardly have left it in doubt that this motif in a variety of incised techniques is at home in the south-west, but it is just as certain that cord renderings are indigenous to the

---

2 P.P.S. iii, 2, p. 201.
north, where they are found from Denmark to South Russia.¹ These two appearances of the semicircle cannot have any original connexion, and in my opinion while the southern form derives ultimately from magical symbolism (pp. 165–170), the northern is a near relation of the ordinary curved maggot pattern. In Denmark and Sweden, as already emphasised, the decoration is influenced from the south and the two distinct semicircle traditions converge.

The hanging pot from Drimnagh stands somewhat apart. The parallel with Moulin des Oies (p. 161) has been noted, but it is not close enough to demand direct Breton influence. The Breton example comes from an early form of passage grave, and although Drimnagh is a closed cist under a round mound, it lies within the main Irish passage grave region. There are several examples in Brittany of closed cists contemporary with the main megalithic period²; particularly relevant is that of Castelliec³ where a rectangular slab cist with circular covering mound is dated by its plain pottery as early as the Manio type long mounds (p. 155). There is a rectangular hanging pot with upright neck from the Grotte de Louoi, Ardèche⁴ and this perhaps comes closer to the Moulin des Oies vessels than any other. But in view of the probable Portuguese connexions of the Breton channelled ware (including Moulin des Oies) it is to the famous hanging bowls of Palmella that we should look for the ultimate inspiration of this unusual and interesting form.

The position of this important channelled ware group of Brittany now remains to be investigated. The similarities it has to the pottery of Languedoc as well as to Beacharra tempt one to regard it either as an intermediate on the line from southern France to Scotland, or as an offshoot from it. But two principal arguments are against deriving the primary Breton group from southern France—the fact that in Brittany we find a narrow incised technique contrasting with

¹ Rosenberg, Kulturströmungen in Europa zur Steinzeit, pp. 137–8, 67, and Figs. 266, 270, 273.
² Z. le Rouzic, L'Anthropologie xliii, p. 228.
³ A. Guebhard, Sur l'Anse Funiculaire, Pl. 21, 4.
the shallow *cannelures* of the south, and that the pottery there is associated with passage graves and not long cists. These factors are apt instead to connect the channelled ware of Brittany with Iberia, and particularly with Portugal. Here narrow incisions seem to be the usual style in decoration, passage graves just such as that of Moulin des Oies are associated with channelled ware at Pavia, and the zigzag design that is so common in Brittany is likely to be of Iberian origin (p. 168). Furthermore the plain pottery with which the best Breton examples were found has a decidedly Iberian look. These scraps of evidence together form a moderately strong case, but while the material from Portugal remains scanty, imperfectly known, and ill-dated, it cannot be a sound one. Relationships between Brittany and Languedoc certainly existed during the megalithic period, and it has already been conceded that these may have involved Chassey and channelled wares (p. 158), but such contacts are likely to have been later in date than the first introduction of channelled ware to the Morbihan.¹

At present the most tenable view is that channelled ware spread from the Mediterranean by two principal routes crossing one another geographically, and perhaps influencing one another—the Atlantic route to Brittany and the Pyrenean to Scotland. Secondary influences from Brittany seem to have been felt in south-west Scotland, while the Morbihan itself was probably affected by the great channelled ware centre in southeast France.

**MAGICAL SYMBOLISM IN THE DESIGNS**

At the beginning of this paper it was foreseen that something would be needed to explain the odd individuality of channelled ware, its extensive but

¹ If obliged to name particular sites that might be attributable to this influence, I should select Er Lannic and Keryaval. Both show grooving that is unusually wide and shallow for Brittany, and the degenerate pendant triangle and chevron found in Languedoc. The bold punctuated style of Er Lannic is much more strongly represented in Languedoc than in the eastern and northern Chassey sites. There are stone circles in the Gard Department.
sporadic range, and the variety of contexts in which it appears. It is evidently not adequate to cite as parallels the far more remarkable diffusions of great ceramic families such as the beakers and Danubian wares, for there is no doubt that these reflect the movements of large human groups. To some very modest extent this may be true also of channelled ware, particularly on the Pyreneo-Scottish line, but it does not wholly fit the case: for a full understanding it is necessary to appreciate the significance behind the unusual decorative motifs that have been described. This brings us to the edge of the hidden world of prehistoric magic. No one can be more aware than the writer that the field of magical symbolism is a dangerous one for the investigator: that madness may be said to lie in that direction. Nevertheless when the certain facts provided by ethnography are remembered, one is forced to conclude that the silence in our orthodox archaeology concerning the symbolic meanings in primitive design shows too great a fear of crankiness. Even if it may be said that every archaeologist carries a ticket for a mental home in his knapsack, such things are not wisely ignored. Happily in this instance a path through the wilderness has already been trod by one better protected than many of us against the evil wiles of the way. The Abbé Breuil’s compendium of British stone-carvings\(^1\) together with his great work\(^2\) on the schematic rock paintings of Iberia are an invaluable aid, and with this support, and the visual evidence of Fig. 9, there is no need for many words.

In Fig. 9 patterns are set out with no regard for technique, material, or scale: a procedure that may be most misleading, but which can well be justified here. The left hand column provides a series of Iberian idols and steles in stone and bone, and illustrates a tendency for their delineation to degenerate into simple semicircles. These derive both from the lines demarcating the bottom of the face that sometimes appear to be a simple chin line, sometimes arms, and at others are undoubtedly a necklace, and from the

FIG. 9. SYMBOLIC DESIGNS
1–8 on Iberian Idols in Bone and Stone; 9–22 in Stone Carving and Painting; 23–42 on Pottery.
emphasis and repetition of the eyebrows. The marble cylinder of Algarve (4), while already much less complete than Fig. 9, i, still shows the eyes and what we will call the chin line, with the usual angular terminations that are difficult to interpret, while the Portuguese idol (5) is reduced to two pairs of curved lines alone. The stele from Esperanca proves how the head can become little more than standing semicircles, and those from Quinta de Conquinho and Serra de Boulhosa how emphasis of the multiple necklace reduces the figure to a scheme of pendant semicircles. In the majority of idols the eyes, if depicted at all, are rayed either inside or outside the main optical circles; the same feature is to be seen on the closely related bowls from Los Millares, and one of these vessels (25) shows how single eyes could also be sun symbols such as have been noticed (p. 135) occurring in isolation on pottery from several Spanish sites, including the segmented cist of Puig Rodó. The wide external relationships of these Iberian cult objects are too familiar to require detailing. It can be accepted that they stand for magico-religious tenets akin, in varying degrees, to those represented by the well-known eyed pottery and the newly discovered ‘owl face’ sculpture of Troy I and the face urns of the later cities, to the statue menhirs and funerary divinities of France, and to the face urns of Scandinavian passage

DETAILS OF FIG. 9

(1) Marble Idol in the Madrid Museum; (2-3) Bone Idols from Almizaraque, Almeria; (4) Marble Idol from Moncarapacho, Algarve; (5) Marble Idol, Belem Museum; (6) Stele from Esperanca, Portugal; (7) Stele from Quinta do Conquinho, Portugal; (8) Stele from Serra de Boulhosa.

(9) Carvings from Loughcrew, Ireland; (10) Carvings from Knockmany, Ireland; (11) Carving at Sesskilgreen, Ireland; (12) Carvings at Gavr’ Innis, Morbihan, Brittany; (13-15, 17, 19-21) Carvings at Loughcrew, Ireland; (16, 18) Carvings from New Grange, Ireland; (22) Cave painting from Siera de San Servan, Spain. Note that Figs. 9-21 are from passage graves.

(23-25) On Bowls from Los Millares, Almeria; (27) On a bowl from Las Carolinas, Madrid; (28, 30) Tunnel lugs from Cave of S. Michele, Ozieri, Sardinia; (29) On a pot from the Cabeço da Ministra, Alcobaca, Portugal;

(31) On a bowl from the Passage Grave of Conguel, Morbihan; (32) Sherd from Puig Rodo, Catalonia; (33, 36, 39) On pots from the Passage Grave at Moulin des Oies, Morbihan; (34) On a bowl from Beacharra, Kintyre, Scotland;

(35) On a bowl from Pavia, Portugal; (37) On a bowl from Mane Hui, Morbihan; (38) On a bowl from Conguel, Morbihan; (40) On a bowl from the Grotte St. Veredeme, Gard; (41) On a pot from Beacharra, Kintyre; (42) On a pot from Clettraval, North Uist.
graves. This last category includes examples that come very close to the Iberian forms, with rayed eyes and degenerate stags deriving from the Los Millares types. Thus it must be borne in mind that we are dealing only with the western specialisations of magic forms that were widespread in the Mediterranean, and were not halted before the shores of the Baltic.

The central column in Fig. 9 comprises Irish and Breton stone-carvings, almost all from megalithic passage graves, and one Spanish rock painting. The rayed sun-eye is again a favourite motif, and concentric arcs and circles, all, as Breuil has stressed, deriving from human representations; the example from Sesskilgreen (11) is one of several in which a third group of concentric circles is added to indicate nose or mouth. The rows of zigzags that are of common occurrence are recognised by Breuil as seated men, but I would suggest that in some instances where there are several close set rows significantly juxtaposed to eye designs (9 and 10) they stand for the stylised hair of the Iberian idols (1). There are probably several lines of derivation for the rectangular patterns (19–22), the first three from Loughcrew, the last a Spanish cave painting; Breuil shows such designs among the schematic paintings originating from both human figures and stags. As for the 'fir tree men' or hommes-sapins (not shown in Fig. 9) they have been convincingly derived from human figures by both Breuil and Mahr, but one of the Los Millares bowls allows a different interpretation of the 'fern leaf' variant in which the short lines slope upward. Exaggerated antlers of a stag have grown into perfect 'fir trees' of this variety, and it is likely enough that this pattern, of animal origin and probably connected with hunting magic, rapidly became confused with the hommes-sapins proper. The zigzag line attached to the base of the 'fir trees' in more than one Irish example would then represent the stag's body. Childe has already alluded to this source for the rather

1 Good examples are given in C. A. Nordman, Jaettistuer i Danmark, Figs. 6, 23.
2 Bosch Gimpera, op. cit., Fig. 104.
3 Dawn, p. 203.
similar motifs found on Scandinavian passage grave pottery.

The rest of the Figure (23-42) reproduces ceramic designs, principally the channelled ware decorations that it is my object to relate to the magical devices just described. Perhaps the most conspicuous parallel, and one already familiar, is between the Sardinian (28 and 30) and south-west French (Pl. iii) channelled ware, and the Los Millares bowls (23-25), the Iberian eyed idols (1-4) and certain stone carvings (9-11). It has been said (p. 133) that it is hard to decide whether to include the Los Millares bowls within the channelled ware class proper: they certainly afford a perfect link between it and the idols. The addition of a third circle below the tunnel lug 'eyes' on one of the Sardinian pots (28) comes very close to the form of Irish carvings such as Sesskilgreen (11), and is displayed in slightly different form in a shallow bowl from Los Millares (24). The same bowl also has the angled chin line of the idols (1 and 4) and this is again clearly intended on the little Portuguese bowl from Palmella (26), the sherd from Cabeço da Ministra (29) with its semicircles and attached chevrons follows in this series. If the guess concerning the eye motif at Doey's Cairn, Antrim, is correct, this pot makes an intermediate between the eyed pottery of Iberia and France and that of Scandinavia—in particular the simple impressed type of south Sweden.

As for the concentric arcs with and without central lines (29-34 and Fig. 1), characteristic of channelled ware throughout its range, there can be no difficulty in equating them with the identical forms so common among stone carvings in Brittany and Ireland (12-15) and perhaps in part with the semicircles of the degenerate Iberian idols (5-8). For Brittany the comparison was, indeed, made long ago, for Gaillard likened Conguel and other of his finds to the carvings of Gavr' Innis. The unusual variant of this design on the vessel from Mane Hui (37) is plainly dependent on the 'eyebrows' of the owl face type. It is the ornamental repetition of the pairs of eyebrows incised on

1 Bull. Soc. d'Anthr. de Paris, 1894, p. 175.
the Pavia bowl (35) and carved at Loughcrew (17), providing a ceramic version of the same development that is seen at New Grange in the owl faces set "wheel-wise." Gaillard also pointed out that the Mané Hui design resembles the so-called 'serpents' on the Manio I menhir; this is true also of the (presumably much later) serpentiform at Gavr'Innis (12), and I am inclined to think that the majority of such figures may in fact be only alignments of owl face 'eyebrows.' The Mané Hui bowl also provides a ceramic presentation of the 'fir tree man' of the 'fern leaf' form; its context here side by side with the 'eyebrows,' when compared with the Los Millares bowls, favours a stag ancestry for the design. Presumably the pattern compared to the feathering of an arrow on the unidentified bowl from Castellic was also a 'fern leaf.'

The close-set zigzags usual on Breton channelled ware and well illustrated at Conguel and Moulin des Oies (31 and 36) have been shown above to have analogies among the tomb carvings (9, 10 and 16), whether or not any connexion with the hair of the idols is allowed.

Finally, the only remaining common channelled ware motif, hurdle pattern, can claim kinship with the various panels of vertical and horizontal lines found abundantly at Loughcrew (19–21) and among Iberian rock paintings (22).

It has been demonstrated that all the designs found on channelled ware have their counterparts in the repertories of the idol-makers and decorators of tombs, but the circumstances of the potter's craft naturally encouraged either stylisation or disintegration of the motifs, and hence partial or complete forgetfulness of their significance. In some channelled ware groups, notably that of Languedoc, the decoration became so formal that the potter tracing her lines on the clay can have had but the faintest understanding of the tradition that prompted her to shape them as she did; in others, such as Eilean an Tighe ware, it grew so chaotic that no conscious significance can have remained. But the tradition was there, and it has been my aim to prove that it shares a common origin
in magic cult with other manifestations in which the underlying symbolism is more obvious. The acceptance of this view provides a satisfactory explanation of the persistence and wide spread of channelled ware, and of its ability to intrude into a variety of cultures; an analogy on a much larger scale is given by the spread of the religious ideas that demanded the building of megaliths. Childe¹ has postulated that the megalithic tombs of Scotland may have been raised for foreign chiefs with 'magical attributes': how well one can imagine that among such attributes were sacred designs embodied on the vessels laid with them in these graves!

There are no serious obstacles in the way of acceptance. Geographically the distribution of the pottery corresponds in large part with that of the idols and stone carvings and paintings: both categories are held to have spread from the Mediterranean and Iberia west and north to Brittany, Ireland and Scotland.

Chronologically the synchronisation of the two is near enough; if some of the pots are considerably older than the carved designs with which they have been likened, channelled ware and carvings alike were certainly being executed during the heyday of megalithic expansion, while having roots in a more remote past. I do not for a moment wish to suggest that the connexion was always direct and intimate: that the community which decorated its tombs and cult objects with the sacred designs necessarily employed them also on its pottery. Indeed scrutiny of the facts makes such an hypothesis utterly untenable. Thus while in Brittany and sometimes in Iberia this type of symbolism in all its media can be attributed to passage grave builders, in Scotland and Ireland channelled ware is associated with long cists on which elaborate decoration is never found. In Ireland this discrepancy is particularly striking: the passage grave people displayed magnificently on their tombs, but not so far as is known on their pots, the symbols that the long cist (horned cairn) people used on their

¹ Prehistory of Scotland, p. 78.
pottery but never on their tombs. Far more evidence is needed before such detailed problems as these can be properly explained. All that is claimed is that these symbols are the expression of an original community of ideas drawn from a cult that, in varying forms, was widespread in the Mediterranean. It is very tempting to look for survivals of these early beliefs in historical Mediterranean religions. Hera, queen of the Olympian pantheon, with her 'large lustrous eyes,' and her particular abode above the plain of Argos that is in the neighbourhood of a Minoan settlement and tholos tombs, is a most promising figure, and one can think of others. But caution has been enjoined and must be observed. At least it is not too much to say that elements from the religions of the higher civilizations must have percolated west and north in Neolithic and Early Bronze Age times, and any surviving traces of them offer a most important subject for study.

CONCLUSIONS

Channelled ware forms a loose-knit but unmistakable ceramic family in Western Europe. Ornament is everywhere its most distinctive feature, but other characteristics have been noticed such as the tubular lug of Africa, Iberia, Languedoc, and Brittany, and the upright-necked vase that covers much the same area; the peculiar sunk tunnel lug is found as far apart as Sardinia and Charente Inferieure.

It has been tentatively suggested that the ware diffused from the west Mediterranean by two principal routes, (1) Sardinia, Languedoc, the Pyrenees and south-west France to Scotland and Ireland, and (2) the Atlantic route from Western Iberia to Brittany; but this division was not absolute—Breton influence was felt in Scotland and Ireland, and Brittany itself may have had secondary contacts with Languedoc. The first of these movements is to be connected with long cist builders and the second with passage graves, so that channelled ware appears in both the major classes of West European megaliths.

It shows similar independence in its associations with other pottery, for while in Africa, Spain, Sardinia and Languedoc it is found, generally in caves, in the company of a variety of elaborately incised wares of Mediterranean type, yet in Portugal, Brittany, Scotland and Ireland it is to be seen, usually in a megalithic context, with plain pottery of the Western Neolithic family.

Scandinavia was not unaffected by channelled ware influence, and a reflex from this source is perhaps shown in the whipped cord decorative technique of Ulster and Kintyre.

The diffusion of this pottery did not necessarily involve any considerable movement of human beings, for it has been shown that its unusual designs have a magic content. The symbolism employed is similar to that found in Iberian idols and cave paintings and the carvings of Breton and Irish passage graves. Thus the adoption of such decorations was in part connected with the spread of cult ideas, and away from the Mediterranean centres they may at first have been among the prerogatives of foreign leaders with claims to magical powers. This conception most readily explains the grafting of channelled ware traditions on to different cultural stocks.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am particularly indebted to Mr. Lindsay Scott for his generosity in allowing me to publish his photographs of Eilean an Tighe pottery, Pls. ii, A and v. I am also grateful to the British Museum for permission to publish the pottery from Moulin des Oës and Peu-Richard and Pl. i, to M. Schaeffer of the Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St.-Germain, for furnishing me with Pl. ii B, and Mr. Glyn Daniel for Fig. 6. Miss V. C. C. Collum has very kindly allowed me to consult the typescript of the forthcoming work on the megalithic monuments of the Southern Morbihan in which she is co-operating with M. Z. le Rouzic; their numbered classification is referred to in footnotes on pp. 142-6.