

**The University of Sheffield
Department of Archaeology**

**Constructing Bronze Age Lives: social reproduction
and the construction and use of dolmen burials from
the Yongdam complex in Jinan, southern Korea**

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Abstract

Constructing Bronze Age Lives: social reproduction and the construction and use of dolmen burials from the Yongdam complex in Jinan, southern Korea

The Korean Bronze Age is regarded as a time of great economic and social transformation, witnessing the emergence of social complexity in the peninsula. The dolmen burials of the region have been used to investigate, and indeed represent, this social change. This thesis looks beyond the typology and grave goods of the Korean dolmens to emphasise the actual practises of burial construction and use which were structured by the emergent material conditions of the dolmen architecture.

The dolmen burials from seven Bronze Age cemeteries located in the Yongdam complex of Jinan, southern Korea, are analysed. The changing nature of burial practices is examined in order to consider the ways in which these dolmen burials actively contributed to the reproduction of life in the changing social and economic conditions of the late Early Bronze Age to Middle Bronze Age. It is proposed that, through these practices, a commitment to the ‘settlement community’ was maintained in the late EBA, a ‘Songuggni way of life’ was reproduced in the early MBA, and social differentiation was expressed and performed in the late MBA.

This thesis presents an alternative interpretative approach which addresses the issue of how societies are maintained and recognises the crucial role of material culture in this process of social reproduction. It also further develops the notion that the ‘meaning’ of the archaeological record should be found in the possibilities of practice and experience, as structured by the physical conditions of the archaeological material.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Research objectives

The Bronze Age (1500-300 BC) in Korea is generally viewed as a period of great economic and social transformation in which the foundations were laid for the subsequent establishment of state level societies. The Early Bronze Age is regarded as being characterised by the increased sedentism of communities and the adoption of farming as a major subsistence strategy. These features are generally contrasted with the mobile hunter-gathering lifestyle of the Late Neolithic. The Middle Bronze Age in southern Korea, which is the main focus of this thesis, is usually described as having witnessed the emergence of the ‘Songgugni culture’. Characterised by the establishment of large-scale villages, the reorganisation of the household unit, and the possible adoption of a new mode of intensive wet-rice farming, it is within the context of the Songgugni culture that Korean archaeologists locate the origins of social complexity in the Korean peninsula.

In Korean archaeology, where material culture is approached primarily as a ‘fossil record’ of past processes, burial evidence is often used to study the development of social complexity. The energy expenditure of burials, as represented by the scale of the burial architecture and the nature of the grave goods, has therefore been a key topic of research. As a result, the study of Korean Bronze Age dolmen burials has focussed on identifying whether they represent the graves of an egalitarian or chiefdom society. In approaching the dolmens as a diagnostic feature of Bronze Age society, however, the active role that these burials may have played in the past has often been overlooked. In other words, the way in which the construction and use of the Bronze Age dolmens may have helped facilitate the reproduction of Bronze Age society has not been considered.

The last decade has seen the excavation of a number of sites which present new possibilities for investigating the active role of dolmen burials in Bronze Age society. The eight Bronze Age sites from the area which was due to be submerged following the construction of the Yongdam Dam – the ‘Yongdam complex’ sites – are an example of this. By analysing the material from the Yongdam complex, which has yielded evidence of burials, settlements and a field system, it will be possible to situate the construction and use of dolmen burials within the wider social and economic context of Bronze Age lives. As this archaeological material from the Yongdam complex is dated to three phases – the late EBA (the tenth to ninth century BC), the early MBA (the eighth to sixth century BC) and the late MBA (the fifth to fourth century BC) – it will also be possible to examine diachronic change in practices of dolmen construction and use. Thus, the first aim of this thesis will be to consider how the different ways of life which characterise the late EBA, early MBA and the late MBA in the Yongdam complex may have been reproduced and maintained through the construction and use of dolmen burials.

This research into the active role of dolmens is inhibited by the current paradigm of Korean archaeology. This is due to the social evolutionary perspective which dominates archaeological thought and the way in which the archaeological record is regarded as passively representing past processes. Within the framework of social evolution, the existence of evolutionary stages – of societies – is regarded as a given, and therefore the issue of how societies reproduce and maintain themselves is not considered to be a valid research question. Equally, the active nature of material culture cannot be considered when the archaeological record is approached as a medium which passively represents, rather than a mechanism which actively constitutes. Thus, the second aim of this thesis will be to formulate, within a Korean archaeological context, an interpretative approach which shifts the focus of discussion from when and how societies emerge to an investigation of how societies are maintained – an interpretative approach which recognises the crucial role of material culture in this process of social reproduction. A key aspect of this interpretative approach,

pertaining specifically to the dolmen material, will be to consider the dolmen burials in terms of their *chaîne opératoire*. In doing so, it will be possible to reinstate a human presence, and therefore acknowledge the role of human agency, in the practices involved with constructing and using these monumental structures.

Finally, in formulating this alternative approach to the Korean dolmen material, the research carried out in this thesis explores the potential of bodily practice and experience as an interpretative methodology. In particular, it rejects the phenomenological approaches which have dominated studies regarding bodily engagement with material culture. Instead, the ideas of Barrett (2005; 2006a; 2006b) are drawn upon, in which material culture is regarded as a ‘structuring mechanism’, and meaning is found in the ‘possibilities’ of bodily practice and experience as structured by the physical conditions of the archaeological material. Thus, the third aim of this thesis is to develop a ‘structuring approach’ towards archaeological interpretation and to illustrate the way in which this approach presents the means of finding meaning in bodily engagement with material culture whilst avoiding some of the criticisms that have been put towards phenomenological approaches.

1.2. Thesis structure

This thesis consists of ten chapters and is organised as follows. **Chapter 2** deconstructs the framework of social evolution which has led the Korean dolmens to be regarded as passively representing Bronze Age social organisation. A brief history of Korean dolmen studies is presented in the first section and a critique of social evolutionism is presented in the second. Having discussed the problematic way in which society has been approached within the social evolutionary framework, an alternative understanding of society is proposed in the final section of the chapter. In an attempt to go beyond the current understanding of the Korean dolmen material, **Chapter 3** considers the various ways in which the archaeological record has been approached within the discipline. In the first section, the processual understanding of the archaeological record – as a ‘fossil record’ – is examined. In the sections that follow, alternative ways of looking at the archaeological record – as represented by the ‘contextual’, ‘phenomenological’ and ‘structuring’ approaches – are discussed. Based on a consideration of these approaches, the interpretative methodology which will be advocated in this thesis is developed. Also included in these sections is a brief overview regarding the ways in which mortuary evidence has been approached from various archaeological perspectives. **Chapter 4** introduces the archaeological context of this thesis. The geographic and archaeological context of the Jinan region, from which our evidence derives, is examined in the first section. In the second section, the archaeological material itself is presented, focusing on the sites, chronology and burials of the ‘Yongdam complex’ in the Bronze Age.

The next three chapters comprise the case studies of this thesis. **Chapter 5** examines the square platform detached dolmens of Yongdam Phase I and considers the way in which their construction and use may have helped reproduce the social reality of the late EBA in the research area. The reality of ‘lived lives’ in the late EBA of the Upper Geum River region is reconstructed in the first section. In the second section, the construction and use of the Phase I dolmens – in particular, practices of object deposition – is examined. Finally, the way in which

these practices may have helped maintain a commitment to the ‘settlement community’, which was central to late EBA lives, is discussed. **Chapter 6** looks at the linear conjoined dolmens of Yongdam Phase II and considers how their construction may have contributed to the establishment of the ‘Songgugni culture’ in the research area in the early MBA. In the first section, a brief but critical overview of the Songgugni culture is presented. The specific practices associated with constructing the linear conjoined dolmens and the experiences which may have emerged are reconstructed in the second section. Finally, the way in which experiences of dolmen construction may have helped facilitate the reproduction of certain realities which were central to a Songgugni way of life in the early MBA is discussed. **Chapter 7** considers the use of Yongdam Phase III burials, which comprise dolmen and non-dolmen burials, and discusses the way in which these burials may have been involved with practices of social differentiation which took place in the late MBA. In the first section, the Phase III burial architecture is examined. This is then compared with the architecture of the Phase II linear conjoined dolmens in the second section. In the third section, comparative analysis is carried out on the diverse architectural forms of the Phase III burials. Finally, the social conditions in which this new, late MBA burial tradition came to be established in the Yongdam complex is explored.

In **Chapter 8**, the wider implications of the theoretical and methodological positions adopted in this thesis are examined. In considering the issue of social reproduction, the current research draws upon the social theories of Giddens and Bourdieu. Therefore, the supposed inability of archaeological studies based on structuration or practice theory in addressing the issue of social change are discussed in the first section. In doing so, the possibility for an alternative way of looking at social change is suggested. According to the methodological approach adopted in the current research, the dolmen material is analysed in terms of its *chaîne opératoire*. Therefore, in the second section, the implications of this approach – for Korean funerary studies, for a critique of phenomenological approaches, and for future excavations of dolmen burials – are discussed. Finally, the conclusions of this research are presented in **Chapter 9**.

Chapter 2. Dolmens, social evolution and society

2.1. Introduction

The dolmen burials of Korea are usually discussed as a by-product, and therefore as a diagnostic feature, of Bronze Age society. The aim of this thesis is to go beyond this current understanding of the Korean dolmens and consider how the construction and use of these burials may have helped reproduce and maintain Bronze Age society. This, however, cannot take place within the current paradigm of Korean archaeology which is dominated by social evolutionary perspectives. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to deconstruct the framework of social evolution and to present an alternative understanding of society in which it is regarded, not as an abstract totality existing in and of itself (i.e. an evolutionary stage), but as a lived reality maintained through practice. It is only when in this alternative understanding of society has been established that the dolmen burials can be approached as actively ‘reproducing’, rather than passively ‘representing’, Bronze Age society.

In the first section of this chapter, I present a brief history of Korean dolmen studies which outlines, in particular, the way in which dolmen burials have been regarded as a diagnostic feature of evolutionary stages, whether as ‘egalitarian’ or ‘chiefdom’ societies. In the second section of this chapter, a critique of social evolutionism is presented, where it will be argued that the ideas of directionality and immanence which lie at the core of this theory are untenable. The way in which theories of social evolution are accompanied by an understanding of society as a naturally occurring evolutionary ‘stage’ – the existence of which is a given – is also discussed. Having outlined the problems with the social evolutionary framework and its conception of society, I outline, in the third section of this chapter, an alternative understanding of society which will be adopted in this thesis.

2.2. A history of Korean dolmen studies

It was in the late nineteenth century, when the 'Hermit Kingdom' first opened its doors to the western empires, that the dolmens of Korea came to be introduced to the wider world. W. Gowland (who published 'Notes on the Dolmens and other Antiquities of Korea' in *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*), the British Vice consular to Korea W. R. Carles, H. B. Hubert and the American H. G. Underwood are the most notable among those who brought the Korean dolmens to a western audience in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Y. M. Lee 2002: 28-29). The archaeological investigation of these dolmens began with the colonisation of the Korean peninsula by the Japanese in 1910; the dolmen burials of Daegu Daebongdong and Gohung Woondaeri came to be excavated by Japanese archaeologists in 1927 and 1928, respectively (*ibid*: 29-30).

In the decade following the Korean War (1950-1953), research on these dolmens was mostly carried out in North Korea by archaeologists such as Jeong Baek-woon (1957) and Do Yu-ho (1959). In South Korea, where post-war reconstruction was the primary concern following the devastation of the Korean War, it was only from the mid 1960s that South Korean archaeologists were able to turn their focus to these dolmens. In 1967, the National Museum of Korea, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, carried out a project investigating over 60 dolmens from 12 different regions in southern Korea. The publication which came out of this project – *A Study of Korean Dolmen Burials* (Kim and Yoon 1967) – is regarded as a seminal work in the history of Korean dolmen research (Y. M. Lee 2002; 2003); it focuses primarily on identifying and cataloguing dolmen characteristics which were then used to establish dolmen typology and chronology. Other works from this period (e.g. Bang 1968; W. Y. Kim 1962; Lim 1964) illustrate a similar concern with dolmen typology, chronology and origins.

In the 1970s, a more contextualised understanding of the Korean dolmens became possible due to the construction of several hydraulic dams initiated by the *Samaul* development scheme of the military dictator Park Chung-hee (Y. M. Lee

2002: 34). These construction projects led to the large-scale excavation of dolmens along the Paldal, Soyang, Yongsan and Daechung River valleys, which were able to provide a relatively thorough picture of dolmen activity along these river ways (JNUM and JNP 1987; 1988; Y. J. Lee 1979; MOC and OCP 1974). The relative completeness of these data – compared to the previous data sets which had come from piecemeal investigations (e.g. see reports in OCP 1977) – allowed the ‘reconstruction’ of dolmen society to become a viable topic of research, as can be seen in the work of Y. J. Lee (1980), B. M. Kim (1981), and Ji (1983), among others. It has been noted that ‘evolutionary stages’ began to appear in discussions regarding dolmen society from around this period, perhaps influenced by contemporary discussions taking place in Korean anthropology concerning the theories of Service and Fried (Choi and K. T. Kim 2000). It was, however, with Choi Mong-yong’s work on the dolmens of the Jeonnam region that a social evolutionary approach, dealing with chiefdom society and its inevitable development towards the ‘State’, came to be actively adopted in the study of Korean dolmens.

Choi’s doctoral thesis from Harvard University – *Study of the Yongsan River Valley Culture: The Rise of Chiefdom Society and State in Ancient Korea* (1983a) – and other works published in Korean (1981; 1983b) played a key role in establishing social evolution as the interpretative framework through which Korean archaeology could make sense of the past. Incorporating ideas of craft specialisation, surplus production and labour organisation, as well as utilising a Saxe-Binfordian approach to the burial data (i.e. that labour invested in dolmen construction and the richness of the grave goods is indicative of the social status of the deceased), Choi (1981) argued that the dolmen society of the Jeonnam region should be regarded as a ‘chiefdom society’ as defined by Service (1971) or Sanders and Price (1968). Perhaps due to the fact that it was regarded as a more sophisticated or ‘theoretical’ way of talking about past – we should bear in mind that to the then very insular Korean archaeological community, this ‘processual’ approach, with its esoteric origins and employment of a wide range of ‘theories’ concerning political organisation, production, crafts specialisation and the social

dynamics of mortuary practices, would have been very attractive indeed – this interpretative approach, which focused on identifying the ‘social organisation’ of past societies, came to feature heavily in the study of the Bronze Age dolmens.

It was within this new interpretative framework that the Korean dolmens came to be regarded as the ‘chiefly’ or elite graves of a chiefdom society (e.g. J. W. Lee 1982; Rhee 1984). Some of the earlier interpretations representing this view were extremely simplistic and *ad hoc*, selectively examining certain characteristics of the dolmens – for example, labour requirements – and attributing them to a highly stratified society (e.g. Choi 1973). Perhaps as a backlash to this, the view that the Korean dolmens were constructed within the context of an egalitarian, rather than stratified, society began to gain strength from around the 1990s (e.g. Kang 1990; Noh 1997; Park 1997; Song 1994). However, these interpretations were equally simplistic and *ad hoc* in nature.

It can be suggested that the unsatisfactory nature of the arguments presented from either side of this debate concerning dolmen society is connected with the conditions of the material evidence. The poor preservation of human remains, the general scarcity of grave goods and the regional diversity of grave goods deposition, in particular, appears to have made it difficult for archaeologists to use the dolmen data to support interpretations of either a stratified or egalitarian dolmen society. We should also bear in mind that, prior to the current decade, settlement evidence for the Korean Bronze Age was relatively limited, and archaeologists therefore had little information about the nature of Bronze Age dolmen society. As a result of these circumstances, the debate concerning the role of dolmen burials and the nature of the society in which they were built reached an impasse by the late 1990s.

It can be suggested that this impasse generated a pessimism in dolmen studies which led to many archaeologists to pursue, once again, a ‘cultural-historical’ understanding of the past. Indeed, much of the work on Korean dolmens since the turn of the millennium has focused on the analysis of dolmen characteristics at a regional level (e.g. see papers in Choi *et. al* 1999 and KAHS

2003). The identification of new architectural features in dolmens has also been an important topic of research (e.g. S. O. Kim 2001; Y. M. Lee 2003). Given that the past decade has witnessed an enormous increase in the number of dolmens excavated – in particular, following the discovery of several large-scale dolmen cemeteries in southern Korea, such as Yeouigok (Kim and Lee 2001) and Yigeumdong (KNARI 2003) – this cultural-historical approach does have some utility. Nevertheless, most of these recent studies have been descriptive, rather than interpretative, in nature and have generally decontextualised the dolmens from the social and economic conditions in which they were constructed and used.

On the other hand, there remain some archaeologists who have continued to work within the ‘processual’ paradigm, most of them reiterating the argument that the dolmens represent the development of an increasingly complex society (e.g. S. O. Kim 2003a; 2006b; Yoo 2001). These more recent and processual interpretations have been based upon a more sophisticated consideration of the burial evidence, in addition to being supported by a detailed understanding of Bronze Age life which has benefited greatly from the significant amount of settlement evidence which has emerged in the last decade or so. They also illustrate a familiarity with the more recent discussions that have taken place in Anglo-American and European archaeology regarding the chiefdom concept. The influences of Earle (1987) and Friedman and Rowlands (1977), in particular, can be noted. Thus, for example, S. O. Kim (2003a; 2006b) has used the dolmen evidence from the Yongdam complex (the same dolmen evidence which is reconsidered in this thesis) to reconstruct a pyramid of kinship relationships recognisably similar to that presented by Friedman and Rowlands (1977) to illustrate the kind of society in which the dolmens may have been used.

While these recent interpretations have been able to provide increasingly sophisticated interpretations on the society in which the Korean dolmens were used, the fact remains that little has been achieved in terms of understanding the dolmens themselves. It can be suggested that this inability to elaborate upon the dolmen material derives, as previously argued, from the nature of the

archaeological evidence, as well limited scope of analytical methods currently adopted in Korean archaeology. The poor preservation of skeletal evidence, again as previously mentioned, makes it impossible to undertake DNA analysis or bio-cultural studies on those individuals buried within the dolmens. The equally poor preservation of organic materials and fact that residue analysis is rarely carried out in Korean archaeology makes it difficult to consider if and how feasting may have factored in structuring the social dynamics of dolmen society. Finally, the paucity of grave goods, which is characteristic of the Korean dolmens, makes it difficult to reconstruct prestige goods systems or to discuss how they may relate to the organisation of this society. Thus, we are faced with a situation in which, although a quarter of a century has passed since archaeologists first began to look beyond the chronology and typology of Korean dolmens, little can be said about these ancient burials apart from the fact that they were quite possibly used as elite graves in a complex society.

This, however, need not be the case. The dolmens can offer us much more insight into the society in which they were used, but this can only take place when they are regarded as an active element contributing to constitution of society, rather than a passive indicator of past processes. The efficacy of this alternative approach is well documented in the work that has been carried out on the ritual and funerary monuments of Northwestern Europe (e.g. Barrett 1994; Bradley 1993; Hodder 1990; Thomas 1999; Tilley 1994). Barrett (1994), for example, approaches the monuments of southern Britain as a kind of architecture which played an active role in structuring the social practices of Neolithic and Bronze Age communities. It is precisely this understanding of funerary and ritual architecture – as something which ‘structures’ rather than ‘represents’ – that I wish to bring to the Korean dolmens.

This new way of approaching dolmen material requires a new way of looking at society, in which it is not regarded as an abstract ‘totality’ reflected in the archaeological material, but a ‘reality’ which emerged through interaction with that material. It is only then that the dolmen material can become regarded as ‘an

active facilitator' of a past reality, and not 'a passive representation' of social organisation or structure. This alternative way of looking at society is, however, fundamentally at odds with the social evolutionary approach of processual archaeology, at the heart of which lies the analysis and categorisation of social totalities. It is therefore clear that in order to give these Korean dolmens a new voice, they must cease to be looked at from a social evolutionary framework.

As social evolution is so deeply embedded within Korean archaeology, it will not be easy to persuade practitioners to step outside of its framework. Indeed, Pluciennik (2005: 12) reminds us, quoting the works of Tilley (1995) and Trigger (1998), that social evolution continues to be as passionately defended as it is reviled. Although the concept has been subject to much criticism from both archaeology¹ and anthropology,² it has continued to maintain a presence within the archaeological discourse. Those archaeologists who have not abandoned evolutionary theory have developed the idea in order to counter some of the criticisms which have come its way (Johnson 1999: 142-143), and it is this ability to adjust to these 'anomalies' – to use Kuhnian vocabulary – that allows the paradigm of social evolution to continue to be regarded, by some, as a valid framework in which to carry out archaeological research.

Rather than presenting a general critique of social evolution (which, considering the scope of this chapter, would probably not contain any new ideas and would merely act to reiterate what others have said³), what I wish to do in the following section is present a tailored critique of social evolution which relates directly to our attempts to consider the Korean dolmens from an alternative perspective. Therefore, the genealogy of social evolution will first be considered, focusing on how certain aspects of this theory – in particular, those having to do

¹ It leaves no room for human agency, ignores diffusion and cultural contact, generalises humanity and presents a teleological view of history (e.g. Bawden 1989; Johnson 1999; McGuire 1983; Paynter 1989; Shanks and Tilley 1987b).

² It has been misused to validate an imperialist agenda and the politics of progress, and its evolutionary 'stages' have little use as conceptual tools (e.g. Ingold 1986; Kuper 1988; Pluciennik 2005; Sanderson 1990).

³ For a much better, in-depth examination of social evolutionary theory see Sanderson (1990); for a shorter, yet equally useful version, see Pluciennik (2005).

with the notion of progress – have embedded itself within this intellectual tradition. I will then go on to discuss the way in which social evolution has acted to constrain archaeological practice, structuring what are regarded as meaningful themes and topics of research.

2.3. Social evolution and archaeological practice

2.3.1. A genealogy of social evolution theory

Modern society's ascent from its primitive origins was the central subject around which the concept of social evolution in the nineteenth century emerged. This notion of human progress can be traced back to the Enlightenment *philosophes* of the eighteenth century who, with their unfailing belief in human progress, believed that all humanity climbed up a single ladder to civilisation. It was these *philosophes* who developed the 'comparative method' which supposed that earlier phases of civilisation could be reconstructed through observing primitive people still living in the earlier stages of development (Malik 2001: 242). However, it was through the work of Herbert Spencer that the notion of human progress became articulated into the 'evolutionary' social philosophy which would influence anthropology and archaeology into the twentieth century (Canerio 2003; Malik 2001).

Spencer's belief in evolution is seen to have been closely linked with the three great passions of the Victorian age: the aspiration to explain all life through a single set of laws; the desire to view all life as perpetual progress; and the devotion to science as the key to moral and social order (Malik 2001: 96). Faced with the decline of religion, he argued that social and moral order should be restored based on the law of nature – 'the survival of the fittest' – in which those with large brains and strong moral values went on to pass their traits to the next generation (Spencer 1864). This belief in human progress through the accumulation of 'superior' traits was influenced by the Lockean idea of the *tabula rasa*, but Spencer extended the idea of the *tabula rasa* from the mind to humanity

(Malik 2001: 98-100). All societies were regarded as having shared this common point of origin – the primordial blank slate of humanity – and from there, the original institutional forms of society became more complex (i.e. progressed) through time (Kuper 1988).

This Spencerian philosophy drew heavily upon Lamarckian evolution⁴ – which is why it is also referred to as ‘Social Lamarckianism’ – and was therefore fundamentally different from Darwinian evolution. However, it has been suggested that, paradoxically, the Spencerian notion of progress, Marxism (which was based on the Spencerian framework) and Darwinian evolution had synergistic effects on one another, influencing the development and enhancing the acceptability of the other (Dunnell 1980). It was in the context of the second half of the nineteenth century, in which the Spencerian philosophy was gaining headway, that the anthropological evolutionary theories of L. H. Morgan and E. B. Tylor (to which neo-evolutionary archaeologists acknowledge their intellectual debt) came to be established.

Morgan and Tylor both focussed on the idea of ‘primitive society’ and how modern society came to evolve from that primordial state. It has been argued that this idea of primitive society, which would become the main subject of social anthropology during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, was crystallized in the 1860s and 1870s through the speculations of lawyers, among whom Henry Maine stands out (Kuper 1988). Maine divided human social evolution into two stages – primitive society based upon kinship ties and modern society organised on a territorial basis – and a similar understating of ‘primitive society’, as dichotomous to ‘modern society’, can be observed in other works of this period (Kuper 1988; White 1959).

⁴ The main tenets of Lamarckian evolutionism can be identified as follows: the inheritance of acquired characteristics, the transformational pattern of evolution and the directed nature of change (Kronfeldner 2006)

In *Ancient Society*, Lewis Henry Morgan (1907) argues that it was from the savagery of primitive societies that all human history progressed in a uniform manner, through barbarism to civilisation, with progress being made on both a technological and a social level. It was thought that the study of kinship terminology was one way in which progress at the social level could be reconstructed, since contemporary kinship terminology was believed to contain traces of primeval social systems (these social systems supposedly having been based upon kinship until the establishment of the state). The development of kinship terminology was therefore used to understand how human societies had evolved from *societas* (primitive society), which was founded upon persons and personal relations, into *civitas* (civil society), which was founded upon territory and property (Kuper 1988; Morgan 1907).

E. B. Tylor (1871) was also a firm believer in the idea that successive types of society had developed out of one primitive ancestral form. However, his interests lay more in the evolution of religion, rather than the evolution of society. This reflected the intellectual atmosphere of the time, in which the publication of Darwin's *Descent of Man* led many to consider the connection between humanity's biological evolution and his or her intellectual development (Kuper 1988). Tylor's work therefore focused on how religion had evolved from its earliest coherent form – animism – into the advanced religions of modern day societies.

As we have seen, the idea of progress was fundamental to these early evolutionary theories. However, the idea of progress was an intellectual construct of the eighteenth century, enabling ideas of freedom, equality and popular sovereignty to be perceived as “not merely desirable but historically necessary, inevitable of eventual achievement” (Nisbet 1969: 171). Indeed, there was never any natural ‘law of progress’; ‘progress’ was merely an ideological construct that needed to *be seen as natural* – as unquestionable and a ‘given’. It has been suggested that the notion of a natural ‘law of progress’ became further established with Darwin's *Origin of Species* in which the words ‘progress’, ‘evolution’ and

'development' were used interchangeably, thereby leading to the conception that progress was something inherent to all species, when in fact neither progress nor cumulative development had any vital role in his theory of natural selection (Nisbet 1969: 174).

It was this idea of progress, perceived as a *natural* and *inalienable* trait of humanity, that formed the central logic of the theories of the nineteenth century evolutionists. Contemporary and past societies were put into stages according to their degree of development, and this narrative of humanity's development from its most primitive origins to the glorious societies of the industrialised West was then used as proof that progress was indeed natural, and therefore inevitable. In other words, the validity of this notion of progress – the underlying motor of evolutionary thought – was based on a circular logic. Indeed, the narratives of social evolution were not a reaffirmation of progress as a trait inalienable to humanity, as the nineteenth century evolutionists would have liked to have believed, but rather, were the reproduction of the ideology of progress which justified as inevitable both the rampant industrialisation in western societies and the western colonisation of less 'developed' societies.

This idea of progress as being 'natural' was further reproduced through the problematic use of time. As Fabian (2002) has noted, social theorists who required a scientific framework with which to legitimise their ideas of progress found it in the 'naturalised' time of the nineteenth century. Unlike 'sacred Time'⁵, which was essentially a vehicle for a linear sequence of events, 'natural Time'⁶ was a neutral framework which provided the basis for a *scientific* formulation of biological evolutionary theories (*ibid*: 13). It is therefore not surprising that the proponents of social evolution incorporated this new notion of 'natural' time into their own discussions of human history, thereby endowing social evolutionary thought with a scientific legitimacy. However, it appears that social evolutionists were not able to entirely abandon their conviction that Time 'accomplished' in the

⁵ Time as a 'chronicle' which relays significant events, both mythical and historical (Fabian 2002: 13)

⁶ Time as a 'chronology'; for example, 'geological time' (Fabian 2002: 13)

course of evolution (which went against the notion of ‘natural’ Time they had adopted), nor could they accept ‘the stark meaningless of mere physical duration’ that ‘natural’ Time embodied (*ibid*: 15). Consequently, what they chose to do, according to Fabian (2002), is discard Time (now naturalised and therefore incompatible) altogether from the speculations about social human evolution, and then spatialize it. The former is observed in Morgan’s discussion on the problem of contemporality between societies of different conditions, in which he states that “the *condition* of each is the material fact, the *time* being immaterial” (Morgan 1907: 13, in Fabian 2002: 15, original emphasis). The latter is seen in Spencer’s visualisation of evolution as a tree, which illustrates a taxonomic approach to socio-cultural reality that regresses to Linnaeus (Fabian 2002: 16).

It can be argued that, ultimately, both of these developments acted to reconfirm the naturalness of progress. In conveniently absencing ‘time’ from their discourse on social evolution, evolutionists were able to retain a concept of Time (i.e. naturalised Time) which was incompatible with their epistemological stance. This allowed anthropology to become a science, and in doing so, helped naturalise their findings on the continuous progress of mankind. The spatialisation of Time, on the other hand, led to an “implied affirmation of difference as *distance*” (Fabian 2002: 16, original emphasis). It was this ‘distance from us’ that was used as the standard to compare past and present primitive societies and assign to them their places in the evolutionary scheme, which again acted to reaffirm a natural law of progress. This spatialization of time has also been discussed by Shanks and Tilley (1987b: 146-7).

Another problem inherent in this notion of progress, as it appeared in nineteenth century social evolutionary thought, was the perceived *mechanism* behind it. Mandelbaum (1971) identified this mechanism as being based on a ‘directional law’, a directional law being, according to Sanderson (1990), that which “assumes that historical change is to be represented as a process of natural development or unfolding, one in which the historical transformation of an entity occurs as the result of the actualisation of the potentialities inherent in that entity

from the very beginning” (*ibid*: 17). It is clear that this notion of a ‘directional law’ was employed by the early evolutionists. For example, in *Ancient Society*, Morgan refers to ‘germs of thought’ from which the principle institutions of mankind are thought to have been developed in a predetermined course and manner (1907: 59). Spencer is also noted to have said, in *Progress: its law and cause* (his famous essay on the general law of evolutionary change), that the evolution of human social life follows the great universal tendency for all phenomena to change from a state of incoherent homogeneity to coherent heterogeneity (Sanderson 1990: 11). However it can be argued, following Mandelbaum (1971), that such directional laws are “epistemologically illegitimate constructions that have no place in historical explanation” since directional tendencies are merely the result of a complex set of *functional* relationships have no conscious ‘direction’. Nisbet (1969) has expressed a similar epistemological problem with the way in which classical social evolution viewed change as being directional, immanent, continuous and necessary (Sanderson 1990).

It has been suggested that this problem regarding directionality and immanence in social evolution was acknowledged, at least implicitly, by twentieth century social evolutionists, for they replaced the developmentalist epistemology with an ordinary casual epistemology to explain the operations of human social progress (Sanderson 1990). However, the notion of progress itself would remain unquestioned and continue into the twentieth century.

Twentieth century evolutionary thought was rekindled by Vere Gordon Childe, Leslie White and Julian Steward as a reaction against the historical particularism of the Boasian school (Trigger 1989; Willey and Sabloff 1980). Childe – although he may have focused on the uniqueness of European prehistory (e.g. *The Dawn of European Civilization* (Childe 1925)) – was essentially an evolutionist who viewed the histories of humankind (as illustrated in *Man Makes Himself* (Childe 1936) and *What Happened in History* (Childe 1942)) as proof of human progress. However, unlike the 19th century evolutionists, Childe did not view human progress as an unfolding of inherent possibilities towards a

predestined goal, but rather saw history as being made by humans, with progress being brought about by the choices and actions of active human agents who found themselves in particular circumstances (Sanderson 1990). As a Marxist, Childe identified economic conditions, technological conditions and the social forces of production as the mechanisms structuring historical change (Childe 1936).

White, who viewed himself as the intellectual heir to Morgan, rejected the historical particularism of Boasian anthropology (Trigger 1989), and focused on understanding the 'culture' (i.e. the totality of human achievements) of humanity and its 'evolution' (i.e. the temporal sequence of culture which constantly underwent changes of content and alterations of form). To explain the mechanism of cultural evolution, White formulated a 'basic law of evolution' which regarded culture as a thermodynamic system functioning to fulfil the needs of humankind and evolving as the amount of energy harnessed or the efficiency of energy increased (Trigger 1989; White 1959). It therefore appears that White, as with Childe, endeavoured to explain evolution (i.e. cultural progress) as the result of casual relationships, distancing himself from the problematic notion of directional progress which had permeated nineteenth century evolutionary thought (Sanderson 1990: 96).

The evolutionary approach of Steward is best understood in light of his objections concerning the evolutionary theories of Childe and White (Sanderson 1990). Maintaining that the evolutionist theories of the nineteenth century (unilinear evolution) and Childe and White (universal evolution) had postulated cultural sequences that were "so general that they are neither very arguable or useful" (Steward 1955: 16-7), Steward therefore presented an alternative theory – that of 'multilinear evolution'. This theory recognized the diversity and parallels among particular cultures, and it was argued that the only profitable way to construct evolutionary generalisations was to study how different cultures developed in different environmental settings, to identify the developmental regularities occurring in the 'cultural core' of each particular environment, and to understand how environmental factors influenced the 'core' elements of culture,

which were essentially related to subsistence (Sahlins and Service 1960; Trigger 1989; Willey and Sabloff 1980)

In an attempt to reconcile the evolutionary approaches of White and Steward, Marshall Sahlins and Elman Service argued that the criticisms of ‘unilinear’ or ‘universal’ evolution were based on the misinterpretation of nineteenth century cultural evolution by twentieth century anthropologists, and that in actuality, nineteenth century cultural evolution had focussed on the dual character of the evolutionary process (Canerio 2003). From this perspective emerged the dual concepts of ‘General Evolution’, which referred to the progressive evolution of culture, and ‘Specific Evolution’, which referred to the adaptive change of particular cultures (Sahlins and Service 1960). However, admitting the existence of ‘adaptive change’ and relating this to ‘general evolution’ had more to do with disarming the critics of general evolution than developing an evolutionary model incorporating the two (Dunnell 1990; Harris 1968). It can therefore be said that in one stroke, Sahlins and Service had not only acted to mend the schism that threatened the intellectual tradition of evolutionary thought, but also managed to ‘smuggle back’ – to use the expression of Harris (1968) – the idea of directional progress (as represented by ‘General Evolution’) into twentieth century evolutionary theory.

In summary, the notion of progress, which gave birth to the theory of social evolution in the nineteenth century, faced uncertainty in the earlier decades of the twentieth century. By the mid twentieth century, however, the idea of progress re-emerged as the one of the key tenets of evolutionary thought. The way in which this notion of progress in social evolution went on to influence archaeological practice will now be considered.

2.3.2. The influence of social evolution on archaeological practice

It was through the work of Sahlins and Service (and later Fried) that the vague idea of progressive evolution crystallised into actual theories concerning the development of societies. Sahlins (1958), for example, proposed a theory regarding the development of social stratification which identified economic surplus as the driving motor of increased stratification. Service (1971), on the other hand, constructed a developmental sequence of societies which contained the evolution of political organisations at its heart. It is to be noted, however, that these theories, and indeed other theories which would follow, were based on the original Enlightenment idea that humanity had progressed from a primitive state to modern western civilisation (Sanderson 1990). Primitive societies would be renamed as ‘bands’ or ‘simple egalitarian societies’ and western civilization would be replaced with ‘the State’, but the notion that each stage had progressed from the former would remain unquestioned. Therefore, all that was left for twentieth century social evolutionists was to explain the mechanism of development which led to ‘the State’ and confirm the diagnostic attributes of each stage.

The problems inherent in this developmentalist explanatory logic are evident. As was discussed earlier in our examination of nineteenth century social evolutionary theory, a developmentalist logic is based on an illegitimate conception of causation in which causation is given a conscious direction. It therefore asserts a directionality to historical change which does not exist (Sanderson 1990: 209-210). These epistemological failings were also noted by Hodder (1985) and Shanks and Tilley (1987b) as they argued for the abandonment of evolutionary theory in archaeology. More recently, the developmentalist logic of social evolution has been problematised by Pluciennik (2005) from the perspective of archaeological practice. He argues that in assuming the directionality and ‘intentions’ of past societies as they move from one predetermined stage to another, archaeologists constrain the questions they are willing to ask and the answers they ultimately provide. “[S]ocial evolution, by defining in advance the direction and stages to which socio-historic processes

move and societies ought to aspire, can act to close down the way in which archaeologies are written, and the themes which are judged relevant and important” (Pluciennik 2005: 131).

Building upon what Pluciennik has argued, it may be suggested that the idea of ‘immanent change’, which is part of this developmentalist logic, also has had an impact on the way in which we carry out archaeological research. The way in which this concept of ‘immanent change’ – which takes the path and outcome of change to be determined by certain inherent ‘tendencies’ or ‘potentials’ that become ‘realised’ with the course of time – operates in archaeological interpretation can be seen, for example, in the investigation of chiefdom societies carried out by Service (1975) and Earle (1997). In Service’s ‘managerial theory’ of chiefdoms, the institutionalisation of the office of the chief, the emergence of a hereditary hierarchy, and the intensification of social inequality (i.e. features which are seen to represent the development of chiefdom society) are regarded as having emerged as the potential for economic productivity/surplus became realised. In Earle’s ‘control theory’ of chiefdoms, systems of staple and wealth finance are seen to have developed as humanity’s desire for domination came to be realised for a certain section of society.

The concept of immanent change is epistemologically untenable, as was discussed earlier (see pp.15-18). It has also had a profoundly negative impact on how we practice archaeology. This is due to the fact that the idea of immanence brings about the assumption that that all developments are merely the fruition of a potential which was already present and needed only to be realised. As a result, societies are studied in terms of what place they occupy on the evolutionary ladder or the way in which they have developed through time, but rarely in and of themselves. In other words, the way in which these societies may have maintained their ontological reality is not considered as the focus of research, since those societies are regarded to be naturally appearing, and therefore *given*. As it is how societies grow into the next stage of fulfilling their potential, rather than how societies *are*, which is considered to be meaningful within a social evolutionary

framework, the study of social reproduction therefore becomes a redundant topic of archaeological research.

It may be suggested that archaeological practice has also been constrained by the way in which social evolution regards societies as abstract totalities. As these abstract totalities are seen to exist in and of themselves, they do not require the reproductive practices of a human presence for an understanding of their histories. Indeed, social evolution has long been criticised for being unable to make room for the individual (Johnson 1999). It is possible to suggest that this way in which ‘society’ is treated as the object of analysis, rather than a concern with the ‘individual’ who maintained that social reality through and his or her actions, can be traced back to the evolutionary approach of White (1959). In rejecting Boasian particularism, White distanced himself from ‘peoples’, ‘cultures’ and ‘histories’, and sought to consider instead, the evolution of ‘culture’ – a singular, abstract and universal concept which was divorced from humanity’s lived reality. And indeed, although White’s own evolutionary stages may have been too crude to have been useful (Sanderson 1990: 99), it appears that this approach, in which an abstract totality is used as the unit for discussing human progress, was adopted by Sahlins and Service (1960) to be used in their own respective evolutionary models.

There are, of course, other criticisms regarding the concept of social evolution which have not been discussed here. However, as the objective of this section has been to justify why the interpretation of dolmens carried out in this thesis will *not* take place within an evolutionary framework – a necessary endeavour given that this thesis must also take into account the intellectual milieu of Korean archaeology – the critique of social evolution presented here has focused specifically on two aspects of the theory which I find make untenable: the way in which it is based on a series of epistemological fallacies and the way in which it keeps us from asking certain types of archaeological questions.

2.4. An alternative understanding of society

Social evolutionary approaches in archaeology have been accompanied by the idea of 'society as organisation'. This idea originates from White's (1959) definition of 'culture' as a thermodynamic system consisting of ideological, sociological, sentimental/attitudinal and technological components (Gosden 1999a: 489); it can also be seen in the systems approach to culture (Trigger 1989). Society is therefore discussed in terms of its different organisational components (i.e. the different elements of society), with the focus of archaeological investigation being the way in which these different components of society functioned to maintain harmony with its environment (Gosden 1999a: 489). A similar understanding of society as organisation can be identified in Marxist approaches. From a Marxist perspective, society, or rather the 'social structure', is regarded as a system of reproduction (Friedman 1998: 32), maintained through the interaction between the relations of production, the productive forces, the ecosystem and the superstructure (Friedman and Rowlands 1978).

It is, however, possible to think about society from an alternative perspective to that of social evolutionism. When society is no longer approached as the unit of study through which the grand trajectories of change are investigated, the act of 'defining' society according to its organisation – or its 'fundamental organising principles', as Barrett (1994) calls it – can cease to be the focus of archaeological research. It becomes possible, instead, to focus on smaller narrative structures and examine the finer-grained aspects of social life (Gosden 1999a: 485).

In this thesis, society will therefore be approached as an 'experienced world' which comes about through people's interactions with the structural conditions they inhabit. In other words, the aim of this study will be to understand how Korean Bronze Age society, as a lived reality, was maintained through the social practices which took place within the material conditions of the world. It is this understanding of society, as a reality which must be reproduced, which allows us to approach the Korean dolmens as an active medium facilitating the practices

of social reproduction.

The understanding of social practice and reproduction adopted in this thesis draws upon the work of Giddens (1979; 1984). Social practice refers to the actions of knowledgeable agents which are carried out in the context of everyday life. These agents inhabit the world, and in doing so experience what they believe 'works' in that world. This understanding of 'what works' becomes a basis for knowing 'how to go on', and this knowledge of 'how to go on' acts as the foundation for future interactions in the world. Success in maintaining one's 'ontological security' during these interactions brings about, once again, an understanding of 'what works', and it is through this process that knowledge is reproduced. Social practices therefore maintain a recursive relationship with their structural conditions in that, they are not just the outcome of the structural conditions, but also act to reproduce and transform these conditions (Giddens 1979; 1984). It is precisely this recursive relationship between structure and agency that allows us to regard social practice as a valid medium through which the active reproduction of past society can be considered.

Chapter 3. Approaching the archaeological record

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter examined the influence of social evolutionary theory on the interpretation of Korean dolmens, with an emphasis on how ideas of directionality and immanent change have contributed to an understanding of society as a naturally occurring evolutionary ‘stage’, the existence of which is a given. This conception of society was held responsible for the way in which Korean archaeology has approached the dolmen burials simply as a by-product of Bronze Age society. Therefore, in an attempt to consider new ways of looking at the Korean dolmen material, an alternative understanding of society was presented – of society as a ‘lived reality’ *maintained* through social practice, rather than an abstract totality existing in and of itself.

This conception of society contains within it the possibility for an alternative understanding of the Korean dolmens. If society is a reality maintained through practice, the dolmen burials can now be approached as an active medium through which that reality was maintained. However, before we can begin to consider the ways in which our dolmen material may have structured practices of social reproduction, the issue of the archaeological record must also be addressed. This is because within the current framework of Korean archaeology, the archaeological record is approached as a fossilised representation of past processes – a passive conception of the archaeological material which does not allow us to explore the active role it may have had in the past.

This chapter considers the various ways in which the archaeological record has been approached within the discipline. In the first section, the processual understanding of the archaeological record – as a ‘fossil record’ – is examined. In the sections that follow, alternative ways of looking at the archaeological record – as represented by the ‘contextual’, ‘phenomenological’

and ‘structuring’ approaches – are discussed. Based on a consideration of these approaches the interpretative methodology which will be advocated in this thesis is developed.

3.2. The archaeological record as fossil record

At the centre of archaeological interpretation lies the archaeological record, but what is the archaeological record? Does it exist ‘out there’ for the archaeologist to find or does it come into being when ‘engaged with’ by the archaeologist? And what is the relationship between the archaeological record and its meaning? Does meaning lie within the archaeological record or is it produced through the archaeologist’s engagement with the archaeological record? Our perceptions regarding the archaeological record determine how archaeological investigation is carried out and the limits to which meaningful interpretation is thought possible.

It was Patrik (1985) who first noted that processual archaeology regards the archaeological record as a kind of ‘fossil record’. She observed that, to the New Archaeologist, the record is composed of the “static, physical things that are the casual effects of what they record” (Patrik 1985: 33). The archaeological record is, in other words, “a faithful remnant of the causal conditions operative in the past” (Binford 1981: 200). However, it is possible to question the epistemological validity of such an approach to the archaeological record.⁷

The processual understanding of the archaeological record is concomitant with a logic of inference which assumes that past processes (the cause) can be inferred from the present record (the effect). But, as Patrik has (1985) demonstrated, the process of inferring a cause from an effect is not as simple as deducing an effect from its cause – one must first confirm that the given effect is

⁷ I do not attempt a general critique of processual archaeology’s method of interpretation here; rather, I focus on the problems that have direct relevance to processual archaeology’s appropriation of the archaeological record.

the result of a given cause, and to do so requires an additional link of inference.⁸ In archaeological practice, this additional link of inference is obtained through two types of analogies: they are the ‘formal’ and ‘probability’ analogies identified by Hodder (1982a).⁹ Formal analogies are piecemeal analogies made between two objects; they allow us to recognise, for example, that a small hole in the ground is a post-hole. Formal analogy is therefore a fundamental building block of our discipline, making the identification of past processes possible (Hodder 1982b; Parker Pearson 1999). However, in order to go beyond mere identification and to explore the complex conditions of the past as represented by the archaeological record, a different type of analogy is required – the probability analogy.

Probability analogies are made by using cross-cultural generalisations, and within the context of processual archaeology, such analogies have been employed by means of middle range theory (Binford 1977). However, it must be stressed that the inferential links of middle range theory are not ‘general laws’ consistent through time and space. Rather, they are empirical generalisations obtained through ethnographic studies and experimental archaeology – to quote Shanks and Tilley (1987a: 44) “middle range theory is little more than middle range empiricism”. Therefore, as empirical generalisations, these middle range analogies have neither the power to substantiate nor negate claims of causality between past processes and the archaeological record (see Wylie 1985a; 1988; 1989 for a discussion on the issue of cross-cultural generalisation as a means of inference). Consequently, it may be argued that when the archaeological record is approached as a fossil record, interpretation that goes beyond simple identification of past processes becomes problematic. This is because an interpretation of the complex social, economic and ideological conditions that structured the formation

⁸ For an in-depth examination of the logic of archaeological inference, see Patrik (1985: 47-8).

⁹ I refer here to types of analogies used within the processual interpretative framework, and therefore do not consider the ‘relational analogies’ – analogies which establish inferential links through a common structuring principle – often employed within post-processual archaeology (e.g. Hodder 1982b; Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina 1998).

of the archaeological material requires, as its additional link of inference, a form of analogy (i.e. the probability analogy) which cannot be validated empirically.

Within the context of funerary archaeology, Saxe (1970) and Binford's hypotheses (1971) regarding mortuary behaviour clearly demonstrate the fallible nature of probability analogies. Based on cross-cultural studies carried out on a series of ethnographically documented societies, these hypotheses postulated the existence of certain correlations between the treatment and disposal of the dead and the complexity of society or the social status of an individual (for a summary, see Parker Pearson 1999: 28-30). The Saxe-Binford programme therefore provided processual archaeologists with the link of inference which allowed them to interpret past social organisation from the funerary data, the latter being the fossil record of past mortuary practices (e.g. Arnold 1980; Binford 1971; Brown 1971; Chapman *et al.* 1981; Peebles and Kus 1977; Randsborg 1973; Saxe 1970; Shennan 1975; Tainter 1975; 1978). In Korean archaeology, the Saxe-Binford approach to the mortuary data continues to have a profound influence on the interpretation of burials. For example, the effort-expenditure principle proposed by Binford (1971) and expanded by Tainter (1978) – that the 'higher social rank of a deceased individual will correspond to greater amounts of corporate involvement and activity disruption, and that this should result in the expenditure of greater amounts of energy in the interment ritual (*ibid*: 125) – consistently appears in the interpretation of Korean dolmen burials, albeit not referred to explicitly as the 'effort-expenditure principle' (e.g. Choi 1973).

More recent studies demonstrate, however, that mortuary practices do not directly reflect society. As Bloch (1971), Hodder (1980), Parker Pearson (1982) and Cannon (1989), among others, have illustrated, burial practices are actively appropriated and manipulated by the living and often provide an idealised or distorted picture of society. For example, ostentatious funerals may represent class-specific attitudes towards burial practices rather than the social status of the deceased *per se*, as was observed to be the case with gypsy and showman burials of Victorian England (see Parker Pearson 1982: 104), and notions of stability

mediated through an ancestral presence within tombs may, in fact, be a means of denying the fragmentation and fluidity of actual society, as has been suggested for the Merina of Madagascar (see Bloch 1971). Thus, as burial practices appear to be, at best, an *indirect* reflection of society (Hodder 1980; 1982b), it becomes possible to question the validity of certain correlations underlying the hypotheses of Saxe and Binford.

As it has been proven both theoretically and empirically that middle range theories used in processual archaeology cannot be a valid means of establishing inferential links between the mortuary record and past society, alternative ways of approaching the archaeological record – and therefore alternative ways of looking at the mortuary data – must now be considered.

3.3. The archaeological record as ‘text’

The post-processual conceptualisation of the archaeological record as text is based on an understanding that material culture is more than a simple and direct reflection of past society. Although the idea of material culture as text appears as far back as the archaeology of Childe (Parker Pearson 1982), it was in the 1980s that the notion of an archaeological record embedded with codes and meanings came to gain prominence (e.g. Hodder 1992b; 1986). The contextual archaeology proposed by Hodder represents one of the main strains of post-processual thought which contain this notion of the archaeological record as text. Heavily influenced by the historical idealism of Collingwood (1946) – in particular the idea that an event should be understood in terms of its ‘inside’ (i.e. the thoughts and intentions behind an event) as well as its ‘outside’ (i.e. the concrete physical characteristics of an event) – contextual archaeology perceives ‘meaning’ to lie not only in the functional nature of material culture, but also in the ideas and symbolic intentions behind the production and use of this material culture (Johnsen and Olsen 1992). The works of Shanks, Tilley and Miller (e.g. Miller 1987; Miller and Tilley 1984; Shanks 1992; Shanks and Tilley 1982; 1987a; Tilley 1989a; 1989b;) contain a

similar understanding of the archaeological record as text, although in this case, the primary focus of archaeological interpretation is to understand how the ideas and symbolic intentions imbedded within past material culture may have been involved in reinforcing and reproduce dominant social structures (Buchli 1995: 182).¹⁰ Together, these works can be understood together as representing a symbolic and/or structural archaeology.

Common to this conceptualisation of the archaeological record as text is therefore an understanding of material culture as “an articulated and structured silent material discourse forming a channel of reified expression” (Shanks and Tilley 1987a: 102). To put it simply, material culture is meaningfully constituted (Hodder 1986); it contains the intentions of past agents and is an expression of their ideas. In the context of mortuary studies, this perception of material culture was interwoven with an understanding of ritual as a form of communication in which an idealised version of the world is referenced through material signs (i.e. material culture) (Pader 1982). This medium of ritual therefore allowed the mortuary data to be approached as a material text that could be read in order to gain insight into the processes by which social relations were represented and produced in the past. Examples of this can be seen in the work of Pader (1982), Shanks and Tilley (1982), Parker Pearson (1984; 1999), Thomas (1990) and Richards (1993).

Central to these studies was the act of ‘reading’ through which past social structures were interpreted from the medium of ritual communication (i.e. the

¹⁰ Patterson (1990) has identified the archaeology of Leone, Potter, Shackel and Wylie (Leone 1982; Leone and Potter 1992; Leone, Potter and Shackel 1987; Wylie 1985b; 1987) as a third strain of post-processual thought in which the archaeological record is approached as text. However, as this ‘critical approach’ focusses primarily on how archaeological texts (as constituted by the archaeological record) are produced and disseminated within the *present* (Buchli 1995), it will not be discussed any further since the objective of this chapter is to consider alternative ways of approaching the archaeological record through which new insight can be gained regarding the social significance of dolmens in the *past*.

mortuary record). To read, according to Hodder's original contextual approach,¹¹ is to understand the meaning of past material culture as it was intended by the producer/user (Hodder 1986); it is to understand prehistoric peoples in their own terms, an approach which borrows upon Collingwood's concept of reenactment (Johnsen and Olsen 1992: 425). This reading of the past requires one to subscribe to what Johnsen and Olsen (1992) have identified as the concept of the 'objective mind' – the "human mental ability to conceive of more than one subjective context and critically to examine the relationship between varied perspectives" (Hodder 1986: 170). However, it is this idea of a subjective reader with an 'objective mind' that has generated much of the criticism regarding the contextual approach. For example, uncertainty surrounding the ability of this objective mind to provide a true version of past events (i.e. a version of past events as perceived by past agents) has resulted in the idea of there being multiple, contradictory 'little pasts' rather than a monolithic and unified 'Past', or even that there is no such thing as a retrievable past (Buchli 1995). It has also been noted that the methodological approach of reenactment assumes, problematically, that the course of history conforms to the intentions of individual actors, when in fact the consequences of human action are often unintended (Barrett 1987). With respect to the former criticism, Hodder has argued that although the structures of meaning through which people made sense of the world may be historical and arbitrary, it is nevertheless possible to interpret those structures of meaning since they were used in social action and therefore produced repeated patterned effects in the material culture (Hodder 1991: 13). Thus, what the archaeologist must do is grasp, as completely as possible, "the totality of the relevant dimensions of variation around any object" (Hodder 1986: 139) – in other words, the archaeological context.

Within funerary studies, Pader (1982) stressed the importance of using multiple sources of archaeological information to obtain a wider social context

¹¹ I refer here to the Hodder's contextual approach from the 1980s (e.g. Hodder 1986; 1987) and not the revised version he promoted in the early 1990s (e.g. Hodder 1991), since it is the former which has had impact on the wider discipline.

which would make the reading of mortuary practices possible. Parker Pearson's (1984) study of wealth destruction in Iron Age Jutland demonstrates how the meaning of burials – as a domain in which control over resources was displayed through conspicuous consumption – can be read through its contextual relationship with contemporary settlements and non-burial rituals (Hodder 1986: 140). In Shanks and Tilley's (1982) study of megalithic tombs from Neolithic Britain and Sweden, contextual evidence from contemporary settlements and non-burial rituals provides the means by which the mortuary practices observed at these megalithic tombs are interpreted as actively misrepresenting and concealing the asymmetrical social relations present within society.

However, such sufficient contextual information may not always be at hand. By 'sufficient contextual information', I refer to the definition of 'context' provided by Hodder – "*the totality of the relevant environment*, where 'relevant' refers to a significant relationship to the object – that is, a relationship necessary for discerning the object's meaning" (Hodder 1986: 139, original emphasis). Indeed, this lack of sufficient context is certainly the case when interpreting the Korean dolmens, since settlements are rarely found in direct association with dolmen burials (an unfortunate situation exacerbated by the piecemeal nature of rescue excavations which represent the majority of archaeological investigations carried out in Korea) and since the preservation of organic remains, including human skeletal evidence, is extremely poor. It may therefore be argued that, in addition to theoretical concerns regarding subjectivity and intentionality (which have been outlined earlier, and which will also be discussed further in the following section), a pragmatic concern regarding the lack of sufficient contextual information is what deters us from adopting a contextual approach to the interpretation of Korean dolmens.

3.4. The phenomenological approach to the archaeological record¹²

Within the framework of processual and contextual archaeology, the archaeological record and what that archaeological record represents/signifies exists in a state of dualism. To interpret is therefore to establish a link between the two using the medium of ‘causality’ or ‘context’. But as we have just suggested, the processual and contextual methods of establishing such interpretative links cannot be applied to the Korean dolmen material, not only due to the theoretical problems inherent in these approaches (i.e. they cannot be validated, they are too subjective and they overemphasise the efficacy of intentional action), but also due to empirical reasons (i.e. the problematic nature of the Saxe-Binford middle range hypotheses and the lack of sufficient evidence which makes difficult a contextual approach). Thus, alternative ways of establishing connections between the archaeological record and what that archaeological record *means* (i.e. represents or signifies) must now be considered.

It can be argued that one way in which to bridge this interpretative divide is by *collapsing* altogether the dualism which exists between the archaeological record and meaning. This conflation could take place by considering the archaeological record in terms of its ontological value, rather than its epistemological quality (i.e. what it can *tell* us), and by regarding meaning as existing within, and not outside, the archaeological record. Shanks and Tilley’s argument for a ‘revitalized’ philosophy of archaeology which goes beyond the traditional dualism between the archaeologist and the data, the subject and object (Shanks and Tilley 1987a: 103-15) can be understood in this light. The phenomenological approaches developed by Tilley (1994; 1996; 1999; 2004a; 2004b) and Thomas (1993a; 1993b; 1996; 2004) can also be understood as attempts to find meaning *in* – and not *from* – the archaeological record. However,

¹² It should be stressed that this section considers the phenomenological approach with the specific objective of considering its methodological utility within this thesis. In other words, it is not meant as an out and out literary review of phenomenological archaeology – for such a literary review, see Brück (2005).

as will now be discussed, whilst these phenomenological approaches may have been successful in conflating the dualism between the *archaeologist* and the *archaeological record*, they have not brought an end to the dualism between the *archaeological record* and *meaning*. It is from the latter dualism, I would argue, that the theoretical problems regarding subjectivity in interpretation emerge.

According to Tilley's appropriation of the concept, "phenomenology involves the understanding and description of things as they are experienced by a *subject*" (Tilley 1994: 12, my emphasis). It can be suggested that his 'subject' is one that is consciously aware of its surroundings, as is evidenced in the following statement from *Phenomenology of the Landscape* (Tilley 1994), as well as in the way in which Tilley himself is shown to be consciously observing the landscape and looking for clues within the case studies presented in this volume:

Being-in-the-world resides in a process of *objectification* in which people *objectify* the world by setting themselves *apart* from it. This results in the creation of a gap, a distance in space. To be human is both to create this distance between the self and that which is beyond and to attempt to bridge this distance through a variety of means

(Tilley 1994: 12, my emphasis)

One may think that this particular phenomenological perspective is based on the phenomenology of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, for it is the ideas and terminology of these two that are heavily used by Tilley to argue that space is socially constituted by the subject's Being-in-the-world, which is one of the core theoretical arguments made by Tilley using the phenomenological approach as a methodology. However, a closer examination of the way in which this approach has been applied to the archaeological data suggests that this may not necessarily be the case.

The phenomenological approach, as a methodology, can be summarised into the following three statements:

- The archaeological record – in Tilley’s case, the Neolithic monuments – cannot be understood without a human presence. Meaning can only be obtained through a human engagement with the material culture.
- The body is the medium through which this engagement occurs.
- Therefore, in using his or her own body as the medium of engagement, the archaeologist can recreate a past Being-in-the-world, and in doing so, retrieve meaning from/through the archaeological record.

The first and second of these statements are not problematic. They faithfully reflect the phenomenology of Heidegger (1962)¹³ and Merleau-Ponty (1962)¹⁴, respectively, and indeed a similar theoretical position regarding material culture and human engagement is adopted in this thesis. However, it is in the third statement that reveals the problematic nature of Tilley’s phenomenological approach.

While Tilley may attempt a phenomenology of the landscape based on the ideas of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, in practice, interpretation is arrived at through an entirely different approach which, it may be argued, has more in common with the phenomenology of Husserl (1931). Husserl’s official definition of the science of phenomenology was that it is the study of “the essence of

¹³ Heidegger maintains that it is in our constant engagement with the world – in our ‘Being-in-the-world’ – that the world acquires its meaning. There is no world ‘out there’ that is to be distanced from and observed; the world exists by virtue of our ‘Being-there’ (*Dasein*). In addition, there is never just one version of the world, since different ‘moods’ - which are the way humans are ‘tuned’ to the world and thus essential structures of our Being – lead to different states of Being, which constitute different worlds.

¹⁴ Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology attempts to transcend the Cartesian dualism between the subject and object, self and world, by claiming that we are our bodies – we are our lived experiences of our bodies. Thus the focus is on the significance of the body (body-subject) in relation to the world and to others.

conscious experience, especially intentional experience” (Husserl 1931). Central to Husserl’s phenomenology is thus the detached attitude of consciousness by which objects are experienced (Smith and Smith 1995). The way in which this detached attitude of consciousness is achieved is by ‘phenomenological reduction’,¹⁵ which enables us to free ourselves from prejudices and maintain our detachment as observers, thereby allowing us to encounter ‘things as they are in themselves’. As can be observed, this approach shares many similarities with Tilley’s own practice of phenomenology in which the archaeologist first clears his or her mind of the preconceptions of this industrial, modern day age which may hinder transformation into the Neolithic *Dasien*, and then, consciously looking around, observing the surrounding landscape and its relationship to the monument, attempts to encounter the monuments ‘as they would have been in the past’ (to use the terminology of Husserl). In other words, it can be argued that while Tilley may advocate a Heideggerian phenomenology, in actual practice, his interpretation of monuments contains a neo-Cartesian emphasis on consciousness and subjectivity very similar to Husserl’s own neo-Cartesian emphasis on consciousness and subjectivity¹⁶, which was precisely what Heidegger was attempting to overcome through his own philosophy of phenomenology.

It is this mixture of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology with something strongly resembling Husserl’s phenomenology that leads Tilley to ‘embody’ monuments with ‘meaning’. However, the notion of projecting meaning into things is problematic from the stance of Heideggerian philosophy, for as

¹⁵ Phenomenological reduction can be understood as the methodological procedure of leading phenomenological vision from ‘the natural attitude’ which involves the actual world of things and persons to ‘the transcendental attitude’ of consciousness and its detached experiences, in which objects are constituted as correlates of consciousness. (Heidegger 1968).

¹⁶ Due to the fact that Husserl constantly revised and expanded his philosophy and adopted various approaches in different works, whether or not Husserl can be seen as a Cartesian thinker is open to debate, as is the argument that Heidegger’s phenomenology is based upon a radical rejection of Husserlian thought (Smith and Smith 1995). However, since Heidegger’s *perception* of Husserl’s phenomenology was that of it contained a neo-Cartesian emphasis on consciousness and subjectivity, it is this aspect of Husserl’s thought that I focus on here.

Guignon (1983) notes:

Interpretation is the “appropriation” (*Zueignung*) of equipment in which one makes the totality one’s own. This interpretation is always involves taking “something as something”; the hammer is encountered *as* a hammer, the nails are encountered *as* nails. When Heidegger says that something is encountered “*as* something”, he does not mean that we have consciously identified a thing and predicated some property to it. The ‘as’ of interpretation is “prepredicative”. “In interpreting” Heidegger says, “we do not, so to speak, throw a ‘signification’ over some naked thing which is present at hand, we do not stick a value on it”. Rather it is the totality of the equipmental context as an interconnected field – a totality understood in advance – that is articulated into an as-structure in interpretation.

(Guignon 1983: 96)

Therefore, when Tilley (1994: 207) observes, for example, the way in which certain monuments in the landscape mimic or emphasise places almost certainly used in the Mesolithic, and suggests that these monuments acted to draw attention to the symbolic and social significance of these places (thereby making implicit assumptions regarding the motivation of monument construction), this is not a ‘true’ interpretation in the Heideggerian sense, for the monuments are approached as ‘present-at-hand’ – from the attitude of a scientist who observes objects in order to theorise about it (see footnote 17).

The phenomenology of Thomas does, on the other hand, seem to contain a more overt awareness of this Heideggerian notion that objects (i.e. the meaning of objects) *reveal* themselves to us in a way that can only be understood within the totality of context (for example, see Thomas 2004: 216-217) – that objects are generally encountered as ‘ready-to-hand’¹⁷. It has been observed that as a result of

¹⁷ The Heideggerian notions of ‘ready-to-hand’ and ‘present-at-hand’ represent two different attitudes towards objects in the world. Ready-to-hand (*zuhanden*) refers to the way in which most objects are approached in an everyday context – the way in which they are used without ‘theorising’ about them. Present-at-hand (*vorhanden*) refers to the way in which objects are approached as a ‘thing’ or in terms of its properties – the way in which they become an object of inspection. Heidegger (1968: 149-189) uses the example of the hammer to illustrate his

this awareness, Thomas' phenomenological approach, in contrast to that of Tilley, places more emphasis on the temporality of being and on local and regional histories, and shies away from overt descriptions and discussions regarding the contemporary experience of monuments (Brück 2005: 49-50). However, it may be argued that Thomas does not practice what he preaches, for as with the phenomenology of Tilley, meaning is sought from the archaeological material in a way that is incongruent with the Heideggerian understanding of objects, as will now be discussed further.

For Tilley and Thomas, the primary meaning of prehistoric monuments appears to be found in the *motivation* which lay behind their construction. Tilley (1994) considers how the deliberate selection of monument fabric and orientation at Västergötland and Cranborne Chase, respectively, may have drawn attention to places in the landscape; how the monuments of Bohuslan and the Black Mountains are located so that they draw out and emphasize the features of in the landscape; and how the deliberate situation of monuments at locals of movement previously used in the Mesolithic may have acted to emphasize a continuity with this earlier period in Skåne and Pembrokeshire. Thomas, on the other hand, who is interested in how social control emerges from a control of people's movement in time and space (Thomas 1993a: 77-78; 1999: 36), finds the meaning of Wessex Neolithic monuments in the way in which their *deliberate* placement within the landscape may have influenced the reading of space.¹⁸ A similar interpretative process whereby meaning is found in past motivation and ideas (this motivation and ideas being recreated through a past perception that is reconstructed by an archaeologist's Being-in-the-world) is apparent in other writings based on this

point: when a hammer is in the midst of being used, it is approached from the mode of ready-to-handedness; however, the moment that the user thinks 'the hammer is too heavy', it becomes an object which is present-at-hand.

¹⁸ That Thomas finds the meaning of monuments in the deliberate intentions which lie behind their construction is clearly seen in the following quote: "The monumental landscapes of the Neolithic were qualitatively different from the spatial orders which preceded and which then succeeded them. By *constructing* artificial landmarks which placed the bones of the ancestral dead or other symbolic media in space, *an attempt was being made to influence* the reading of that space" (Thomas 1999: 60, my emphasis).

phenomenological approach (e.g. Bender, Hamilton and Tilley 1997; Cummings 2002a; 200b; Cummings, Jones and Watson 2002; Cummings and Whittle 2004; Watson 2001).

It can be argued, however, that it is fundamentally problematic to seek meaning from past motivation when adopting, at the same time, an interpretative approach based on Heideggerian phenomenology. This is because, as discussed earlier (p. 38), a key component of Heideggerian philosophy is the understanding that, in our encounter with the world, objects are generally engaged with as ‘ready-to-hand’. In other words, rather than consciously being theorised about, objects in the world tend to be approached simply ‘as’ – as they are. One can only imagine how difficult day-to-day life would be if otherwise. Of course, this is not to deny that, at times, objects are approached as ‘present-at-hand’; that they are consciously inspected and thought about. Without the theorising of the world that this attitude entails, there would be no science, philosophy, nor ideology. However, it must be stressed that within the framework of Heideggerian thought, ready-to-hand is perceived as primordial, whilst present-at-hand is secondary. As Guignon (2006: 10) puts it, “the present-at hand items taken as basic by traditional theorizing (for instance, physical objects and their causal relations) are derivative from and parasitic on the world understood as a context of involvements directed towards accomplished things”. In other words, present-at-hand is a *derivative* mode of being which should not be mistaken as *the* significant mode of being underlying all entities; it is, rather, ready-to-hand which constitutes “our practical understanding of dealing with equipment, “being-with” other human beings, and “in-each-case-mineness”, the relation to and concern for our own selves that we are and have to be” (Frede 2006: 58).

Unfortunately, in their ‘theorising’ of the motivations and intentions which may have structured the situation of monuments within the landscape, proponents of the phenomenological approach have only allowed for this derivative, present-at-hand attitude towards the material world. In other words, although Tilley’s 1994 manifesto illustrates an allegiance to Heideggerian

phenomenology, the phenomenological approaches of Tilley and others have, in practice, overlooked an essential point of Heideggerian thought; they have not considered the meaning of the archaeological material from the perspective of ready-to-hand. Of course, this is not to suggest that an archaeological approach which limits itself to exploring past meaning from the perspective of present-at-hand is problematic *per se*. However, let us be clear on one thing. Such an approach *cannot* be regarded as faithfully adopting Heidegger's phenomenology as an interpretative methodology when it selectively overlooks one of the key tenets of his thought: the notion of ready-to-hand, for "in anything ready-to-hand the world is always 'there'" (Heidegger 1962: 114). In fact, it must be pointed out that in assuming a detached attitude of consciousness (where the mind and the world maintain a state of dichotomy, although the body itself may be engaging with the world) as a means of understanding of the world 'as intended', phenomenological approaches have more in common with certain ideas of Husserlian phenomenology. As noted earlier (p. 37), it was these ideas of Husserl that Heidegger was attempting to overcome in formulating his own phenomenology.

It can thus be argued that the phenomenological approach, as it has been applied to the archaeological record, is problematic in that it misses the main point of Heideggerian phenomenology.¹⁹ Tilley and others may talk Heidegger but they do not practice it. The archaeologist may go through the actions of 'Being-in-the-world', but in looking for meaning, not amongst what *is* encountered, but in what *is intended to be* encountered, the true essence of Heideggerian phenomenology – of approaching the world 'as' – is lost, and thus so is its potential for providing an alternative way of understanding the past.

In summary, it may be suggested that although the phenomenological

¹⁹ This can be added to the current corpus of criticism regarding the phenomenological approach: it is conceptually one-dimensional (McGlade 1995; 1999), lacks critical rigour (Flannery and Marcus 1996; Fleming 1999; 2005; 2006; Hodder 2000b), does not provide adequate evidence (Flannery and Marcus 1996; Fleming 1999; 2005; Hodder 2000b), and produces empirically false statements (Fleming 1999; 2005).

approach has been successful in collapsing the dualism between the archaeologist and the archaeological record, thereby bringing to our attention a new way approaching landscape as a inhabited place, rather than an abstract space (which was perhaps Tilley's original intention in formulating this approach), in its application to the archaeological material, the phenomenological approach – constrained, as it has been, by a focus on motivation – has not been successful in overcoming the dualism between the archaeological record and meaning. We must therefore consider other ways of bringing an end to this dualism, perhaps through a more faithful application of Heideggerian phenomenology to archaeological interpretation, as will now be discussed.

3.5. The 'structuring' approach to the archaeological record

Approaching the archaeological evidence as 'ready-to-hand' allows meaning to be found directly in the archaeological material. However, as I have argued above, this Heideggerian approach to objects is not compatible with attempts to find meaning in the original ideas or intentions which lie behind material culture. Given that this is the case, we must reconsider *where* meaning is found in the material culture.

Common amongst archaeological interpretations deriving from a phenomenological approach is the notion that there existed, prior to the construction of a monument, an *intended idea* – an idea of not only the monument's form, location and function, but also of the way in which it would operate once constructed, such as to emphasise features in the landscape (e.g. Tilley 1994). However, it has been suggested that this conception of there being a pre-existing mental model from which material culture emerges is a remnant of modern day thought (Jameson 1984). As Thomas (2004: 4) has noted, it is a feature of the modern world that "abstract thought is often considered to precede action." Thus, material culture should not necessarily be approached as a kind of surface onto which meaning is projected (Graves-Brown 2000), a point made by

Ingold (2000) using the example of basket weaving – “The actual, concrete form of the basket, however, does not issue from the idea. It rather comes into being through the gradual unfolding of that field of forces set up through the active and sensuous engagement of practitioner and material” (*ibid*: 57). Consequently, it can be argued that while mental templates may establish certain parameters regarding material culture (form, primary function, etc.), the meaning of an object evolves through the interface between the ‘matter’ of material culture itself, the user and the environment.

With regard to the matter of ‘intervisibility’, so often used in phenomenological archaeology as a means of reconstructing deliberate action and therefore intentional meaning, Brück (2005: 51) has similarly argued that “intervisibility does not in itself indicate that those who built and used a monument either recognized this visual relationship or considered it significant.” The need to distinguish those particular elements of the landscape context which influenced monument construction from those which did not was therefore proposed – an endeavour which requires a careful distinction between causation and simple association, since the latter can be an accidental outcome of other factors (*ibid*). However, to distinguish past causation from past association is a daunting, if not impossible, task, which also requires one to achieve a detached state of consciousness incongruent with the Heideggerian phenomenology discussed above.

Thus, it may be suggested that we should consign causation, intentionality and pre-existing mental models to the category of ‘that which simply cannot be known to the archaeologist’, and focus, rather, on finding ‘meaning’ elsewhere in the material culture. As Barrett (2005a; 2005b; 2006) has recently argued, in freeing ourselves from the mistaken belief that the perceived outcome of behaviour is consistent with original motivation, we will no longer be consciously obliged to look for specific motivation within the archaeological material. Once freed from this tyranny of motivation, the material world can then be approached ‘as’, in the true spirit of Heidegger.

The groundwork for a phenomenological approach in archaeology which adhered to the essential ideas of Heidegger was laid down more than a decade ago when Barrett (1994: 168-9) stated that “Artefacts mean nothing. It is only when they are interpreted through practice that they become invested with meanings and may then act as the props for the strategies of social life.” What was suggested here is that meaning is found, not in the original motivation behind the situation reconstructed through the archaeologist’s bodily engagement with material culture, but in the reality of that situation itself. It was therefore argued that archaeological interpretation should focus on exploring the various *possibilities* of reality which could have emerged from *human engagement* with material culture, since it is in these possibilities of human engagement that meaning – an understanding of the world deriving from practice – is found (Barrett 2005a; 2005b; 2006). Consequently, as the possibilities of past reality are reconstructed through the archaeologist’s understanding of the material culture ‘as’, it was this attempt to go beyond an archaeology of motivation and consider an archaeology of possibilities which allowed a faithful rendition of Heideggerian phenomenology to take place.

It is this approach, which finds meaning in the way in which human practice and experience was ‘structured’ by the material conditions of the archaeological evidence (i.e. in the possibilities of reality as emerging from human engagement with material culture), that is adopted in this thesis. The interpretative framework of the current research is therefore structured as follows:

- Step 1: The *material structural conditions* of the mortuary landscape, as represented by the burial evidence, is examined. Following Barrett, the ‘material structural conditions’ can be defined as the “*inhabited conditions which acted partly as medium and partly as outcome of that agency’s existence*” (2001: 158, original emphasis).

- Step 2: The possibilities of *practice*, as structured by these material conditions, are considered.
- Step 3: The possibilities of *experience*, as emerging from these practices, are explored.
- Step 4: The meaning of the burial evidence is found in the *consequences* of these practices and experiences, rather than the motivations which may have generated these practices and experiences.

Not only does this approach enable a ‘ready-to-hand’ engagement with the archaeological evidence, it is more resilient to the criticisms of relativism which have followed post-processual interpretations, as will now be discussed.

Much of the debate surrounding phenomenological interpretations, as Brück (2005) has noted, has concerned the degree of commonality between contemporary and past experiences of landscape (e.g. Barrett 2004; Brück 1998; Jones 1998; Tarlow 2002). Given that neither the human body nor the material world can be approached as being universal (Brück 2005: 55), we must accept that phenomenological interpretations – be it based on the ideas of Heidegger or Husserl – will inevitably be subjective in nature. This subjectivity in itself cannot be taken to invalidate phenomenological approaches to the archaeological material, for once we distance ourselves from the idea that archaeology is an objective science, all ‘interpretative’ archaeology will, to an extent, be subjective. However, we must also guard against hyper-relativism and the pessimistic assumption that ‘there is no past which can be meaningfully grasped’.²⁰ Therefore, attempts must be made to provide, amidst this subjectivity, interpretations which may commonly be accepted as being plausible by the wider archaeological, if not necessarily agreed upon.

²⁰ Of course while an archaeology which accepts that there is no past which can be meaningfully grasped may still have much to offer, such as insight into the political agendas and concerns of the modern age (e.g. Leone 1982; Leone, Potter and Shackel 1987; Leone and Potter 1992; Wylie 1985b), I would argue that this cannot constitute the entirety of our discipline.

It may be argued that, compared to the phenomenological approach, the 'structuring' approach adopted in this thesis is better able to avoid the pitfalls of relativism by providing interpretations which may be regarded, more commonly, as being plausible. Firstly, because our investigation focuses specifically on events of dolmen construction and use, it is possible to achieve a common consensus regarding the conditions structuring practice; in our case they would derive from the architecture of the dolmen burial itself. In contrast to this, the material conditions which phenomenological approaches to the landscape regard as having structured practice and experience are often subject to debate (see, for example, Cummings and Whittle 2004 and Fleming 2005). It can also be suggested that the range of possibilities (in terms of practice and experience) associated with dolmen construction and use is narrower than that associated with simply viewing (e.g. Tilley, Hamilton and Bender 2000) or walking amongst monuments in the landscape (e.g. Tilley 1994), since the dolmen architecture provides relatively concrete parameters of bodily action. Secondly, as investigation deals not with the issue of 'motivation', which is inevitably contentious, but considers the 'possibilities' of practice and experience emerging from the material conditions of the archaeological evidence, the structuring approach therefore allows less room for presentist assumptions of the past (this issue is considered further in Chapter 8, pp. 198-200)

Chapter 4. Introducing the archaeological material

4.1. Introduction

The previous two chapters put in place the groundwork for an alternative understanding of the Korean dolmens. The theoretical positions adopted in this thesis with respect to society and the archaeological record were clarified and the analytical framework was outlined. This chapter introduces the archaeological material which is to be studied according to this alternative approach. The geographic and archaeological context of the Jinan region, from which our evidence derives, is examined in the first section of this chapter. In the second section of this chapter, the archaeological material itself is presented, focusing on the sites, chronology and burials of the ‘Yongdam complex’ in the Bronze Age.

4.2. The Jinan region: geographic and archaeological contexts

4.2.1. The geographical context of the Jinan region

The county of Jinan forms part of North Jeolla Province and is located in the central south-western part of South Korea. Much of this region consists of a highland plateau area (around 300-500 meters above sea level) which runs from the Sobaek mountain range in the east to the Noryong mountain range in the west (Figure 4.1). The two mountain ranges converge in the Jangsu region, just south of Jinan, and it is in this upland basin area that the Geum River – one major waterways in southern Korea – originates (Jang 2004).

The Geum River flows through the Jinan highlands on its journey northwards to the Daejeon Basin.²¹ During this process, it forms a river valley consisting of narrow alluvial plains, river terraces and gently sloping hillsides. It is along these river terraces and hillsides flanking the Geum and its tributaries that the burials and settlements of the Bronze Age in this area are located.

These geographic conditions would have had a profound impact on the lives of communities living in the Jinan region. As a highland plateau area surrounded on both sides by mountain ranges, the region experiences both heavy rainfall in the summer (760-780 millimetres in Jun-Aug) and significant snowfall in the winter (100-110 millimetres in Dec-Feb) (Jang 2004). The heavy summer precipitation, in particular, makes flooding an inevitable fact of life in this upland river valley. Indeed, the authors of the Yeouigok excavation report note that during the summer excavation season, the Geum would overflow, flooding the area where the Bronze Age field system lay, and encroaching upon the band of dolmen burials. They also mention that summer rainfall led to a rise in the ground-water table and triggered small-scale landslides, making the excavation of the dolmen burials extremely difficult (Kim and Lee 2001: 25). As this Upper Geum River valley does not appear to have witnessed any significant changes to its topography, it can tentatively be suggested that the Bronze Age communities of this region would have faced similar difficulties with flooding in the past. Of course, further work needs to be carried out on past environmental conditions before this can be substantiated.

Although the seasonal vagaries of the Geum river may have caused hardship, especially during the summer 'rainy season', it was also an enabler of human interaction, carving out routes of movement from the Jinan highland to the Daejeon Basin in the north, and through Buyeo and Gongu to the west, before emptying out into the Yellow Sea. A southern route of movement leading from the Jinan region was provided by the Seomjin River, which flows into the Jeonnam

²¹ It is this section of the river between Jangsu and the Daejeon Basin that is generally referred to as the 'upper reaches' of the Geum River.

(southwestern) region of Korea. Finally, the *Yuksib* mountain pass, which lies east of the Jinan region, provided a gateway into the Yeongnam (southeastern) region of Korea (Figure 4.2). It is therefore likely that the Jinan region played a crucial role in facilitating movement between the central-western, south-western and south-eastern regions of the peninsula (Gwak 2001). The way in which the geographic location of the Jinan region may have structured past human activity will be considered further in the following section.

4.2.2. The archaeological context of the Jinan region

There is evidence for a human presence in the Jinan region from the period of the Upper Palaeolithic, represented by the excavated site of Jingeunul and several un-excavated (and now submerged) surface scatters found along the Geum and Junga rivers.²² Yielding approximately 90 finished lithics (which include tanged points), 20 clusters of debitage, a flat cobble with use wear and two open hearths, Jingeunul is believed to have been a lithic production site which was continuously revisited during the Upper Palaeolithic, possibly due to its proximity to sources of high quality raw material. AMS analysis on the charcoal obtained from one of the campfires has yielded a radiocarbon date of 22,850±350 bp (G. G. Lee 2004).

Following a long hiatus, human activity is once again evidenced in the Jinan region from the late fourth millennium BC (the Middle Neolithic period). It has been suggested that the repopulation of the area was caused by an influx of communities from the south, whose cultural influences were subsequently transmitted further north into the middle reaches of the Geum River (Ahn and Lee 2004). Middle Neolithic life in the Jinan region appears to have been semi-sedentary, as indicated by the dwellings found at the sites of Jingeunul (Kim and Kim 2001) and Galmeori Phase I (Ahn *et al.* 2003). It has also been suggested that

²² Lithic scatters have been identified at the sites of Waesong, Sinjeon, Pyungeun, Wonjupyung and Mosil (G. G. Lee 2004: 6)

these communities may have practiced small-scale cultivation as part of their subsistence strategy.²³ This way of life seems to have come to an end by the early third millennium BC, as human activity in the region during the Late and Final Neolithic periods (early to late third millennium BC) is mostly represented by open hearth sites and surface scatters (Ahn and Lee 2004).²⁴ This abandonment of a sedentary way of life and the dissolution of settlements is widely observed throughout southern Korea at this time, marking the end of the Korean Neolithic (Lim 2006).

The Bronze Age in the Korean peninsula dates from approximately 1500 BC. This period is represented, not by the use of bronze (which was not widespread until 800 BC), but by the presence of a new set of material culture, consisting of longhouses, plain pottery, a stone tool assemblage characterised by its distinctive, half-moon shaped harvesting knives and dolmen architecture. In contrast to the material culture of the Late Neolithic, which is extremely diverse in nature, the Bronze Age 'culture package' is relatively homogeneous (J. S. Kim 2002). It is this discontinuous nature of the Neolithic-Bronze Age evidence which has led archaeologists to suggest a dramatic scenario of transition in which new farming populations are seen to have spread into an indigenous hunter-gathering context (J. S. Kim 2002). However, settlement sites yielding evidence of continuous occupation and gradual culture change from the late Neolithic to the early Bronze Age have recently been discovered along the wide alluvial plains of the Nam River, in south-eastern Korea, suggesting that this may not have necessarily been the case (Ahn 2006).

The earliest evidence of Bronze Age occupation in the Jinan region comes from the 'square platform detached dolmens' of this region which are dated to around 900-800 BC (S. O. Kim 2003b: 30). As settlements have yet to be found

²³ In Korea and other parts of East Asia, the 'Neolithic' refers to the presence of ceramics and ground tools, rather than agriculture (see Barnes 1993). Therefore, the Middle Neolithic communities of the Jinan region were essentially semi-sedentary, hunting-gathering communities who used ceramic vessels and practiced small-scale cultivation.

²⁴ This is evidenced in the sites of Yeouigok, Mangduk, Woonam and Nongsan (Ahn *et al.* 2003: 37).

for this period of the late EBA, the nature of the communities who built and used these dolmens is unclear. However, similarities in the material culture make it possible to suggest that these earliest Bronze Age communities of the Jinan region may have come from areas further down the Geum River (S. O. Kim 2003a).

Bronze Age life in the Jinan region appears to have reached a zenith in the Middle Bronze Age (700-300 BC, hereafter referred to as the 'MBA'). It is in this period that the Songgugni culture, which had its origins in the middle reaches of the Geum River, came to be introduced into the Jinan region, and from here, transmitted into the southern parts of the Korean peninsula (S. O. Kim 2003b). The influences of this culture in the Jinan region – which is often considered to represent a more 'developed' way of life based on wet-rice farming (a problematic assumption, as is discussed in Chapter 6, pp. 114) – can be seen in the roundhouses, ceramic vessels and stone tools of the MBA. However, it must be stressed that this 'foreign' cultural package was not automatically adopted by the Jinan communities. For example, the 'indigenous' tradition of dolmen burials continued to be maintained subsequent to the introduction of the Songgugni culture – it is only in the latter stages of the MBA that the non-dolmen burials of the Songgugni tradition are used in the Jinan region. It can therefore be suggested that the MBA in the Jinan region was a period in which a new 'Songgugni way of life' was selectively adopted and reproduced within the indigenous context of Jinan communities.

The Late Bronze Age/Iron Age (300-0 BC) in southern Korea was a time of great social transformation, in which settlements were relocated to hill-top locations and often surrounded by fortifications (Ro 2001). It is difficult to know, however, if a similar relocation of settlements took place in the Jinan region during the Late Bronze Age, or if the area was abandoned altogether. This is because archaeological investigations have rarely been carried out at hill-top locations. The reason for this and the way in which the concomitant lack of information influences our archaeological understanding of the area will be discussed further in the following section.

The Jinan region witnessed continuous human occupation from the Proto-Three Kingdoms period (0-AD 300) onwards. Many of the sites dating to the early historic period reflect the importance of this region in bringing together three different networks of movement. For example, it has been noted that the hill-fort settlement of Wajung, dating to the Three Kingdoms period (AD 300-668), is strategically located where the north-west transportation route connecting the rivers Geum and Seomjin and the east-west transportation route crossing through the Noryong and Sobaek mountain ranges intersect. The burial ground at Hwangsanri was also found to contain a stone lined grave of the Gaya tradition (i.e. a south-eastern tradition) yielding pottery of the Paekche tradition (i.e. a central south-western tradition) and the Gaya tradition. Finally, it has been noted that many of the hill-top fortresses in this region are located around strategic points of transportation (Gwak and Kim 2001).

In summary, it can be said that the geographic conditions of the Jinan region have acted to make this rather marginal highland area an important locale through which populations and cultural influences came and went from prehistoric to historic times. This thesis aims to look at how Bronze Age communities in the Jinan region may have actively adopted and reproduced these influences within the context of mortuary practices. The archaeological material through which this issue is considered will now be outlined.

4.3. The archaeology of the ‘Yongdam complex’

Most of the archaeology from the Jinan region comes from a series of excavations which were carried out between 1995 and 2000 in the area that was submerged following the construction of the Yongdam Dam. A preliminary survey of the area was first carried out in 1993, identifying possible areas of past human activity (Yoon 1993). It should be noted that this 1993 preliminary survey was limited to the area below 220 metres above sea level, which was the proposed water line for the Yongdam Dam’s reservoir. Therefore, it is not difficult to

assume that much of the archaeology in the higher altitudes of this region has yet to be found. Subsequent rescue excavations undertaken by seven different archaeology units working over a series of four seasons led to the discovery of 41 sites, spanning from the Neolithic to the Joseon (i.e. late historic) period. In the Korean literature, the submerged area in which the sites are located is referred to, literally, as ‘the area submerged due to the construction of the Yongdam Dam (*yongdam dam sumol jigu*)’. However, for ease of expression in this thesis, this area will be referred to as the ‘Yongdam complex’ (see Appendix I and II for map and list of all Yongdam complex sites).

4.3.1. Bronze Age site summaries

Of these 41 Yongdam complex sites, eight Bronze Age sites – which form two clusters of Bronze Age activity along the rivers Anja and Jungja – will be examined in this thesis. I will now briefly summarise the archaeological material of these sites (Figure 4.3).

The Anja River cluster

Gugok (Shin and Kim 2001)

The cemetery site of Gugok is located in the Ancheonmyun district of Jinan. Two burial grounds have been identified at this site – they are Gugok A and Gugok C²⁵ which lie 300 metres apart along the Anja River as it flows into the Geum River. The burial ground at **Gugok A** contains 10 dolmen burials dating to the MBA, while the burial ground at **Gugok C** contains 8 dolmen burials also dating to the MBA.

²⁵ Gugok B is a settlement site dating to the late Three-Kingdoms to early Unified Silla period.

Sujwadong (Shin and Kim 2001)

Located 500 metres upstream from (i.e. south of) Gugok is the site of **Sujwadong**. Predominately a cemetery site, 10 burials (dolmen and non-dolmen) dating to the EBA and MBA have been identified at Sujwadong. A single roundhouse, dating to the MBA, was also found in close proximity to the burials.

Pungam (Kim, Lee and Cho 2001a)

The cemetery site of **Pungam** is located approximately two kilometres south of Sujwadong. The burial ground itself is situated on a peninsula-like hill surrounded by two converging streams which meet at this point and flow into the Anja River. On the terrace-like summit of this hill lie 16 dolmen burials which date to the late EBA and the MBA.

Anjadong (Kim, Lee and Kim 2001a; Shin and Kim 2001)

Located 100 meters west of Pungam is the cemetery site of **Anjadong**. Located at the foot of a gently sloping hillside, this site contains 13 dolmen burials which date to the late EBA and the MBA.

The Jungja River cluster

Yeouigok (Kim and Lee 2001)

The multi-feature site of Yeouigok is located in the Jungcheonmyun district of Jinan, where the river Jungja meets the Geum. Bronze Age activity at Yeouigok has been identified in three main areas – Area A, B and C – which are spread out around the alluvial plains and hillsides neighbouring the river Geum. Area A, where the majority of burials – and all of the dolmens – are found, lies at the foot of the hills and along the plains. This Area A is sub-divided into three locations. **Yeouigok A-I** has the largest Bronze Age burial ground identified in the Jinan region, containing dolmen and non-dolmen burials dating to the MBA. **Yeouigok A-II** yields a second burial area (consisting of five dolmen burials), as well as the remains of several dolmen capstone trackways, a field system, a series

of ditches separating the dolmens from the fields, and three building structures, all of which appear to date to the MBA. Finally, in **Yeouigok A-III** a third burial area (consisting of three dolmen burials), two roundhouses, three stone cairns and a large, shallow pit feature are found, again all dating to the MBA. Yeouigok Area B is situated on the hillside overlooking Area A. Much of this hillside was destroyed in the 1990s due to quarrying. In the remaining, undisturbed areas of **Yeouigok B**, archaeologists were able to identify four MBA roundhouses. Yeouigok Area C is found on the hillside opposite the summit from Area B. Much of this hillside was also destroyed due to quarrying. Three MBA burials, none of which are dolmens, were found in the remaining, undisturbed areas of **Yeouigok C**.

Mangduk (HNCPRI 2002)

Located one kilometre south of Yeouigok is the Bronze Age cemetery site of Mangduk. Situated on an alluvial plain, to the east of which flows the Jungja River, this site contains two separate areas of burial which lie 300 meters apart. The burial ground of **Mangduk A**²⁶ was found to contain 18 Bronze Age burials, the majority of which are dolmens. **Mangduk B** yielded five dolmens burials, most of which were poorly preserved. All of the burials date to the MBA.

Mogok (Kim, Lee and Cho 2001b)

Located one kilometre south of Mangduk is the Bronze Age cemetery site of **Mogok**. It is reported that there was originally a longer line of dolmens running parallel to the Jungja River but only six were identified, and of these only four had their burial chamber floor in tact. Other Bronze Age features identified at this site include two stone coffin burials which were built alongside the dolmens. A stone paved track way and a separate stone platform area was also found next to the dolmens. All of these archaeological features can be dated to the MBA.

²⁶ In the Korean publication, Mangduk A and B are referred to as Mangduk 'ga' and 'na', respectively.

Nongsan (Kim, Lee and Kim 2001b)

The Bronze Age settlement of Nongsan is located around four kilometres south of Mogok, on a hillside overlooking the Jungja River. A total of eight dwellings – four square/rectangular houses and four roundhouses – were identified at this site, as were 101 pit features. Based on the radiocarbon dates which have been obtained, the Nongsan settlement can be dated to around the seventh century BC, which corresponds to the early MBA in this region.

4.3.2. Bronze Age burials and chronology

Much of the evidence for the Bronze Age in the Yongdam complex comes from dolmen and non-dolmen burials. The dolmens of Bronze Age Korea consist of three types: the ‘table type’ dolmen, the ‘go-table type’ dolmen and the ‘capstone type’ dolmen (Figure 4.4). The table type dolmen was built by erecting three to four stone slabs, upon which a large capstone was placed. Table type dolmens which only had two supporting walls in the first place have also been identified (Y. M. Lee 2002: 97). Artefacts are scarce but bone fragments found inside the chamber of these structures (e.g. Hwangsukri No. 13) indicate that the table type dolmens may have been used as tombs. As these dolmens are generally found in isolation within the landscape or in rows along river ways, it has also been suggested that they may have acted as territorial markers (J. S. Kim 2002; Nelson 1993; Park 2001), commemorative markers (Nelson 1993; Y. M. Lee 2001) or ritual alters (Y. M. Lee 2001). The go-table type dolmen consists of a massive stone block capstone which is supported by four to eight cube or pillar-like boulders surrounding a shallow pit. As with the table type dolmens, they are often found in isolation. Go-table type dolmens have also been found at dolmen cemeteries consisting primarily of capstone type dolmen burials; these are regarded as burial ground markers (Y. M. Lee 2001). The capstone type dolmen consists of a ground-level or semi-subterranean burial chamber which is sealed off by a large capstone. In contrast to the other two dolmen types, capstone-type

dolmens have yielded a relatively greater number of artefacts, and, as they are often found in clusters, forming ‘dolmen cemeteries’, they appear to have functioned primarily as burials.

The dolmen burials of the Yongdam complex, which belong to the category of ‘capstone type dolmens’, are generally surrounded by a platform-like stone cairn feature. Within this surrounding stone platform feature we find a large amount of extremely informative ceramic vessel and stone object debris – it is this material which contributes to our understandings of the ritual practices that took place at these burials. The stone platform dolmens of the Yongdam complex can be further divided into three sub-types: *square platform detached* dolmens, *linear conjoined (platform)* dolmens, and *round platform detached* dolmens (Figure 4.5). The stratigraphic evidence from the cemeteries of Anjadong, Pungam and Yeouigok indicates that these dolmen sub-types were chronologically sensitive: square platform detached dolmens were followed by linear conjoined dolmens, and linear conjoined dolmens were followed by round platform detached dolmens. It should be noted here that the Bronze Age burials of the Yongdam complex provide very little which would be useful in obtaining radiocarbon dates (see Appendix III for a list of radiocarbon dates obtained from Bronze Age Yongdam complex sites).

Stone coffin burials, earth cut burials and jar burials represent the non-dolmen burials used in the Yongdam complex during the Bronze Age (Figure 4.6). Of these, stone coffin burials and earth cut burials appear in the same burial ground as dolmen burials. Jar burials, on the other hand, are not found with dolmens burials. Based on the evidence from Sujwadong, Mangduk and Yeouigok, it can be said that the stone coffin burials and earth cut burials were used subsequent to the linear conjoined dolmens, and were contemporary with the round platform detached dolmens. The temporal position of jar burials, on the other hand, is difficult to establish – one may tentatively assume that they were contemporary with the other non-dolmen burials, since stone coffin burials, earth cut burials and jar burials all belong to the same Songgugni culture tradition.

The chronological framework for the Yongdam complex Bronze Age has been constructed using the above-mentioned burial sequences. According to this framework, which was devised by S. O. Kim (2004), the Bronze Age can be divided into three phases which coincide with fundamental changes in burial architecture: Phase I (the late EBA), which is represented by square platform detached dolmens; Phase II (the early MBA), which is represented by linear conjoined dolmens; and Phase III (the late MBA), which is represented by round platform detached dolmens and non-dolmen burials.

Such a chronological framework which relies heavily on burial typology is not without its problems. For example, as this chronological scheme is based on diachronic change in 'Yongdam-type' dolmens (i.e. dolmens which have surrounding stone cairn platforms), it cannot incorporate the dolmen burials of Wolpori, Jinguneul and Seunggeum which do not have such platform features.²⁷ Nevertheless, this three-phase chronological scheme provides a useful framework within which to consider the changing practices of burial construction and use for the majority of Yongdam complex Bronze Age burials, and will therefore be adopted in this thesis. The case studies presented in this thesis are structured according to these three chronological phases, as they go hand in hand with significant social and economic transformations taking place in the Bronze Age of the Yongdam complex. The way in which this chronological framework relates to the particulars of the Yongdam complex Bronze Age material is presented in Table 5.1.²⁸

²⁷ It is due to this, and the fact the burials are in very poor states of preservation, yielding little in terms of artefacts, that the sites of Wolpori, Jinguneul and Seunggeum will not be included in the analysis carried out in this thesis.

²⁸ It should be noted that some discrepancies exist between S. O. Kim's original chronological scheme (2004) and the chronological scheme utilised in this thesis. This has to do, first of all, with the chronological interpretation of the dolmens which are found attached to the sides of the linear conjoined dolmens (a sub-type of Kim's BII type dolmen). These 'horizontally attached' dolmens come after the Phase II linear conjoined dolmens (BIb type dolmen), but are not later than the Phase III detached round platform dolmens (AII and BIII type dolmen). In Kim's chronological scheme, these 'horizontally attached' dolmens are attributed to Phase III. However, an analysis of funerary debris carried out in this thesis was able to confirm that these 'horizontally attached' dolmens

Phase I	Period: Late EBA (around 10th ~ 9th century BC)
	Burial type: Detached dolmen with square stone cairn platform S. O. Kim (2004) AI type dolmen
	Site: Anjadong, Pungam, Sujwadong
Phase II	Period: Early MBA (around 8th ~ 6th century BC)
	Burial type: Linear conjoined dolmen S. O. Kim (2004) BI type dolmen
	Site: Anjadong, Pungam, Sujwadong, Gugok, Mangduk, Mogok, Yeouigok
Phase III	Period: Late MBA (around 5th ~ 4th century BC)
	Burial type: Detached dolmen with round stone cairn platform, 'Songgugni-type' burial (i.e. stone coffin burial, earth cut burial, jar burial) S. O. Kim (2004) AII and BIII type dolmen
	Site: Sujwadong, Mangduk, Yeouigok, Mogok

Table 4.1. Chronological framework adopted in the thesis

were significantly different from the Phase III dolmens in terms of the deposition practices which took place, and were in fact quite similar to the Phase II dolmens (see Chapter 7, p.153). These 'horizontally attached' dolmens are therefore attributed to Phase II in this thesis. Secondly, the round platform dolmen which is found attached to the end of the Yeouigok A-I North Group conjoined dolmen line (BIc type dolmen) was attributed to Phase II in Kim's original scheme. This dolmen is regarded as a 'transitional type' in this thesis and not given a chronological phase.

Chapter 5. Establishing notions of the ‘settlement community’: The square platform detached dolmens of the late EBA

5.1. Introduction

The late EBA square platform detached dolmens (Figure 5.1) represent the earliest evidence of Bronze Age activity in the Yongdam complex and have been dated to around the tenth to ninth centuries BC. Seven of these monumental structures have been found at three locations in the northern part of the Yongdam complex. These late EBA dolmen burials (hereafter referred to as ‘Phase I burials’) represent the first traces of human activity in the Yongdam complex since the end of the Final Neolithic (see Chapter 4, p. 49). It therefore appears possible to suggest, albeit cautiously, that the construction of square platform detached dolmens in the Yongdam complex may have occurred in connection with the re-population of the Jinan region in the late EBA.²⁹ This chronology – that the Phase I burials may have been built by the earliest Bronze Age communities to have settled in this region – has been advocated by S. O. Kim (2003a), who has written extensively on the Yongdam complex burials and excavated many of them.

The current understanding of the Phase I burials, as put forward by S. O. Kim (2003a), is that they were the graves of socially equal ‘household heads’. Given the absence of evidence to the contrary, I would not disagree with Kim’s assertion that the late EBA square platform detached dolmens were a product of a relatively egalitarian, rather than ‘chiefdom’, society. However, I do not think it is possible to say that these dolmens were the graves of household heads, for there is a lack of empirical evidence with which to substantiate this argument. In addition, such an understanding does not take into account the active nature of material culture – in other words, the way in which these dolmen burials may have helped

²⁹ A similar absence of human activity is commonly observed for the inland areas of southern Korea in the period of transition from the Neolithic to Bronze Age.

structure the lives of late EBA communities in the Yongdam complex. A more productive way of understanding the Phase I burials, therefore, may be to focus on the 'social role' that they had in reproducing certain ways of life.

Discussion regarding the social role of dolmens must be based on an understanding of the social and economic context in which Bronze Age life took place. Settlement evidence, in particular, is likely to provide valuable insight into these contexts, but the late EBA of the Yongdam complex is represented solely by dolmen burials. Fortunately, the Daejeon-Chungju area, which lies further down the Geum River, has yielded a wealth of settlement evidence which makes it possible to obtain a relatively good understanding of the EBA in the Upper Geum River region – an understanding which can then be transferred into the Yongdam complex. Once this social context of the late EBA has been established, we can begin to explore how the construction and use of square platform detached dolmens may have helped facilitate the reproduction of an EBA way of life in the Yongdam complex.

In the first section of this chapter, the reality of 'lived lives' in the late EBA of the Upper Geum River region will be considered, based on archaeological material which comes from the Daejeon-Chungju area. In examining the material conditions of late EBA lives *vis-à-vis* that of the early EBA, it will be observed that the late EBA in the Upper Geum River was a period in which the 'settlement community' came to emerge as a prominent social category in the lived lives of people. In the second section of this chapter, we will discuss how the construction and use of Phase I dolmens may have helped reproduce and maintain this notion of the 'settlement community' in the Yongdam complex during the late EBA. Investigation will focus, in particular, on the nature of deposition rituals, and it will be argued that these deposition rituals may have helped facilitate the reproduction of the settlement community by providing an arena in which history of the settlement community could be established.

5.2. A late EBA way of life in the Upper Geum River region

Our understanding of the EBA in the Upper Geum River region comes predominantly from the Daejeon-Chungju area (Figure 5.2), which has yielded a wealth of archaeological evidence. It seems likely that the way of life observed for this area in the late EBA would have had resonance among communities in the Yongdam complex.

Firstly, it has been observed that the late EBA dolmens of the Yongdam complex and the late EBA sites of Shindaedong and Biraedong in Daejeon share a common artefact assemblage (S. O. Kim 2003b; Song 2001). Indeed, in the absence of radiocarbon dates, the ‘Phase I’ dolmens of the Yongdam complex were dated to the late EBA based on the presence of chronologically sensitive artefact types, such as the stemless stone arrowheads (*samgakmanib seokchok*) and stone daggers with divided hilts (*idanbyungsik seokgum*), which were identified as a key component of the Shindaedong and Biraedong artefact assemblage (Seong 1997). The late EBA Yongdam dolmens have also yielded notched rim pottery and red burnished pottery, which are again a key component of the Shindaedong ceramic assemblage (H. W. Lee 2002: 23).

In addition to this shared material culture, it can be observed that the Yongdam complex and the Daejeon-Chungju area lie within the boundaries of a common cultural sphere which is known as the ‘Garakdong assemblage’ (Figure 5.3).³⁰ The Garakdong assemblage is one of three culture assemblages which represent the EBA of southern Korea (H. W. Lee 2003: 45).³¹ Sites which belong to this assemblage are only found in areas in which the other two assemblages do not appear (J. S. Kim 2001); they appear in the upper reaches of the Geum River, in an area defined by the Charyong mountain range to the north, and the Sobaek

³⁰ This concept of an ‘assemblage’ is often used in Korean archaeology as a euphemism for ‘culture’. It comes from David Clarke’s notion of the ‘culture assemblage’ (1978), and refers to “a set of artefacts produced and used by groups that are archaeologically contemporary and share a common cultural tradition” (Park 1999: 81).

³¹ The other two assemblages are the Misari assemblage and the Yeoksamdong/Hunamni assemblage.

and Noryong mountain ranges to the south (H. W. Lee 2003). The Daejeon-Chungju area has been identified as the centre of activity for the Garakdong culture assemblage (Lee and Park 1995; H. W. Lee 2003). The Yongdam complex, on the other hand, is situated in a peripheral location but it still lies within the naturally occurring geographical boundaries of the Garakdong assemblage (i.e. south of the Charyong mountain range and north of the Sobaek and Noryong mountain range).

Finally, as was mentioned in the previous chapter (Chapter 4, pp. 48-9), the Jinan basin, where the Youngdam complex is located, sits in the middle of what has traditionally been a main route of movement connecting the western-central region of the Korean peninsula to the south-eastern region (Gwak 2001). The transmission of cultural influences along this route has been identified for both prehistory and historic periods (Gwak 1999). In terms of the EBA, Garakdong influences in the style of dwellings (i.e. rectangular stone lined hearths and post foundation stones) have been identified at Gumreung Songjugni and Jinju Daepyungni in the Youngnam (south-eastern) region of Korea, indicating that Garakdong influences from the Daejeon-Chungju area would have travelled along this route (H. W. Lee 2002: 52), passing through the Jinan region.

The archaeological evidence for the EBA in the Daejeon-Chungju area will now be examined in an attempt to understand the reality of the late EBA in the Upper Geum River region. This understanding will then applied to the Yongdam complex, as we attempt to consider how the construction and use of dolmen burials may have helped facilitate the reproduction of a late EBA way of life in the Yongdam complex.

5.2.1. The archaeological evidence for the EBA of the Daejeon-Chungju area

Evidence for the EBA in the Daejeon-Chungju area comes from 16 sites which span a time period of half a millennium, from approximately the early thirteenth century BC to the early eighth century BC (H. W. Lee 2002: 47). Following M. J. Kim *et al.* (2005), this period can be further divided into two phases: the early EBA (the twelfth century BC to the first quarter of the ninth century BC) and the late EBA (the second quarter of the ninth century BC to the mid eighth century BC).

The early EBA evidence

Ten settlements have been identified for the early EBA in the Daejeon-Chungju area (H. W. Lee 2002; 2007). They are Dunsan, Sangseodong, Yongsandong, Gungdong, Nohundong, Yongjungdong, Naegokdong, Gwanpyungdong, Sayangri and Hyangjung-Oebukdong. These settlements are generally situated on hilltops and hill ridges overlooking the alluvial plains formed by the tributaries of the Geum River.

Two different types of settlement organisation, dispersed and linear, have been identified for these early EBA settlements (H. W. Lee 2002; 2003).³² The dispersed settlements,³³ which account for the majority of the early EBA sites, generally consist of two to three longhouses (although single longhouse settlements have also been identified) (Figure 5.4). The linear settlements,³⁴ on the other hand, are substantially larger in scale and can contain up to eleven longhouses per site. However, it is difficult to regard the linear settlement as

³² Citing differences in dwelling floor space, the number of hearths and pottery type ratio, H. W. Lee (2002; 2007) has suggested that these dispersed and linear settlements should be attributed to two separate phases: Garakdong culture Phase I (early 13th to early 10th century BC) and Phase II (late 12th to 9th century BC). However, M. J. Kim *et al.* (2005) have observed that Lee's Garakdong Phase I and II are contemporaneous or show no meaningful difference in terms of their time span. Therefore the dispersed and linear settlement sites will be considered together in this thesis as representing the 'early EBA'.

³³ Dunsan, Sangseodong, Yongsandong, Yongjungdong I, Gungdong, Naegokdong and Hyangjung-Oebukdong.

³⁴ Yongjungdong II, Gwanpyungdong and Nohundong

representing an entirely different mode of settlement organisation. This is because these 'linear settlements' are essentially comprised of three to four separate clusters of longhouses organised in a linear fashion (H. W. Lee 2003) (Figure 5.5).

The longhouses of the early EBA contained single or multiple stone lined hearths which were constructed at intervals along the long axis of the house. It has been suggested that the number of hearths may represent the number of family units per residence (Lee and Park 1995). The relationship between these family units is unclear, but it is generally thought that they would have been members of an extended family, sharing a longhouse (S. O. Kim 2006b; S. B. Park 1997). Storage pits in the early EBA were located inside these longhouses, along the walls or in the corners of the dwellings (J. H. Son 2004). Storage pits in the MBA, on the other hand, were located outside houses. The implications of this change in storage pit location are discussed in Chapter 6 (pp.117-19).

The artefact assemblage of the early EBA is represented by the distinctive Garakdong style pottery. Notched rim pottery, which becomes prevalent towards the latter stages of the EBA (H. W. Lee 2003), has also been identified. Also of interest is the double-edged stone axe and boat shaped stone-knife which were discovered at Yongsandong House No. 1. The former is generally interpreted as a tree-cutting axe and attempts have been made to associate this axe type with land-clearing practices (Ahn 2000; Cho 2000). The latter is a type of harvesting knife which was in use throughout the EBA and has been associated with farming practices which predate the introduction of wet-rice farming in the MBA (H. W. Lee 2001).

The late EBA evidence

The late EBA in the Daejeon-Chungju region is represented by the sites of Hwangtanri (KUCPRI 2001), Hadangri (JCHRI 2004), Gaodong (JCHRI 2003), Neunggangri (SUM 2001), Shindaedong and Biraedong (Seong 1997). In contrast to the dispersed or linear settlements of the early EBA, the settlements of the late EBA show a nucleated mode of organisation, with dwellings located within a

relatively compact and delineated space (Figure 5.6). In addition, these late EBA settlements are often found in association with a burial ground (e.g. Shindaedong, Neunggangri, Hwangtanri and Gaodong).

Some of these late EBA settlements appear to have witnessed several phases of reorganisation, as is represented by the presence of longhouses, rectangular house and square/roundhouses (e.g. Shindaedong, Gaodong, Hwangtanri); in contrast, only longhouses are found in early EBA settlements. This reorganisation of settlement is most clearly evidenced at the site of Shindaedong where nine dwellings have been excavated: five longhouses (No. 1, 4, 6, 7, 8), two rectangular houses (No. 3, 9, 5), and one square house with rounded corners (No. 2).³⁵ Based on radiocarbon dates, the typological sequence identified for these house types, and evidence of buildings being built on top of each other, three phases were identified for the construction of these dwellings: longhouses → rectangular houses → the square house (Seong 1997; H. W. Lee 2002). In addition, the application of Bayesian statistics to the radiocarbon dates has made it possible to identify that the dwellings were constructed over a time period of 120 years (at 1σ Std. Dev.) (M. J. Kim *et al.* 2005). It therefore appears that the Shindaedong site witnessed the continuous reorganisation of settlement over a relatively short period of time. Also of significance at Shindaedong is the existence of House No. 4 which is significantly larger in size (66.6 m² with two hearths) than any of the other longhouses. Such variation in longhouse size is not observed in settlements of the early EBA.

The longhouses of the late EBA are similar in nature to the longhouses of the early EBA and contain multiple hearths. The later rectangular houses, on the other hand, are much smaller in size and do not have multiple hearths. The square/roundhouses are even smaller in size.³⁶ It may be suggested that these

³⁵ The excavators of Shindaedong have noted the existence of two more longhouses near the summit of the hill, which could not be investigated as they did not fall within the boundaries of the rescue excavation.

³⁶ At the Shindaedong settlement, the floor space of longhouse No. 4, 6, 7 (large sections of the other two longhouses were destroyed) was observed to be 66.6 m², 22.2 m², 30.8

transitions in dwelling structure are associated with the reorganisation of the residential unit (see Chapter 6, p.117). However, regardless of dwelling type, storage pits continued to be located within dwellings, reflecting a continuity with the early EBA.

With respect to the late EBA artefact assemblage, a distinct absence of Garakdong style pottery can be observed (H. W. Lee 2003). For example, the only piece of definite Garakdong style pottery to have come from the Shindaedong site is the double, notched rim, slash decorated (*yijung guyeon dansasun*) sherd found at House No. 7 (Seong 1997; H. W. Lee 2002). What is observed instead is Yeoksamdong style red burnished pottery, notched rim pottery and flared rim pottery. Due to this non-Garakdong nature of the pottery assemblage, late EBA sites such as the Shindaedong site were previously attributed to the Hunamri assemblage (Song 2001). However, this was based on an understanding of EBA culture assemblages which has since been superseded,³⁷ and the concept of the 'Hunamri assemblage' no longer has the utility that it once had (as a way of explaining the existence of both Garakdong and Yuksamdong assemblage elements at the same site). Therefore, the best way of explaining the archaeological material from these late EBA sites may be to follow H. W. Lee (2002) and suggest a continuation of the Garakdong assemblage (represented by the stone hearths of the longhouses), accompanied by the introduction of elements from the Yeoksamdong/Hunamri assemblage (perforated rim pottery and red burnished pottery) and Songgugni assemblage (flared rim pottery). Finally, it can be noted that, in contrast to the settlements of the early EBA settlement which yielded little evidence of grain (Song 2001), a considerable amount of carbonised grain was found at all three dwelling types in the Shindaedong settlement (Seong

m², respectively. The average floor space of the four rectangular houses is 15.9 m², while the floor space of the square house is 10.6 m².

³⁷ Until recently, it was generally thought that the Garakdong and Yeoksamdong assemblages co-existed during the early EBA, and then came together to form the Hunamri assemblage in the late EBA. However, the settlement data which has been amassed for the EBA in recent years (e.g. Baeksukdong, Nohundong, Gungdong, Youngsandong, Yongjungdong) has led to the view that the Hunamri assemblage is in fact a continuation of the Yeoksamdong assemblage (J. S. Kim 1999).

1997).

The late EBA settlements were often accompanied by burials (Figure 5.7). What is significant about these burials, as many archaeologists have noted (H. W. Lee 2003; Seong 1997; Song 2001), is that they represent, for the first time in the EBA, the establishment of a formal disposal area for the dead in association with a settlement. The nature of the grave goods assemblage, characterised by its divided hilt stone daggers, stemless stone arrowheads and red burnished pottery, (Figure 5.8), indicates that the burial grounds were contemporary to the settlements (H. W. Lee 2002; 2007; Seong 1997).

The non-settlement site representing the late EBA of the Daejeon-Chungju area is the dolmen cemetery of Biraedong. Located on a hillside four kilometres southeast of Shindaedong, five dolmens were identified at this site, three of which have been excavated (Figure 5.9). The presence of several other dolmen burials further down the hillside has been noted and, given that parts of the site have already been destroyed due to earlier motorway construction, it seems likely that the Biraedong cemetery may have originally covered a much larger area than it currently appears. Artefact typology and radiocarbon dates indicate that these dolmens were generally contemporary with the Shindaedong settlement (H. W. Lee 2002; Seong 1997).³⁸

It is difficult to be sure of the nature of the social unit represented by the Biraedong cemetery. This is because a contemporary settlement has not been found in association with the burial ground. However, it is only in this period of the late EBA, around the time that nucleated settlements emerge, that we see the use of formal burial grounds. In addition, given that we also have direct evidence of a one-to-one association between nucleated settlements and burial grounds (i.e. Shindaedong, Neunggangri, Hwangtanri and Gaodong), it appears possible to suggest that the Biraedong cemetery was also established as the burial ground of a

³⁸ The one radiocarbon date that has been identified for the Biraedong dolmens (Dolmen No. 1) is 1145-900(2 σ) BC (M. J. Kim *et al.* 2004) which generally coincides with the late 11th to early 8th century BC time frame given for the Shindaedong settlement (based on radiocarbon dates not analysed using Bayesian statistics).

single late EBA nucleated settlement.

5.2.2. Interpreting the archaeological evidence

We will now explore what this archaeological evidence has to say about the reality of late EBA lives in the Daejeon-Chungju area *vis-à-vis* the earlier period. The key to this are two major transformations identified as for the late EBA: the emergence of nucleated settlements and the establishment of formalised disposal areas for the dead. That these events go hand in hand with the transition from the early to late EBA has previously been identified (e.g. Park 1999; Song 2001). However, there is much confusion with respect to what these events may represent in terms of the economic and social context. For example, the long-standing assumption has been that the presence of attached burial grounds and the evidence of rebuilding observed at late EBA nucleated settlements, such as the Shindaedong site, represent the arrival of 'long-term settlement' and therefore a transition from slash and burn to a more 'settled' mode of farming (e.g. Song 2001). Recently, it has been suggested, alternatively, that all Garakdong communities, both early and late EBA, practiced slash and burn farming, based on the absence of 'large-scale' Garakdong settlements (H. W. Lee 2007).³⁹

It is thus clear that a specific understanding of slash and burn farming, in which this mode of farming is regarded as being incompatible with either long-term or large-scale settlement, has determined the way in which the emergence of nucleated settlements and the establishment of formalised burial grounds have

³⁹ It should be noted here that attempts have also been made to approach the transition from EBA to MBA dwelling structure (i.e. from longhouses and rectangular houses to Songgugni roundhouses) and settlement organisation (i.e. from dispersed to nucleated settlements) in terms of social stratification. This is well illustrated in the papers that were presented at the most recent Annual Conference of the Hoseo Archaeological Society (2007 HSAS). However, given that these discussions have only recently begun to take place (at the time in which this thesis is being finalised) and that they are not contradictory to the interpretations presented in this work regarding late EBA dolmen activity, this issue of social stratification and settlement structure will not be considered in the current research.

been interpreted within Korean archaeology. However, in the following section, these assumptions will be deconstructed, thereby opening the doors to new interpretations of these events. In deconstructing the problematic association between farming intensification and settlement mode, it will also become possible to deconstruct the current interpretative framework in which changes in settlement organisation etc. are regarded simply as the by-product of changes in the economic sphere. This will allow us to regard the emergence of nucleated settlements and the establishment of formalised burial grounds as being meaningful events in and of themselves – as *actively reproducing*, and therefore being integral to, the gestaltic transformation of lived lives which took place in the late EBA, rather than merely *representing* this transformation.

The understanding of slash and burn farming within Korean archaeology

The main subsistence strategy of early EBA communities in the Daejeon·Chungju area is generally assumed to have been that of slash and burn farming (Ahn 2000; H. W. Lee 2007; Park 1999). This is thought to be evidenced by the ‘ephemeral’ and/or the relatively small scale nature of early EBA settlements, which is taken to indicate short-term settlements. This perception of early EBA life is based on a certain understanding of slash and burn farming which is similar to that first presented by Iverson (1941) and widely used to explain the expansion of the earliest LBK farming communities in Europe; it is approached as an unsustainable mode of farming in which the inevitable falling of crop yields leads to the relocation of settlements by communities, therefore resulting in the rapid colonisation of large areas.⁴⁰ This understanding of slash and burn farming – that it is unsustainable – is responsible for the way in which

⁴⁰ It should be noted that this understanding has been severely discredited for the LBK (e.g. Rowley-Conwy 1981). For example, the presence of weeds indicating the existence of hedgerows and fixed fields at LBK sites seeming to suggest that land was cropped for several years in succession (Dennell 1992). However, this model of rapid colonisation via the mechanism of slash and burn farming has been adopted by Park (1999) to explain what he argues is the rapid spread of certain assemblage types in the EBA.

the transition to 'settled' farming⁴¹ is regarded as inevitable within Korean archaeology, and it is due to this supposed 'inevitability' of settled farming that the accompanying transition from short-term settlement to long-term settlement is considered unproblematic (e.g. Song 2001). However, slash and burn farming is not unsustainable, nor does it necessarily require the frequent relocation of settlements, as will now be discussed.

Slash and burn farming

The term 'slash and burn' is often used interchangeably with 'shifting cultivation', 'swidden agriculture' and 'long fallow systems' in the archaeological, anthropological and ethnographical literature. Therefore the definitions of each of these terms will be examined here. Shifting cultivation has been defined as 'any continuing agricultural system in which impermanent clearings are cropped for shorter periods in years than they are fallowed' (Conklin 1961: 27). The logic of this system is that when land is plentiful and there is no need to maximise production, the easiest course of action for the farmer to take is to leave land fallow and let the natural process of recovery replenish soil nutrients, rather than to attempt permanent cultivation which requires laborious or expensive replacement of lost soil nutrients. For plots to lie fallow, cultivation must shift from one piece of land to another, and it is from this process that the term 'shifting cultivation' originates (Bayliss-Smith 1982). The term 'slash and burn', on the other hand, comes from the technique of land clearance that is generally employed in shifting cultivation, and it is because of this that slash and burn farming and shifting cultivation are used synonymously. However, Conklin (1961) notes that in light scrub and grassland areas, 'hoe and burn' is used instead of slash and burn, and in the continuously drenched jungle of the Colombian Choco, 'slash and mulch' has also been identified.

⁴¹ The concepts of 'settled' farming or 'settling down' are vaguely, but widely, used in Korean Bronze Age archaeology to refer to a mode of existence which does not require frequent relocation of communities.

The term 'swidden agriculture' refers to a mode of farming that utilises plots which have been cleared of secondary forest and then burnt, thus getting rid of litter and releasing precious plant nutrients. It is these plots that are called 'swiddens', which is an Old English word describing similar Anglo-Saxon farming practices (Bayliss-Smith 1982). Finally, the term 'long fallow systems' refers to an agricultural system in which forest-fallow and bush-fallow is practiced, and is defined *vis-à-vis* 'short fallow systems', which include grass-fallow, annual cropping and multi-cropping (Boserup 1965).⁴²

While it has been possible to come up with a general definition of slash and burn farming, that definition is very broad, since, as Conklin states in *Hanunoo Agriculture* (1957),⁴³ shifting cultivation "may refer to any one of an undetermined number of systems" (*ibid*: 1). The specific form of a system of shifting agriculture within a given geographical or cultural context can depend on a variety of factors,⁴⁴ which can lead to diversity in the practices of shifting cultivation.⁴⁵ In particular, this can lead to diversity in settlement patterns, as will now be examined.

⁴² Based on this, it appears that while 'slash and burn' and 'swidden agriculture' are terms which focus on the superficial characteristics of the type of farming practice they refer to, 'shifting cultivation' and 'long-fallow systems' are terms which bring to light the core characteristic of this type of farming practice – the shifting/fallowing of cultivation plots. Therefore, it can be suggested that 'shifting cultivation' and 'long-fallow systems' are terms better suited for use in an archaeological context when discussing past farming practices.

⁴³ Harold Conklin's *Hanunoo Agriculture* (1957) is regarded as "What is doubtless still the most influential work written in the subject of swiddening" (Padoch *et al.* 1998: 5).

⁴⁴ The extent of available land, labour and capital; the local settlement pattern; the degree of social and political integration; the local settlement pattern; the degree of social and political integration with other segments of the larger society; and on a large number of more specifically agronomic variables, such as the kinds of principle crops raised (grains, root crops, etc.), types of crop associations and successions, crop-fallow time ratios, the dispersal of swiddens, the presence of livestock, the use of specific tools and techniques including special methods of soil treatment, the vegetational cover of land cleared, climate, social conditions, and topography (Conklin 1961).

⁴⁵ Swidden soil may or may not be worked with hoes or other bladed implements; swiddens may or may not be fenced; swidden farmers may live in isolated and very temporary dwellings or in sedentary villages (Conklin 1961).

The two groups which lie at opposite ends of the broad spectrum of ethnographically-identified shifting cultivators are the Iban of Sarawak (Sutlive 1978) and the Hanunoo of the Philippines (Conklin 1957), both of which are dry hill rice farmers. The Iban have been called ‘destructive pioneers’ (Padoch *et al.* 1998: 5) as they regularly burn vegetation, degrade resources and ultimately move on in search of new, fertile lands. It is this particular system of farming which appears to have been adopted by archaeologists to represent slash and burn farming. On the other hand, the Hanunoo of the Philippine island of Mindoro practice an ‘integral system of established swidden farming’ in which little or no climax vegetation is cleared annually. The Hanunoo system is distinctive insofar as fallowing is not something that is left to nature after a year or two of cropping. Rather, “fallowing is more accurately viewed as a period in which most vegetation is prepared for the next swidden cycle by controlled natural reforestation and forest enrichment” (Conklin 1957: 138), with fallow plots being actively managed and prepared within the swidden cycle through the use of non-grain crops. Therefore, if we look at the cropping-to-fallowing ratio of the swiddens, some plots revert to 19 years fallow after a year of grain cropping (i.e. a traditional long fallow system in the Boserupian sense), but others are actively managed using root crops and tree crops after grain cropping and fallowed for only ten years. This diversity and management of swidden plots appears to ensure both the conservation of the surrounding environment and the stability in the way of living. In the case of the Yagwa community,⁴⁶ for example, it has been noted that of the 6.2 kilometres of cultivatable land, 1.2 square kilometres remains uncultivated, a figure which does not take into account the fact that one third of primary forest has been left untouched due to taboo. In addition, the land/population ratio (four hectares per person) for the Yagwa has been relatively stable for the past 75-100 years.⁴⁷ Due to the sustainable nature of this farming system, the Hanunoo therefore live in long-term settlements – some have been occupied for decades –

⁴⁶ Population c. 150.

⁴⁷ Conklin estimates that the Hanunoo would be able to sustain a 60 percent increase in population.

consisting of five to six one family dwellings, with cultivation plots dispersed near the settlement.

Another example of shifting cultivators, albeit not of rice, who maintain long-term settlements are the Ushi of Northern Rhodesia (Kay 1964) who practice bush fallowing, also known as the *chitemene* system.⁴⁸ The *chitemenes*, in which the staple crops of millet and cassava are cultivated, are rarely used for more than six or seven years, after which they are left fallow until the woodland regenerates. While the *chitemene* system can only support low population density, it appears to be a sustainable mode of farming, “admirably adapted to the physical environment, the technology and traditions of the villagers... capable of modification and change” (*ibid*: 29). Hence, when fallow lengths are strictly adhered to, settlements need not be moved frequently, if at all, since the Ushi will cultivate plots over a wide range of area. In the specific case of Chief Kalbala’s village, the Ushi village surveyed by Kay, cultivation plots are generally located up to a radius of six miles from the village, although some can be up to ten miles away.

Of course, many shifting cultivators do indeed prefer to live in short-term settlements. However, the decision to move settlements frequently may also be influenced by factors other than farming practices, as the example of the Tsembaga Maring suggests. The Tsembaga Maring of New Guinea live in an environment where perennial cultivation is unsustainable and forest fallows (15 to 25-35 years) are required for two years of cultivation (Rappaport 1971). Because the Tsembaga are not short of land – they have a population of around 200 for an area of 823 hectares – this system of long fallow cultivation constitutes a highly sustainable mode of farming (Bayliss-Smith 1982). Tsembaga settlements appear to move frequently, following the shifting of cultivation plots, but two factors must be taken into consideration when discussing this mobile nature of Maring settlements. The first is that for the Maring, the distance between cultivation plots and settlements is a significant constraining factor due to the rugged terrain and

⁴⁸ *Chitemene* is the Bemba word for ‘swiddens’ (Kay 1964: 29).

the fact that root crops – the main subsistence crop – are bulky and easily perishable in the wet humid climate (Bayliss-Smith 1982). Secondly, Maring houses are simple huts built using forest timber and leaf thatch, which means that they must be rebuilt every few years due to the tropical climate (*ibid*). In other words, the nature of the houses are in themselves temporary. Consequently, it appears possible to suggest that, instead of being the result of having to move settlements often in order to follow the constantly shifting cultivation plots, the temporary nature of the huts could have itself factored in the decision to move settlements.

Finally, the Bari of the southwestern Maracaibo Basin of Columbia and Venezuela (Beckerman 1987) practice a peculiar mode of settlement which may provide valuable insight into archaeological attempts to understand the relationship between settlement patterns and farming practices. The Bari practice a kind of ‘fallow within fallow’ system which leads to exceptionally sustainable yields, as well as a specific pattern of settlement. A Bari local group consists of about 50 people in a territory of about 150 square kilometres, in which around nine hectares of the land is productive. It can be said that they practice forest fallowing as they prefer forests in which they see no evidence of previous cultivation, although shorter fallows are allowed for alluvial fields. What is intriguing about Bari settlement patterns is that each local group owns two to five communal longhouses within their recognized territory, among which the group moves during the course of the year. The longhouses are occupied for about ten years, and during that time, surrounding fields are kept in continuous cultivation, while additional fields which lie further afield are kept in cultivation for three years if on colluvium soil, and up to 15 years if on alluvium. However, because the group moves around the different longhouses every year, the associated fields are in fact used for only a third of a year or less, and it is this low-intensity usage that accounts for their sustainability.

These ethnographic accounts illustrate two fundamental aspects of slash and burn farming which are relevant to our discussion. First of all, the fact that

shifting cultivation is a widely varied strategy indicates that residence mobility in a farming context cannot be the main criterion in identifying the practice of slash and burn farming. Even when systems of long fallow are adhered to, communities may remain in one place for generations, just as they may frequently move around, as the example of the Hanunoo and Maring illustrate, respectively. Therefore, it becomes possible to argue that simplistic associations between short-term settlement and slash and burn farming, and long-term settlement and 'settled farming', are untenable. Consequently, having questioned the utility of settlement longevity as an indicator of past farming practices, it becomes possible to shift the focus of archaeological investigation regarding EBA settlements towards the material conditions of settlement itself, for it is these material conditions which structured, and were structured by, the reality of lived lives in the past, these lives also having maintained a recursive relationship with farming practices.

These accounts also illustrate that slash and burn farming is indeed sustainable, and this has the potential to bring about a fundamental change in the way in which events of the late EBA are perceived. The sustainability of slash and burn farming allows us to understand that the transition to more intensive, permanent forms of agriculture was not inevitable. Even when the simplistic association between intensive farming practices and long-term settlement is adhered to, the sustainability of slash and burn farming leads to the realisation that the transition from short-term to long-term settlements was, again, not inevitable. It therefore becomes possible to argue that the emergence of nucleated settlements and the establishment of formal burial grounds in late EBA of the Upper Geum River region were not passive, nor natural, nor inevitable events generated by the process of social evolution. Rather, just as we must acknowledge the presence of conscious deliberation and active choice in the transition to more intensive modes of farming,⁴⁹ these past events must also be approached as having resulted from

⁴⁹ The ethnographic examples examined above indicate that shifting cultivation is sustainable in conditions where the *ratio of the population to arable land* is below a certain extent. This may appear to suggest, therefore, that there is no room for human agency in the sustainability of shifting cultivation since the two governing factors are population growth and the amount of arable land, the former generally being assumed as

human agency. Consequently, it becomes possible to argue that the emergence of nucleated settlements and the establishment of formal burial grounds are meaningful events in themselves, and not merely manifestations of humanity's march of progress, and this allows then be regarded as a valid focus around which the social and economic context of the late EBA can be constructed.

5.2.3. The emergence of nucleated settlements and the establishment of dolmen cemeteries

If the emergence of a new type of settlement organisation and the establishment of formal burial grounds can indeed be regarded as significant events in their own right, what can they tell us about the reality of life in the late

inevitable and the latter constant. Indeed, it is these assumptions which underlie Boserup's model of agrarian change (1965), in which population pressure is identified as the primary factor generating land use intensification. However, it can be argued that both of these assumptions regarding population and arable land are untenable. First of all, population pressure is *not* inevitable; it is a factor that can be controlled, as countless ethnographic accounts of infanticide attest to (Hern 1992). To go back to the case of the Tsembaga Maring, it has been suggested that warfare is one of the mechanisms through which the Maring keep their population down to a sustainable level (Bayliss-Smith 1982). Secondly, arable land is never a constant, as we must first take into account human mobility and migration into other territories (Adler 1996: 343). In addition, even within a 'closed' territory, arable land is not constant, as long as there exists another category of land: arable land within the territory which remains 'wild' due to cultural factors. For example, in an attempt to get away from agricultural determinism in understanding Neolithic land use, Robb and Van Hove (2003) have discussed the social use of uncultivated space between settlements and have presented various uses for 'bush' based on ethnographic accounts: "hunting, foraging, quarrying, trading, fighting, burial, pula ceremonies, ritual exclusion, activities requiring privacy such as sex, and dangerous objectionable work such as potting" (*ibid*: 251-2). As mentioned above, the Hanunoo also leave wild some parts of the forest, not because of their social uses, but because they are regarded as taboo, sacred or inhibited by spirits. Based on this, it can be argued that arable land is never a constant, even within a 'closed' territory, since the notion of what is *not* arable land is socially mediated, and therefore there is always the potential for land previously thought to be non-arable to be negotiated into arable land. Then, if the issue of population and arable land pressure may be dealt, to an extent, through cultural means, it is possible to argue that the intensification of land use cannot be explained in terms of economic rationale alone. Of course, this is not to deny the central role that population and arable land pressure would have had in influencing modes of land use. However, we must also be open to the possibility that other factors (i.e. social factors) may have featured in decisions to intensify farming practices.

EBA? To consider this, we require, first of all, an alternative way of approaching the material culture. In our discussion of the nature of the archaeological record and, in particular, the relationship between the archaeological record and meaning, which took place in Chapter 3, the potential of a Heideggerian approach to material culture was explored. It was discussed how, from a Heideggerian perspective, the meaning of an object could be found in the totality of the context in which it is experienced, for it is the object which enables experience, and this experience which provides the object with meaning. It was argued that this approach, in which the object (i.e. material culture) is seen as an *enabler* of meaning, could open the doors for alternative interpretations in archaeological discussion.

If we apply this approach to our understanding of late EBA cultural change, it becomes possible to regard settlement nucleation and the establishment of formal burial grounds as representing the emergence of a new set of material conditions – material conditions which would have structured the practices of individuals. Therefore, it is in the inhabitation of these material conditions that the reality of the late EBA would have come about. This perspective is associated with work which outlines the recursive relationship between architecture and the reproduction of society (Bender 1993; Parker Pearson and Richards 1994); that spatial structure should be approached “not merely as an arena in which social life unfolds, but rather as a medium through which social relations are produced and reproduced” (Gregory and Urry 1985: 3). Thus, in order to better understand the reality of lived lives in the late EBA of the Upper Geum River region, the possibilities of practice and experience as structured by the material conditions of nucleated settlement and formalised burial ground will now be considered.

The nature of late EBA settlement nucleation can best be understood *vis-à-vis* the dispersed and linear nature of settlements from the early EBA. The dwellings of the early EBA dispersed settlements were often situated on neighbouring hilltops and slopes, and could be located up to 80 metres apart (see Figure 5.4). In the absence of any direct evidence pertaining to the nature of early

EBA farming practices or animal economy, it is difficult to make any assumptions regarding the frequency of interactions which could have taken place between members of separate residences within a dispersed settlement. However, it would not be implausible to suggest that day-to-day social interaction, as mediated through routine practices, would have been focused around the individual residence, rather than taking place within the wider context of the dispersed settlement.

The dwellings of the early EBA linear settlements were organised in a single row, generally along hill ridges (see Figure 5.5). These dwellings could be located up to 75 metres apart and, although this does not necessarily preclude contact within day-to-day routines, it should be noted that this distance between houses is considerable compared to the nucleated settlements of the late EBA. Interestingly, the dwellings of linear settlements are often organised into several discrete segments. The houses within these segments stood side by side (i.e. along their long axis) in close proximity to one another. At the Nohundong linear settlement, it was possible to identify two longhouses (No. 3 and 4) within a segment which had entrances that faced each other (H. W. Lee 2003) (Figure 5.10). Based on this spatial arrangement, it is possible to suggest that, in the case of linear settlements, day-to-day interaction within each settlement segment may have been a constant fixture of everyday life.

The nucleated layout of dwellings at the late EBA settlements, on the other hand, makes it possible to suggest that the daily routines of each household, or at least those routines which took place outside the dwelling, would have easily been observed by members of the wider settlement. The houses at Shindaedong (Seong 1997) are located in and around an oval-shaped terrace which is about 50 meters long at its widest point (see Figure 5.7). At Hadangri (JCHRI 2004), six dwellings are found surrounding the plateau-like area of the hilltop (see Figure 5.6). It can therefore be suggested that the settlement in the late EBA was a *bounded* space, a social arena in which lives were lived and the pragmatic concerns of living could be observed and shared by all. These material conditions

of settlement may have generated experiences which could have reaffirmed, either implicitly or explicitly, a sense of togetherness among members of the settlement. This is in contrast to the early EBA in which the material conditions of settlement appear to have facilitated daily interaction within the unit of the residence, or within residence clusters, rather than amongst the settlement as a whole. To put it simply, it can be argued that with the establishment of nucleated settlements in the late EBA of the Upper Geum River region, the conditions were set out which allowed the 'settlement community' to emerge as a prominent social category in the lived lives of individuals.

Any discussion of 'community' must provide a clear definition of the concept. The definition adopted in this thesis brings together two different perspectives. One is the 'ideational' approach to community (Yaeger and Canuto 2000) which refers to Cohen's understanding of community as a collective identity, existing as a mental construct. The other is the 'interactional' approach (*ibid*) according to which communities are regarded as being created and recreated through the dialectical relationship between the agents and structure (for a similar bilateral approach to the concept of community, see J. I. Kim 2001: 17-19). Therefore, it can be suggested that two factors central to the creation of 'community' were a shared understanding of the world – or at least a *belief* in a shared understanding of the world – and the reproduction of that understanding through shared practices. It is in these shared practices that a sense of 'sameness' can emerge, and it is in these notions of commonality and solidarity that the agency of the community can be found. Thus, the distinction between lived lives in the early and late EBA using this definition of community can be posited in the following terms: if, in the early EBA, it was a sense of commonality among the residence unit and residence clusters which appeared foremost in the minds and actions of individuals, in the late EBA, it was being part of the settlement community – of confirming one's similarity and solidarity with other members of the settlement – which emerged as central to one's Being.

The emergence of the nucleated settlement, with its accompanying notions of the 'settlement community', was not an event isolated to the Upper Geum River region. It has also been identified at late EBA sites belonging to the Yuksamdong/Hunamni culture assemblage, at Cheonan Baeksukdong (N. Y. Lee and D. Lee 1998)⁵⁰ and Anyang Gwanyangdong (GCPRI 2002) further north of the Geum River, and at Boryung Gwansanni (Yoon and H. J. Lee 1996) in the lower reaches of the Geum River. For example, at the Gwansanni settlement which has been dated to the ninth century BC, ten longhouses/rectangular houses were found spread out on a slope beneath the western summit of a hill (Figure 5.11). Forming a plateau-like area, this western summit, which has yielded a single stone cist burial, has been interpreted as a communal space attached to the settlement (Song 2001). Four more burials were identified on the eastern summit of the hill.

The existence of burials in direct association with the Gwansanri settlement brings us to consider the significance of an attached burial ground. The establishment of burial grounds in association with settlements has generally been regarded as the causal result of communities 'settling down' (e.g. Park 1999; Song 2001). However, given that attached burial grounds tend to be identified in conjunction with nucleated settlements (e.g. Shindaedong, Hwangtanri, Gaodong, Neunggangri, and Gwansanri), it becomes possible to suggest that the establishment of an attached burial ground may have had more to do with the 'nucleated' nature of settlements, and accompanying notions of the settlement community, rather than the 'long-term' nature of settlements. Indeed, as Parker Pearson (1999: 141) has noted, the placement of the dead in relation to the living is generally not a matter of functional expediency. How, then, may the establishment of attached burial grounds be best understood?

The advent and location of cemeteries can be determined by a variety of different factors. Within a processual archaeological framework, this has generally been associated with ideas about access to restricted resources by means of

⁵⁰ Baeksukdong settlement phase III (H. W. Lee 2003)

descent (e.g. Goldstein 1981; Saxe 1970) or the territorial rights of sedentary communities (e.g. Charles 1995). Changing perceptions of death and the need to establish lineages or the desire for new ways of expressing identity may have also influenced the location of burial grounds in relation to settlements (Parker Pearson 1999: 129). While all of these possibilities may be worth considering with respect to the late EBA attached burial grounds of the Upper Geum River region, it is also possible to regard these burial grounds in another way, as deriving from the agency of the settlement community.

Although the notion of the settlement community may be contingent upon shared practices or perceptions of sameness and solidarity among community members, it is also possible that the settlement community could have become a social entity in its own right through processes of objectification and materialisation (J. I. Kim 2001: 14-20). Upon gaining this ontological existence, the settlement community may have come to acquire an agency of its own, and one way in which the agency of the settlement community may have been manifested could have been through the creation of 'spaces' which belonged to the settlement, such as the village square or cemetery. In this sense, it can be argued that establishment of an attached burial ground may be regarded as the result of the settlement community, having become 'fetishised' into a social entity with an agency of its own, reproducing itself through the designation and sanctioning of an area for the community's dead.

This idea that formal burial grounds (i.e. areas set aside exclusively for the disposal of the dead) were a medium through which the notion of the settlement community was reproduced can also be applied to the Biraedong dolmen cemetery, given, as we have previously argued (see p. 68), the Biraedong site is most likely to have been the burial ground of a late EBA nucleated settlement. This reproduction of the settlement community through the establishment of a dolmen cemetery is an issue which can be explored further by considering the reality of an event of dolmen construction.

A distinctive feature of 'community', as proposed by Cohen (1985), is that, while members of a community may appear united under a common identity, what that common identity means may differ from member to member. However, the reason that the concept of the community is still able to maintain its efficacy is because it can retain a guise of commonality while at the same time allowing individual diversity to exist. This is possible because, as a symbol of 'our similarity' as opposed to 'differences of the Other', the notion of the community allows members to focus on their similarities and *belong* to a common identity, although their differences may be great indeed. In other words, the community enables people with differing interests to negotiate their own places in this world according to a shared vocabulary (Cohen 1985; Jenkins 1996).

Given that the efficacy of the community lies in its ability to be 'an umbrella of solidarity' under which people of differing interests can shelter (Cohen 1985), it can be argued that the construction of a dolmen burial would have been an ideal stage in which this aspect of community – allowing for diversity within commonality – could be reproduced. This is because while dolmen construction would have embodied a common purpose on the part of the settlement community, each member's decision to participate in this event may have been fuelled by differing interests. It is possible that some would have used this opportunity to cement their affiliation to the community, whereas others would have perceived the negotiation of various roles required in this immense project of dolmen construction as a means of social competition. It can therefore be argued that, in addition to reproducing the solidarity of the settlement community, an event of dolmen construction would have constituted a theatre in which community members with differing interests could negotiate their own places in the world whilst maintaining the necessary layer of solidarity. This would have allowed the balance between commonality and individual diversity to be maintained – a balance which may have required more explicit measures to be sustained as the community became larger and the scope for diversity grew. Perhaps, then, this is one of the reasons why we see the construction of dolmen cemeteries, such as Sindaedong and Biraedong, only in contexts subsequent to the

appearance of nucleated settlements.

To summarise, it can be suggested that the late EBA was a period in which the nucleated settlement was formed, and the 'settlement community' became a prominent social entity in the Upper Geum River region. As dolmen cemeteries, either attached to the settlement or existing separately, appear to have been established in conjunction with these nucleated settlements, it is therefore possible to argue that similar dolmen cemeteries identified in the Yongdam complex for this period of the late EBA should also be considered as having been established by communities for whom the 'settlement community' was an integral part of everyday life. These dolmen burials may have played an essential role in reproducing the notion of the settlement community, and it is with this recursive relationship between the settlement community and the construction of dolmens in mind that the late EBA dolmen burials of the Yongdam complex will be examined.

Before we embark on this discussion, however, it is necessary to touch upon one final matter regarding late EBA social transformation – if these transformations were indeed connected to the emergence of the settlement community as an important social entity, then why did the settlement community come to gain prominence at this particular moment in time? My intention here is not to suggest a specific motivation for the emergence of the nucleated settlement; rather, what I wish to do is briefly suggest a possible context in which the settlement community may have gained importance. Because this possible context is based upon yet to be proven assumptions regarding the nature of farming practices in the EBA, I wish to stress that it has been presented only as a speculative possibility.

The possibility which I wish to propose is that the 'settlement community' emerged in conjunction with changing systems of *tenure*. In agricultural societies, the degree to which principles of land tenure are defined differs according to the intensity of land use (Netting 1993). Thus, where shifting cultivation is practiced, tenure is by usufruct only, with tenure coming to an end when a cultivation plot is no longer productive according to commonly recognized harvesting procedures

(Netting 1993). According to Adler (1996), in this context, tenure is mediated at the level of the individual or household, since it is through the actual practice of farming by individuals and households that tenure is negotiated. However, as land use intensifies and more labour is invested into the land, individuals become reluctant to give up their plots (Netting 1993). Tenure therefore becomes mediated at the level of communal multi-household groups, with the annual use of agricultural fields decided by its leaders and constituencies (Adler 1996).

Following this, it can be suggested that similar transformations may have taken place in the EBA; in the context of intensifying land use, a new system of land tenure may have emerged in the late EBA which needed to be mediated at the settlement level. A shortage of well-rested fields would have compelled individuals or households to commit to a mechanism that could ensure their fair share of well-rested fields. In addition, increased investment into fields would have also required the existence of a communally sanctioned institution which could ensure the security of one's claim to land resources. Thus, it is possible that it was in this context of intensified land use, which required new ways of mediating tenure systems, that the institution of the settlement community came to gain importance. Of course, land use in the EBA of the Upper Geum River region must be investigated in detail before this scenario can be deemed credible. However, in the meantime, it should be noted that Adler (1996) has identified associations between land use intensity and settlement pattern which are relevant to what we have observed for the EBA in the Daejeon-Chungju area: in low intensities of land use, settlements will be dispersed and made up of only a few households, whereas in moderate intensities of land use, households tend to amalgamate into villages.

5.3. The late EBA dolmen burials of the Yongdam complex

It has been established that the late EBA in the Upper Geum River region was a period in which the settlement community emerged as a prominent social category. In this context, the attached burial ground was regarded not only as a formal resting ground for the settlement's dead, but also as a 'public space' established through the agency of the settlement community. It was in this capacity that the attached burial ground came to facilitate the reproduction of the settlement community, by objectifying and materialising its agency. It was also suggested that, since large-scale construction projects embody a common goal, the construction of the dolmen burial, as represented by the dolmen cemetery, may have provided an arena in which the differing interests of community members could be negotiated while engaging in communal activity. This would have allowed the notion of commonality, crucial to the existence of the settlement community, to be maintained. These ideas will now be utilised in the following discussion in which we consider how the construction and use of square platform detached dolmens in the Yongdam complex may have helped generate certain understandings which were central to the reproduction of a new way of life centring around the settlement community in the late EBA.

5.3.1. Introducing the late EBA dolmen burials of the Yongdam complex

The square platform detached dolmens which represent the late EBA of the Yongdam complex consist of ground-level or semi-subterranean stone burial chambers surrounded by square platform-like stone cairn structures and sealed off with large capstones (See Figure 5.1). This stone cairn platform is a distinctive feature of Yongdam complex dolmens, appearing in the linear conjoined dolmens of the early MBA, as well as the round platform dolmens of the late MBA. The use of such stone cairn platforms has been identified throughout the Korean peninsula but, given the number of dolmens which do not have such structures, it must still be considered a relatively rare phenomenon (see S. G. Lee 2006 for a

comprehensive overview of this dolmen sub-type). Indeed, the degree to which stone cairn platforms were used in the Yongdam complex – they are observed at all 135 dolmen burials discussed in this thesis – is unique. Therefore it has even been suggested that this dolmen sub-type should be referred to as the ‘Yongdam type’ dolmen, rather than the more generic ‘stone cairn attached dolmen (*juksukbuga jiseokmyo*)’ or the ‘burial boundary grave (*guhwekmyo*) (S. O. Kim 2003b)’. In this thesis, they will be referred to as ‘stone (cairn) platform dolmens’.

Seven late EBA square platform detached dolmens have been identified in association with later burials at three locations in the north eastern part of the Yongdam complex (Figure 5.12).⁵¹ Of these, four were found in a row along the foot of the hillside at Anjadong. Two were found on a narrow piece of V-shaped land formed by two converging streams at Pungam, which is located 100 meters east of Anjadong. The final dolmen was found situated at the foot of a hillside at Sujwadong, which is located around two kilometres north of the other two sites. Based on the presence of stemless stone arrowheads and stone daggers with a divided hilt, these dolmens have been dated to approximately the tenth century BC (S. O. Kim 2003b).

The identity of those buried in these earliest of the Yongdam dolmens remains a mystery. It has been suggested that they were the burials of socially equal ‘household heads’ (S. O. Kim 2003a), an interpretation reflecting the current paradigm in which the late EBA is viewed as a period pre-dating the emergence of stratified (i.e. chiefdom) society. In the absence of skeletal evidence, however, it is difficult to identify even the most basic of facts regarding the deceased, such as age or sex. In addition, it must be stressed that burial is but one of many ways in which the dead could have been disposed of in the past (Parker Pearson pers. comm.). Therefore, rather than assuming that certain members of the settlement community were automatically afforded dolmen burials due to their social position, a more fruitful way of approaching this issue may be to suggest that

⁵¹ A list of the Phase I dolmens from the three sites, a plan of each site, the structural components of burials, the artefact assemblage and the object deposition patterns are presented in the Appendices.

dolmen burials were constructed because there was something about the deceased, or indeed the event of death, which needed to be marked using these perpetual stone monuments.

The nature of the social groups which used these three separate late EBA burial grounds is also a matter of importance. In the preceding section of this thesis, it was suggested that the Biraedong dolmen cemetery, although not directly attached to a settlement, could be attributed to a nucleated settlement based on the existence of other contemporary burial grounds which demonstrate a one-to-one correlation with nucleated settlements (e.g. Shindaedong, Gwansanni). A similar logic can be applied to the late EBA (i.e. 'Phase I') cemeteries of the Yongdam complex.

5.3.2. Square platform detached dolmens: practices of construction and use

In considering the meaning of square platform detached dolmens, and indeed other forms of dolmen burial, it is generally the dolmen *per se* which is studied. Archaeologists have tended to conceptualise the dolmen material into two-dimensional representations of its form, and analysis has therefore focused on identifying the structural attributes of the dolmen architecture, mainly for purposes of producing typology. However, it may be argued that this approach does not attend to the temporality of dolmen construction and use. Thus, the way in which the physicality of the dolmens will be approached in this thesis is as a palimpsest of human actions – as representing the final stage in a long chain of funerary activities which took place at the locale of burial. In other words, it is through its *chaîne opératoire* that the square platform detached dolmens of Yongdam Phase I will now be considered. It should be noted here that a similar way of approaching ancient monuments – in terms of their constructional histories, rather than their finished form – has been proposed by McFadyen (2006); her ideas will be discussed further in the following chapter (Chapter 6, pp.133-34). Finally, as the construction process of Phase I burials was, for the most part,

similar to that of the Phase II (i.e. early MBA) burials, the sequence of dolmen construction and use observed for the late EBA square platform detached dolmens can also be considered relevant to the linear conjoined dolmens of the early MBA which will be examined in the following chapter.

Quarrying and working the stone material

A large amount of different stone materials would have been required in the construction of a dolmen burial. Firstly, the dolmen capstone would have had to have been quarried from a stone source and transported to the locale of burial. Elsewhere in Korea, chisel marks and the remains of drilled holes (into which wooden pegs were inserted and then expanded with water) have been identified at prehistoric stone quarry sites and on dolmen capstones (Y. M. Lee 2002: 327), indicating that the capstones were extracted from larger stone outcrops, rather than being occurring naturally as individual boulders. However, analysis has not been carried out on the provenance of Yongdam complex capstones, so little else can be said about where they came from and how far they may have travelled. Secondly, dolmen burials would have required a large number of stone slabs and river stones which were utilised in a variety of ways in the construction of the burial chamber and stone cairn platform. Large stone slabs were used for the burial chamber floor, while large river boulders were often used as the boundary stones of the stone cairn platform. The stone slabs would have been quarried from a stone source, whereas the river stones could be gathered from the rivers which lay in close proximity to the Yongdam complex cemeteries. Finally, a variety of different stones appear to have been used in the construction of the stone cairn platform, including stone slabs, river stones and 'rough stones' (*halsuk*) – these rough stones may have included the stone debitage produced when stone slabs were being reworked. All of this indicates that dolmen construction was not limited to the locale of burial; the acquisition of stone material may have required practices of dolmen construction to be spread out over the wider landscape.

Constructing the burial chamber (I): Laying down the chamber floor

In many instances, dolmen construction began with the laying down of the burial chamber floor. This was the case at Pungam Dolmen No. 16, where a single stone slab was used as the chamber floor. However, when small stones were used to pave the floor of the burial chamber, this appears to have taken place after the chamber walls were built (JJ Anjadong No. 9). At Sujwadong Dolmen No. 1, it was possible to observe, in the finding of a stone carpenter's tool beneath the chamber floor, how this activity of laying down the burial floor was marked by the deposition of objects. It should be noted that this practice of depositing objects beneath the burial chamber floor continued into the early MBA (Figure 5.13) (see Appendix VIII and Chapter 7, p.158).

Constructing the burial chamber (II): Building the walls of the burial chamber

The stone walls of the burial chamber could be built using a variety of different stone materials, including river stones (Sujwadong No. 1), stone slabs (Pungam No. 14 and 16), small stones (JJ Anjadong No. 9), or a mixture of these (JJ Anjadong No. 6, JB Anjadong No.1 and 2). At Pungam Dolmen No. 14, it was possible to observe how this activity could be marked by the deposition of objects: a plain ceramic vessel base was found incorporated into the east wall of the burial chamber. It should be noted that this practice of depositing objects, both ceramic vessel parts and stone objects, into the fabric of the burial chamber walls continued into the early MBA (Figure 5.14) (see Appendix VIII and Chapter 7, p. 158).

Constructing the burial chamber (III): Filling in the space between the burial pit and the chamber walls

The burial chamber of dolmens could be located above ground or slightly below ground. In the case of the latter, the burial chamber was constructed within a shallow pit, and the space between the burial pit and chamber walls could be filled in, either with small stones (JJ Anjadong No. 6) or a mixture of small stones

and sandy clay (JJ Anjadong No. 9).

Establishing the stone platform boundary

Large stone slabs or large river boulders were generally used to demarcate the area of the stone platform prior to the construction of the stone cairn (Figure 5.15). This has also been observed at later burials in the Yongdam complex (e.g. Yongdam A-II No. 1, 2). However, it appears that these boundary stones could at times be laid out subsequent to the construction of the stone cairn. This was observed at JB Anjadong Dolmen No. 1.

Constructing the stone cairn platform

The stone cairn platform was constructed using a variety of different types of stone (Figure 5.16). Generally consisting of two to three stone layers, the bottom layers of the cairn were usually made up of large river stones and stone slabs, while the upper layers often consisted of smaller stones. At JJ Anjadong Dolmen No. 9, it was also possible to observe a layer of sandy clay in between the first and third stone layers of the stone cairn. Such multi-layered cairn platforms, which are often higher in the centre leading to a slightly mounded shape, were a distinctive feature of the Phase I dolmens. The stone cairn platforms of later dolmens (i.e. Phase II and III dolmens), on the other hand, are smaller in size and consist of fewer stone layers.

It appears that the construction of the stone cairn platform was also accompanied by the deposition of objects. This is evidenced by the way in which some objects are reported to have been found 'between the cairn stones', while other objects are described as having been found 'amongst the cairn stones' (for example, see Shin and Kim 2001 for a description of artefacts from Sujwadong Dolmen No. 1). Unfortunately, even this vague differentiation is a rarity; excavation reports may note the horizontal position of stone objects found in the stone cairn platform, but they rarely specify their vertical position. It is therefore difficult to differentiate between objects deposited during the actual construction

of the stone cairn and objects deposited after the stone cairn platform was built. Thus, in examining the nature of stone objects found inside and outside the burial chamber of dolmens (see following Section 5.3.3.), it has been necessary to consider the objects together, even though it is possible that they may have derived from different fields of ritual practice. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify one piece of undeniable evidence regarding object deposition during cairn construction at a Phase I dolmen: the remains of an entire red burnished vessel were found between the first and second layers of the stone cairn at JJ Anjadong Dolmen No. 6.

Interring the deceased and placing the grave goods

It is not possible to be sure at which point during the sequence of dolmen construction that the interment of the deceased took place. However, evidence which comes from a later Phase II burial seems to suggest that ritual practices taking place inside the burial chamber would have occurred subsequent to the construction of the surrounding stone cairn platform: at Yeouigok A-1 Dolmen No. 20, it was possible to identify a stone arrowhead which had been broken into two parts, with one piece deposited into the burial chamber and the other into the stone cairn platform.

The specific nature of those objects which came to be deposited into the burial chamber of dolmens will be discussed in the following section. In the meantime, it should be noted that these objects were not always laid down on the burial floor or on the deceased's person. For example, at Pungam Dolmen No. 16, a stone carpenter's tool was found sticking out from the south-east corner of the burial chamber, ten centimetres above the chamber floor (Figure 5.17) Similar examples in which objects have been stuck into, or placed on top of, burial chamber walls come from a number of Phase II burials (see Appendix VIII and Chapter 7, pp. 158-59).

Placing the dolmen capstone

The poor preservation of Phase I dolmen substructures has meant that none of the dolmen capstones are found *in situ*. However, evidence from a later Phase II burial indicates that the sealing off of the burial chamber was also marked, at times, with the deposition of objects: at Mangduk A Dolmen No. 13, an unfinished stone knife was found beneath the dolmen capstone. The stone burial chamber could also be covered with stone slabs prior to the placement of the capstone (although this was not a common practice in the Yongdam complex) and this activity was again marked by the deposition of objects. For example, at Yeouigok A-I Dolmen No. 38 (a Phase II dolmen), a round jade bead was found in between two layers of the stone slabs which covered the burial chamber.

Funerary rites taking place after dolmen construction

The construction of the dolmen burial appears to have been followed by ritual practices, a primary component of which involved the deposition of stone objects and ceramic vessel parts into the stone cairn platform. Although rituals which involved the deposition of these objects may have also taken place prior to the placement of the dolmen capstone, the way in which object debris is generally found along and outside the position of *in situ* capstones at later dolmens (Figure 5.18) suggests that deposition rites generally took place after the capstone was in place. If we look at the location of stone objects and ceramic vessel parts found around the Phase I dolmen burials, it can be observed that deposition took place at several points within the stone platform (Table 5.1). It is therefore difficult to identify any particular locale of deposition, and this also seems to be the case for the Phase II dolmens. Finally, it should be noted that, as with the deposition of objects inside the burial chamber, object deposition outside the burial chamber (i.e. amongst the stone platform) also involved a relatively wide range of objects, the specific nature of which will be discussed in the following section.

Burial No.	Object type	Location within stone cairn platform			
		N	S	E	W
PA 14	Stone tools	▪		▪	
	Pottery				▪
PA 16	Stone tools	▪			
	Pottery	▪			
JB AJ 1	Stone tools				
	Pottery	◻	◻	◻	◻
JB AJ 2	Stone tools				
	Pottery	◻	◻	◻	◻
JJ AJ 6	Stone tools				
	Pottery	◻	◻	◻	◻
JJ AJ 9	Stone tools		▪	▪	
	Pottery		▪	▪	
SJ 1	Stone tools	▪			
	Pottery	◻	◻	◻	◻

Table 5.1. Location of objects found within the stone cairn platform of the Phase I dolmens: '▪' used when specific location is known and '◻' denotes the general presence of objects within the stone cairn.

5.3.3. The ritual practice of object deposition

The deposition of objects into the Yongdam stone platform dolmens occurred at various stages of the funerary ritual, and at various locales within the funerary architecture. However, the way in which the artefact evidence has been recorded and published makes it difficult to categorise objects according to these different modes of practice. Therefore, this section will focus on four main categories of ritual practice which can be identified from the artefact evidence: the deposition of objects inside the burial chamber, the deposition of stone objects outside the burial chamber, the deposition of ceramic vessel parts outside the burial chamber, and the deposition of fragmented objects.

The deposition of objects inside the burial chamber

An examination of objects deposited inside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens reveals a degree of variation in the nature of the grave goods assemblage. In JB Anjadong Dolmen No. 1, a stone dagger and five stone arrowheads were buried with the deceased, whereas in JB Anjadong Dolmen No. 2, there is no evidence of grave goods. In JJ Anjadong Dolmen No. 6, a single red burnished vessel was deposited in the south-west corner of the burial, while in JJ Anjadong Dolmen No. 9, a stone dagger and eight stone arrowheads were deposited along with a red burnished vessel. In Pungam Dolmen No. 14, two stone arrowheads and a stone dagger fragment were identified, while at Pungam Dolmen No. 16, three different types of stone arrowheads, but no stone dagger, were buried with a stone carpenter's tool and worked stone material. Finally, a stone dagger and two arrowheads were found along with a stone carpenter's tool and a fish-net sinker at Sujwadong Dolmen No. 1 (Table 5.2).

Burial No.	Objects deposited inside the burial chamber
Pungam No. 14.	1 stone dagger fragment, 2 arrowheads (w+f)
Pungam No. 16	3 stone arrowheads (w), 1 stone carpenter's tool, worked stone material
JB Anjadong No. 1	1 stone dagger; 5 stone arrowheads (w+f)
JB Anjadong No. 2	None
JJ Anjadong No. 6	1 red burnished vessel
JJ Anjadong No. 9	1 stone dagger, 8 stone arrowheads (w+f), 1 red burnished vessel (f)
Sujwadong No. 1	1 stone dagger, 2 stone arrowheads (w+f), 1 stone carpenter's tool, polished river stone

Table 5.2. Objects found inside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens (w: whole, f: fragment).

In Korean archaeology, such grave goods have generally been regarded as the personal belongings of the deceased or as formalised items of status and prestige; either way, they are seen as a direct reflection of the deceased's social identity (Y. M. Lee 2002: 166). This is in keeping with the processual approach to mortuary remains in which the number, quality and variety of grave goods is seen to represent the personal wealth and status of the deceased (e.g. Randsborg 1973; Shennan 1975). However, it is gradually being recognised, particularly within British archaeology, that not all objects found within burials may have been the personal belongings of the deceased (e.g. Barrett 1994; Bradley 1999; Brück 2004; Parker Pearson 1999; Thomas 1991; Woodward 2000). For example, it has been suggested that grave goods may have been made specifically to be used in gift exchanges with the dead (Parker Pearson 1999: 85) or that items used in funerary activities, such as the preparation of the corpse, may have been placed within burials (Brück 2004: 318). These possibilities will be taken into consideration in interpreting the nature of the Yongdam Phase I grave goods assemblage.

An examination of the stone daggers and arrowheads from the Phase I dolmens reveals, first of all, that these objects were used prior to deposition. As can be seen in Figure 5.19, a large proportion of these artefacts show slight chipping around the edges. Even if we attribute some of this chipping to post-depositional processes, the fact that these stone daggers and arrowheads are similar in form to those found in settlement contexts strongly indicates that their use was not limited to that of a grave good.⁵² As for the other stone objects deposited along with the stone daggers and arrowheads, given that they comprise

⁵² Interestingly enough, this is in contrast to the depositional practices identified in areas further south of the Yongdam complex (in the southern coastal area of Jeonnam province or the Sumjin, Bosung River region). In these areas, it was possible to observe the use of long and slender 'ritualised' arrowheads or stone daggers of the 'ritualised' or 'degenerated' type as grave goods (Y. M. Lee 2002). As these types of stone daggers and arrowheads are not observed in settlement contexts and do not show evidence of prior use, it is believed that they were made specifically to be used as grave goods (*ibid*) (Figure 5.20).

two stone carpenter's tools, a fish-net sinker and a polished flat river pebble (Figure 5.21), it is unlikely that they were items used in funerary activities.

It therefore appears that the most plausible explanation for the objects found inside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens would be to regard them as the personal belongings of the deceased or as gifts brought by mourners which commemorated the life of the deceased in some way. Either way, it may be suggested that the objects were selected for their personal associations with the deceased – because they were objects central to the Being of the deceased. In this sense, it can be stressed that, rather than representing the individual in terms of his or her social identity, the grave goods may have represented the individual in terms of his or her actual lived experiences. This possibility is further explored in Chapter 7 in which the graves goods assemblage from the Phase II and III burials are examined.

The deposition of objects outside the burial chamber: stone objects

The deposition of objects outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens involved both stone objects and ceramic vessels. As these two object categories appear to have derived from two different sets of ritual practices (the reasoning for this is presented below), they will be considered separately, beginning with the stone objects. A wide range of stone objects were found in the stone cairn structure of dolmen burials. They include, in addition to stone daggers and arrowheads, stone axes, a stone carpenter's tool, a stone knife, a stone polishing tool, a stone base used in the manufacture of tools, raw stone material and an unfinished spindle whorl (Table 5.3.). It should be noted that the deposition of such objects around (i.e. outside) the burial chamber is frequently observed at dolmens in the Korean peninsula and are interpreted vaguely as representing 'funerary rituals' (e.g. S. G. Lee 2000; Y. M. Lee 2002).

Burial No.	Objects deposited outside the burial chamber
Pungam No. 14.	1 stone dagger fragment, 1 stone axe fragment, 2 pieces of raw stone material, stone cutting base fragment
Pungam No. 16	2 stone arrowheads (whole and fragment), 1 stone axe fragment, 1 stone carpenter's tool
JB Anjadong No. 1	Half of an unfinished spindle whorl
JB Anjadong No. 2	None
JJ Anjadong No. 6	None
JJ Anjadong No. 9	1 dagger fragment, 1 stone knife
Sujwadong No. 1	1 stone arrowhead fragment, 1 polishing stone fragment

Table 5.3. Objects found outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens.

As with objects deposited inside the burial chamber of dolmens, it is possible to observe that objects found outside the burial chamber of dolmens were also used prior to deposition. It is not impossible to assume that some of these artefacts had been used in funerary activities (following Brück 2004). However, given the presence of objects such the unfinished spindle whorl, stone cutting base, stone knife and stone polishing tool, all of which were most likely tools used in an everyday contexts (Figure 5.22), a more plausible way of understanding these artefacts may be to regard them – as we did with objects found inside the burial chamber of dolmens – as items which were associated with the life history of the deceased.

How, then, may we best understand deposition outside *vis-à-vis* inside the burial chamber of dolmens? Given that stone daggers, arrowheads and other objects appear in both contexts, it is difficult to identify a substantive difference between the two. However, as deposition outside the burial chamber appears to have involved a wider range of objects, one possibility, which may tentatively be suggested, is that objects found inside the burial chamber may have been the

belongings of the deceased, whereas objects found outside the burial chamber may have been gifts brought by the mourners which held meanings relevant to the deceased. As the rituals of deposition which took place at Phase I burials continued into the following period of the early MBA, the difference between deposition outside the burial chamber *vis-à-vis* inside the burial chamber can be further explored in Chapter 7 (p.162) when we analyse the Phase II and III data set.

The deposition of objects outside the burial chamber: ceramic vessels

The nature of ceramic vessel parts found outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens is a complicated issue. Were these ceramic vessel parts also the remains of objects relevant to the life history of the deceased or did they come to be deposited as part of an entirely different set of ritual practices? Analysis carried out on ceramic vessel and stone object deposition practices in the following phases of the Yongdam complex (the results of this analysis are presented in Chapter 7, p.164) reveals that, in contrast to stone object deposition, which came to be abandoned for the most part in the late MBA, the deposition of ceramic vessel parts continued into the late MBA. This seems to indicate that the deposition of ceramic vessels belonged to a category of ritual practice which was different from that of stone object deposition.

The presence of ceramic vessels in a burial context may suggest a variety of ritual practices, including libation, offerings of food to the deceased, drinking ceremonies and feasting. However, the nature of the Yongdam ceramic assemblage – comprised mostly of rim sherds which cannot be reconstructed and vessel bases which, in the case of Korean Bronze Age pottery, are not a good indicator of vessel form or size (Figure 5.23) – has meant that it is difficult to consider these possibilities based solely on vessel form. Therefore, we have no choice but to follow other, more tenuous, lines of interpretation.

Firstly, the presence of red burnished pottery, which is a very fine ware represented in vessel forms such as cups, pouring vessels and bowls, suggests that ritual practices such as libation ceremonies and offerings of food to the deceased may have taken place at the Yongdam dolmens. It has been observed that the red burnished pottery found in burial contexts in the Yongdam complex is different in nature from that found in settlement contexts (S. O. Kim 2003b) (Figure 5.24).

A number of plain vessel bases with holes in the bottom have also been found among the stone cairn platform of the Yongdam dolmens (Figure 5.25). Although such holes may indicate the ritual 'killing' of an object (Grinsell 1961), it should be noted that such holes are also a common feature of libation vessels (Konsolaki-Yannopoulou 2001; Peña 2007).

Finally, the majority of ceramic parts found outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens consist of coarse plain ware (Table 5.4). A similar trend can be observed in the Phase II and III burials. Although drinking and pouring vessels are also represented, the coarse plain ware assemblage consists mainly of jars and beakers; both vessel types are generally associated with the everyday cooking, transporting and storage of food (D. Cho pers. comm.) (Figure 5.26). It may therefore be tentatively suggested that the vessel parts found in and around the stone cairn platform of dolmen burials may in fact have derived from practices associated with feasting, feasts being defined here as a '*ritual* activity essentially constituted by the *communal* consumption of food and/or drink' (Dietler and Hayden 2001: 3, original emphasis). It must be acknowledged, of course, that ceramic evidence is just one of several archaeological signatures which may indicate feasting (for a list of these signatures, see Hayden 2001: 40-41). However, given that feasting in a mortuary context is not an uncommon practice (e.g. Forster 1990; Hamilakis 1998; Parker Pearson 1999; Ralph 2005), it would not be difficult to presume that feasting took place at burials in the Yongdam complex.

Burial No.	No. of coarse plain ceramic vessel parts	No. of red burnished ceramic vessel parts	Least No. of vessels
Pungam No. 14.	7 rims	None	7
Pungam No. 16	2 rims, 3 bases	2 rims	5
JB Anjadong No. 1	8 rims, 5 bases	2 rims	10
JB Anjadong No. 2	10 rims, 8 bases	2 bases	12
JJ Anjadong No. 6		1 rim	1
JJ Anjadong No. 9	3 vessels, 1 rim, 6 bases	1 bases	10
Sujwadong No. 1	1 rim, 8 bases	2 bases	10

Table 5.4. Estimated least number of ceramics represented in the stone cairn platform of the Phase I dolmens (body sherds were not counted).

The deposition of broken and partial objects

What is most striking about the artefact assemblage of the Phase I dolmens is the way in which objects were deliberately broken prior to their deposition. This deliberate destruction of objects in a funerary context has long been identified as a feature of the Korean dolmens (S. G. Lee 2000; Y. M. Lee 2001). As can be seen in Table 5.5, an examination of the Phase I artefact evidence reveals that broken objects were deposited both inside and outside the burial chamber of dolmens, and that they represent all object categories (i.e. daggers, arrowheads and other stone objects). A similar trend can also be identified for the Phase II dolmen burials (see Chapter 7, p.159).

Possible reasons for the deliberate breaking of objects within a funerary context, as discussed by Grinsell (1961; 1972), include releasing the spirit of the object to accompany the dead to the afterlife; preventing quarrels regarding the disposal of the deceased's property; for fear of pollution; as part of a drinking ceremony; due to people's repugnance towards the idea of using them again,

and/or to prevent the efficacy of the ritual from being spoiled by the subsequent use of those objects for profane purposes (Grinsell 1961: 476-7). More recently, Brück has suggested in the context of the British Early Bronze Age that the deliberate destruction of objects at burials may have been a symbolic statement regarding the social impact of death; the destruction of objects may have represented an end to the social relationship between the deceased and the living which had been sustained and signified by these same objects (Brück 2004: 319-20). As for the deliberate destruction of ceramic vessels, Hamilakis (1998) has suggested that this practice, along with the consumption of food, may have represented the ritual 'killing' of memories.

Daggers	Inside bc	Outside bc	Total
Whole	3	0	3
Fragmented	1	2	3
Total	4	2	6

Arrowheads	Inside bc	Outside bc	Total
Whole	14	1	15
Fragmented	6	2	8
Total	20	3	23

Other stone objects	Inside bc	Outside bc	Total
Whole	4	4	8
Fragmented	0	5	5
Total	4	9	13

Table 5.5 Frequency of whole and fragmented stone daggers (top), stone arrowheads (centre) and other stone objects (bottom) found inside and outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens.

Not only were objects deposited in and around the Phase I dolmens deliberately broken, they were also deposited in a partial state (i.e. had missing parts). That this partial nature of objects was the result of deliberate practice, and not processes of post-deposition, is confirmed by the evidence which comes from two Phase II dolmens: Yeouigok A-II Dolmen No. 3 and 4. These two dolmen burials are distinctive in that earthen mounds were erected over the stone cairn platforms prior to the placement of the capstones (this is discussed further in Chapter 6, pp.141-42), providing us with a fairly accurate account of the ritual debris left by the mourners, ritual debris consisting of a wealth of broken stone objects and ceramic vessel parts. It is therefore possible to argue that the fragmented nature of objects deposited into the stone cairn platform of Yongdam dolmens was deliberate.

To summarise, we have observed that objects found inside and outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens may have been items relevant to the lived life of the deceased. It was also suggested that ceramic vessel parts found outside the burial chamber of dolmens may have derived from practices associated with feasting. Finally, it was identified that objects found amongst the dolmen architecture may have deliberately been deposited in a broken and partial state. The way in which these different facets of object deposition may have contributed to the reproduction of the settlement community in the late EBA of the Yongdam complex will now be discussed.

5.3.4. Ritual practices of object deposition, collective memory and the reproduction of the settlement community

It has been observed that a common use of social memory is to create and support a sense of community identity (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003). The efficacy of collective memory in reproducing notions of community becomes clear when we examine how it has been actively constructed, manipulated or even dismantled as a means of establishing the legitimacy of communities and of their interests (for examples, see Diaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; Kohl and Fawcett 1996; Van Dyke and Alcock 2003). The reason that collective memory is important to the existence of communities may be because “they carry a context of meaning” that “turns us [the community] towards the future” (Bellah *et al.* 1985, quoted in Middleton and Edwards 1990: 5); it tells us who we are, embedding our present selves in the past (Fentress and Wickham 1992: 201). I now turn to an examination of ‘collective memory’.

The concept of collective memory was first discussed by Halbwach who argued that groups, as well as individuals, have memories which are structured by, and constitute an important part of, group identity (Halbwach 1993). However, Fentress and Wickham (1992) have argued that Halbwach’s notion of collective memory, emerging from a collective agency, leaves no room for the actual thought process of particular individuals. Thus, they have presented the concept of ‘social memory’, which sees individual memory as becoming social through the process of sharing, and it is this understanding of collective memory – or social memory, as it will now be referred to – that will be adopted in this discussion.

Social memory hinges upon acts of sharing, and it can be argued that the coming together to mourn and commemorate deceased members of the community through dolmen construction would have constituted an ideal stage for that sharing to take place.⁵³ The actual dolmen, as a monumental representation

⁵³ Discussions regarding burial monuments and social memory have tended to focus on the way in which monuments act as a container for social memory (e.g. Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Van Dyke and Alcock 2003) or how memories are evoked in association

of the social meaning embodied by the deceased, would have been one way in which memory was made social. However, in addition to such 'inscribed' memory practices, as it has been defined by Connerton (1989), memory is also shared through embodied practices such as ritual behaviour.

The nature of the Phase I artefact assemblage becomes particularly significant in light of this proposed role of ritual behaviour in facilitating social memory. In presenting the concept of 'biographical objects', Hoskins (1998) has illustrated the way in which, in communities where the narcissistic telling and retelling of one's life history is not developed, objects which are entangled in the events of a person's life become used as symbols of selfhood; the biography of a person is told through the biography of the object (*ibid*: 2-4). With respect to objects deposited in the Phase I dolmens, which have been interpreted as items entangled in the life history of the deceased, it could be argued that they would have been regarded as symbols of the deceased's selfhood, facilitating the telling of the deceased's biography.

Members of the community would have been aware of the selection and interment of these objects, either through first hand participation or observation, or simply by virtue of the shared nature of this deposition practice. It is likely that these objects would have been thought about by members of the community, and in doing so, specific events in the life history of the deceased remembered. Consequently, it would have been through this process of selecting, interring and observing these biographical objects that the memories of the deceased were objectified, therefore allowing them to be articulated.

Memories of the deceased may have also been articulated through practices which resulted in the ceramic debris found outside the burial chamber of Phase I dolmens. It was suggested earlier that these ceramic vessel parts may have

with mortuary ritual (Chesson 2001a ; Holtorf and Williams 2006; Williams 2006). However, what I wish to explore in this chapter is not only how memories are produced, but more specifically, how they are *objectified* and *shared*, thereby allowing them to become *social memories*, in the context of burial practices.

been derived from practices of feasting; feasting in a mortuary context, as Hamilakis (1998) has noted, is a powerful memory device, combining the mnemonic practice of eating and drinking with the embodied experience of death. Therefore, the feasts which took place in conjunction with the deceased's funeral may have also provided a stage for the articulation and sharing of the deceased's memory.

Finally, the broken objects found amongst the Phase I dolmens may represent yet another set of practices which facilitated the articulation and sharing of memories – that of 'fragmentation' and 'enchainment'. The notion of 'fragmentation', as developed by Chapman (2000) in an attempt to explain the fragmented nature of pottery, skeletons and figurines from the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Copper Age in southeastern Europe, refers to the deliberate breaking and dispersal of objects for purposes of 'enchainment', a process whereby object pieces, containing the personal qualities of the owner, are dispersed as a means of establishing social linkages. Fragmented objects found in a mortuary context can therefore be seen as illustrating the enchainment of the living with the recently dead; a similar interpretation has been presented by Brück (2006) for the partial objects found in burial contexts of the British Middle and Late Bronze Age. Given the fragmented nature of objects found inside and outside the burial chamber of Yongdam dolmens, which was identified as being deliberate (see p.92 and pp.101-3), it is possible to suggest that similar practices of fragmentation and enchainment may have taken place at the Yongdam dolmens. In other words, objects may have been deliberately broken up and distributed among the living (i.e. taken away by the mourners) and the dead (i.e. deposited into the burial) in the context of funerary rituals. This would have helped materialise and reproduce the social relationship between the deceased and the mourners, and indeed the social relationship between the mourners themselves. In addition, it can also be suggested that these practices of fragmentation and enchainment which took place at the Yongdam Phase I burials – and indeed later

burials (see Chapter 7, p. 159-60) – may have allowed memories, either that of the deceased (as embodied in the stone objects) or that of the burial event itself (as embodied in the ceramic vessel parts), to be articulated and shared.

How, then, could this sharing of memories with respect to the deceased have acted to reproduce the notion of the settlement community? Firstly, although these memories would have been structured around the deceased, the deceased was also a member of the settlement community, and therefore these memories would have been relevant to the community as a whole. For example, the carpenter's tools buried with the deceased and deposited around the stone platform of Pungam Dolmen No. 14 may have brought about memories of a specific event of house building, but as this event would have taken place within the context of the settlement, these memories would have also contained memories of the social background of, or people's own personal engagement with, the event remembered. Secondly, it can be argued, following Bartlett (1932), that the act of remembering is a form of constructive activity. "Memory is not the retrieval of stored information, but the putting together of a claim about past states of affairs by means of a framework of shared cultural understanding" (Radley 1990: 46). In remembering, what is being remembered is much more than the event which lies at the fore of memory; in the act of remembering, memories are made sense of and given meaning. It can be suggested, therefore, that in sharing and remembering the life experiences of the deceased, accounts of the settlement community's past would have been shared and reinterpreted, and in doing so, the history of the settlement community put together. Articulating the settlement community's history would have been integral to maintaining the idea of the settlement community as a collective whole, for in giving it a past, the settlement community was also given a future. In addition, this active participation in putting together the settlement community's history, mediated through the sharing of memories, would have acted to reproduce one's affiliation to the settlement community. Finally, the actual process of sharing memories would have enabled members of the settlement community to discover things about the past which they could jointly recall and discuss on future occasions (Middleton and Edwards

1990: 8), thereby laying down the grounds for future opportunities for community bonding.

It was in this process of reproducing the commitment to a way of life in which the settlement community existed as a prominent social category that the foundation was laid for the fundamental transformation which was to take place at the beginning of the MBA: the emergence of a 'Songgugni way of life'. Indeed, the pottery and stone tool assemblages indicate that such a transition was already taking place in Yongdam Phase I (S. O. Kim 2003a); a transition which would not have been possible without the pre-existing notion of the 'settlement community'. This is because this new MBA mode of being was, above all, a way of life focussed on the settlement community in which storage pits were located outside dwellings and large-scale irrigation projects requiring communal labour took place. The following chapter will now consider the way in which the construction of dolmens burials may have contributed to the reproduction of this new 'Songgugni way of life'.

Chapter 6. Reproducing a ‘Songgugni way of life’: **The linear conjoined dolmens of the early MBA**

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the square platform detached dolmens of the late EBA which represent the beginnings of dolmen activity in the Yongdam complex. The deposition of objects at these Phase I burials was a topic of particular interest, as was the more general issue regarding the establishment of formal burial grounds in the Upper Geum River region during the late EBA. Based on a consideration of the social and economic conditions of the time, it was argued that the establishment of formal burial grounds and the funerary practices which accompanied the detached dolmens of the Yongdam complex may have both contributed to the reproduction of a way of life which required a commitment to the settlement community.

The following period of the early MBA in the Yongdam complex witnessed the establishment of a new way of life, as well as a new mode of dolmen construction. The former is represented by the ‘Songgugni culture’ which appears to have originated and spread from the middle and lower reaches of the Geum River. The latter is represented by the conjoined dolmen lines which were formed by connecting the square platform detached dolmens of the previous period (Figure 6.1). These linear conjoined dolmens are found at all seven cemetery sites in the Yongdam complex (Figure 6.2), and although similar examples of conjoined dolmens have been found outside the Yongdam complex (e.g. Geochang Sanpo), the extent to which such dolmens appear in the Yongdam complex is unique. Little work has been done, however, to explore the specific nature of these conjoined dolmens, or their significance with respect to the wider social and economic context. Rather, the interpretation of these early MBA burials (hereafter referred to as ‘Phase II burials’) has been limited to substantiating

certain preconceptions which exist for the Korean MBA. For example, we are told that the linearity of the conjoined dolmens may represent kinship ties (S. O. Kim 2003a). As the number of burials which are generally found in a conjoined dolmen line (three to five) is similar to the number of dwellings which are seen to comprise a household unit, it is also suggested that the different lines of dolmen may represent discrete household units, with the presence of relatively 'richer' dolmen lines indicating the emergence of 'elite' households in the early MBA (S. O. Kim 2006a).

It may be argued that the limited nature of these interpretations derives, in part, from the way in which the archaeological record has been perceived. Because dolmens are regarded foremost as 'fossil records' of past processes, the actual practices of dolmen construction, or indeed the way in which these practices may be associated with the wider social and economic context, tend to be overlooked. Therefore, while it has been noted that the early MBA in the Yongdam complex witnessed the construction of linear conjoined dolmens in association with the establishment of the Songgugni culture, attempts have not been made to examine the specific practices of the former, nor to explore how these practices may have been involved with the latter. Thus, the aim of this chapter will be to consider the construction of linear conjoined dolmens, and to explore the how the practices of construction may have helped facilitate the establishment of a Songgugni way of life in the Yongdam complex in the early MBA.⁵⁴

In the first section of this chapter, a brief but critical overview of the Songgugni culture will be presented. This will provide the basis for understanding the wider social and economic context of the MBA, against which the construction of conjoined dolmens will be discussed. Although debate continues regarding the origins of the Songgugni culture and the spatial and temporal trajectories by which it spread throughout the peninsula, the continuation of a

⁵⁴ The practices of object deposition which took place at the linear conjoined dolmens will be discussed in the following chapter (Chapter 7) in conjunction with Phase III (late MBA) deposition practices.

Songgugni way of life once it was introduced into a new region is an issue that is rarely, if ever, discussed.⁵⁵ However, it may be argued that the reason the Songgugni culture can be observed in the archaeological record of the Yongdam complex is not merely because it was introduced into this region, but, more importantly, because it was actively reproduced and successfully maintained through practices both everyday and ritual. Therefore, in reviewing the work that has been done on the Songgugni culture, an attempt will be made to identify the key features which are held to define a Songgugni way of life, as it is through the reproduction of these tenets that this new way of life would have existed as a reality for MBA communities in the Yongdam complex.

Mortuary events, in particular, provide an arena in which practices of social reproduction may take place, and it is with regard to this role as a mechanism of social reproduction that the construction of Phase II burials in the Yongdam complex will be discussed. Therefore, in the second section of this chapter, the actual practices which may have been involved in the construction of conjoined dolmens in the Yongdam complex will be considered. This will begin by reconstructing, where possible, the specific sequences by which individual dolmens came to be conjoined. These sequences of dolmen construction will then be approached in terms of bodily experience, focusing on the ways in which participants may have moved about (as determined by the material conditions of the dolmen architecture) and the scenes towards which their gazes may have been directed. It is in exploring these performances that the meaning of linear conjoined dolmens is found.

⁵⁵ This may be because the Songgugni culture is often associated with intensive wet-rice farming. From the teleological perspective of present day Koreans, a Songgugni way of life based on wet-rice farming represents a key stepping stone in the path of economic and social progress. Consequently, archaeological investigation tends to focus on when and how past communities *arrived* at this new way of life; the *continuation* of such a way of life receives little interest, possibly due to the fact that from a teleological view of the past, the existence of such evolutionary stages is considered a given.

The third and final section of this chapter will bring together the observations and discussions of the previous two sections and explore how the general experiences of dolmen construction, and the more specific experiences relevant to the linear conjoined dolmens, may have contributed to the reproduction of certain realities which were central to a Songgugni way of life in the early MBA.

6.2. A Songgugni way of life

The Middle Bronze Age in southern Korea is defined by the appearance of the Songgugni cultural assemblage. First identified through the excavation of the Buyeo Songgugni site in 1975 (NMK 1979), this assemblage came to be attributed to the MBA in the early 1990s (e.g. Cho 1989; C. K. Lee 1988; K. M. Lee 1992). By the late 1990s, it was established as the representative MBA culture of the southern regions of the Korean peninsula (e.g. Ahn 1992; H. J. Lee 2003; Song 1997).

The origin and spread of the 'Songgugni culture' has been the subject of intense debate in Korean archaeology (e.g. Ahn 1992; Song 1997; 2004; 2006b). With regard to its origins, opinion is currently divided between those who believe that the Songgugni culture was introduced into the Korean peninsula from a non-indigenous source (H. J. Lee 2006; J. M. Lee 2003; J. Y. Woo 2001) and those who subscribe to the notion of indigenous development (J. S. Kim 2002). Both sides, however, appear to be in agreement that the culture first made its appearance in the middle and lower reaches of the Geum River at around the tenth to ninth century BC, and by the eighth century BC, spread throughout much of the southern regions of the peninsula (J. C. Lee 2000).⁵⁶ Therefore, in areas beyond

⁵⁶ There are, of course, some archaeologists who have contested this commonly held view. Ahn (1992), for example, has proposed a 'dual origin and development model' which identifies the Nam River/Ulsan region as the point of origin from which the Songgugni culture identified in the south-eastern part of the peninsula emerged and spread. More recently, H.W. Lee (2006) has suggested that the southern Gyeonggi region may be regarded as a possible candidate for the homeland of the Songgugni culture.

the Songgugni 'core region' (i.e. the middle and lower reaches of the Geum River), the key issue has been understanding the route and timeline of the culture's dispersal.

Research into the spread of the Songgugni culture has focused on tracing the spatial and temporal trajectories of its component features. Songgugni dwellings, in particular, with their diverse of sub-types, have provided archaeologists with a useful means of identifying the regional variations of the Songgugni culture; it is these regional variations in dwelling type which make it possible to understand the trajectory of Songgugni cultural influences. For example, J.C. Lee (2000) has identified the possible routes through which Songgugni influences may have spread by looking at the patterning of four dwelling sub-types (the proto-type 'A' and derivative types 'B', 'C' and 'D'). He suggests that one way in which Songgugni influences may have travelled from the Songgugni core region (where all four dwelling sub-types are observed) was through the upper reaches of the Geum River (i.e. the case study area) and into the Hwang and Nakdong River regions of south-eastern Korea, based on the predominance of Type C dwellings along this route – the current research accepts this interpretation.

More recently, attempts have also been made to investigate the social and economic conditions of the Songgugni MBA, in particular by looking at the spatial organisation of individual settlements, as well as the relationship between settlements, burial grounds and field systems within the wider regional landscape (e.g. Ahn 2004; B. C. Kim 2005; S. O. Kim 2006b; H. J. Lee 2003; K. S. Lee 2000; Song 2006a). In these studies, elements of the Songgugni culture are often associated with increased social complexity or the need for intensive labour, both of which, in turn, are regarded as being associated with the adoption of wet-rice farming (e.g. Ahn 2004; Song 2006a).

In these studies, elements of the Songgugni culture are often associated with increased social complexity or the need for intensive labour, both of which, in turn, are regarded as being associated with the adoption of wet-rice farming (e.g. Ahn 2004; Song 2006a). However, while it cannot be denied that wet-rice farming would have played a role in bringing about some of the changes evidenced in the Korean MBA, it is problematic to posit wet-rice farming as the structuring motor of Songgugni life, for many of the MBA settlements lack direct evidence of wet-rice farming.⁵⁷ Indeed, it is well documented that rice only became a staple product of the Korean diet at a much later date in the historical period (J. J. Lee pers. comm.), making it possible to question the significance of rice in the MBA subsistence strategy. Moreover, the extent to which the presumed 'labour requirements' of wet-rice farming may have influenced social organisation in the MBA can also be reconsidered. Indeed, the recent excavation of EBA rice paddy systems at Mugeodong Okhyun in Ulsan (S. G. Lee *et. al* 1999) indicates the need to reconsider the simplistic association between MBA Songgugni culture and intensive wet-rice farming.

Once we begin to deconstruct the idea that wet-rice farming was the 'structuring principle' of a Songgugni way of life, it then becomes possible to reconsider how we define this MBA way of life, as well as the mechanisms through which it was maintained. This, in particular, has implications for how we approach the spread of the Songgugni culture, for it no longer becomes possible to accept the introduction of a 'superior' farming technology (i.e. wet-rice farming) as the motor behind its adoption. Thus, in order to investigate what other 'principles' may have acted to structure a Songgugni way of life, we will now examine its key components.

The diagnostic features of the Songgugni artefact assemblage can be found in its ceramics, stone reaping knives and stone axes (Figure 6.3). Songgugni pottery consists of plain coarse ware and red burnished ware. The former is

⁵⁷ MBA rice paddies or related structures, such as irrigation channels, have been identified at Nonsan Majeonri (KUCPRI 2004), Milyang Gumcheonri (KNUM 2003), and Ulsan Yaumdong (MUM *et al.* 2004) and Jinhae Jaeundong (CWUM 2000).

represented by three vessel types (the jar, beaker and bowl) (H. J. Lee 1998), while the latter is characterised by the presence of flask-shaped vessels. Although various forms of red polished vessels were used from the late EBA, it is only from the MBA, following the appearance of the Songgugni culture, that such flask-shaped vessels came to be used (Ahn 2002)⁵⁸ – these red polished vessels represent around ten percent of a typical Songgugni ceramic assemblage (Yoon 2003). The MBA also saw a marked increase in smaller polished vessels within the ceramic assemblage, such as the four red polished cups found at Songgugni House No. 54-2 (Yoon 2003). The flask-shaped vessels are generally considered to have contained liquids (Ahn 2002) although residue analysis has yet to be carried out on any of these vessels. Therefore, their presence, along with the increased use of smaller drinking vessels, can be taken to suggest that ritualised events of drinking which utilised such red polished wares may have played an important part of Songgugni social life (Ahn 2002).

Songgugni stone reaping knives consist of the ‘triangular type’ and ‘asymmetrical boat type’ stone knives which came to replace the ‘fish type’ and ‘boat type’ stone knives of the earlier period. This change in the shape of reaping knives is thought to have resulted from a change in the type of cereal crop harvested. This is due to the fact that triangular knives are found in association with rice paddies and carbonated rice in both southern Korea and Kyushu in Japan (Ahn 1998; Son 2003). However, it should be pointed out that this interpretation cannot account for the dominant presence of triangular knives in regions such as the Jinan valley (i.e. the research area) where even in the present day, there is relatively low dependence on rice farming (ASIS 2007). Therefore, rather than positing direct links between triangular harvesting knives and wet-rice farming, an alternative explanation may be to associate these knives with the emergence of new farming practices in the MBA which were relevant to all crops in the MBA – new farming practices which, in particular, may have facilitated the adoption of wet-rice farming in the MBA.

⁵⁸ All three vessel types of the Songgugni plain ware were present in EBA ceramic assemblages, however.

Finally, there is the *yugu* stone axe, which appeared at the same time as, or even slightly earlier than, the Songgugni culture (Bae 2001). These single-sided stone axes are slightly smaller than the stone axes of the previous period and feature grooves which would have held in place the ropes used to attach wooden handles to the axes. Generally regarded as a carpenter's tool, the presence of the *yugu* stone axe has been interpreted as representing an increased need for farming tools (Ahn 2006). And indeed, it has been observed that, compared to the EBA tool assemblage, the Songgugni tool assemblage illustrates an increase in the proportion of stone farming tools and carpenter's tools (K. S. Lee 2001).

Although direct evidence for wet-rice farming is still sparse, the Songgugni MBA is also characterised by a marked increase in rice remains. For example, the cereal assemblage identified at the site of Songgugni – which gives this culture its name – was comprised solely of rice (NMK 1979). However, it should be noted that some of the Songgugni culture sites show a distinct absence of rice remains. For example, opal phytolith analysis carried out on soils from the Yeouigok field system in the Yongdam complex yielded evidence of foxtail millet, barnyard millet, broom corn millet and kaoliang millet, but not rice (K. S. Kim 2001)

Songgugni type dwellings consist of round or square houses which are characterised by a central pit and dual post hole feature (Figure 6.4). The nature of this central pit remains a mystery, as the absence of fired earth and ash makes it unlikely that the pit would have been used as a hearth (J. C. Lee 2006) In some cases, post holes have been found within the pits (as opposed to outside) (J. C. Lee 2002; Shin 1996), while stone debris has been found in others (J.C. Lee 2006).

Moated and fenced structures, which have been identified at some large-scale settlements, have also been regarded as a key characteristic of the Songgugni culture. Increased violence stemming from a variety of factors, all of which are traced back to intensive wet-rice farming, is generally regarded as the reason behind the construction of such fortification structures (e.g. Bae 2000; S. J. Lee

1998). However, segmented moat structures have recently been identified at the EBA sites of Banggiri and Paldaldong (S. J. Lee 1998). In addition, it has been observed that, in the case of the earliest enclosed settlements from the Japanese Yayoi period, dwellings are only found only *outside* circular moat structures (D. Cho pers. comm). It thus appears that the current understanding of MBA 'fortified' settlements must be reconsidered.⁵⁹

Research on the Songgugni culture has generally been focused on analysing these key index features in terms of their typology, chronology and function. However, it is the more recent work carried out on MBA settlements which provides us with valuable information regarding the reality of Songgugni life. For example, it has been identified that Songgugni type dwellings are noticeably smaller in size than the dwellings of the previous period (K. S. Lee 2001). While the floor size of EBA dwellings could be up to 50 square metres for longhouses, and 20 to 30 square metres for rectangular houses, the average size of a Songgugni roundhouse was found to be around 20 square metres, and around 10 square metres in the case of the square houses. It has also been noted that the Songgugni type dwellings are more standardised in size (Ahn 1996; Kwon 1995). Finally, it has been observed that MBA storage pits are located in clusters *outside* dwelling structures, representing a fundamental change from the EBA in which storage pits were located along the *inner* walls of houses (K. S. Lee 2001; Son 2004).

It has been suggested that these changes in residence size and storage pit location had to do with changes in the unit of production and consumption. K. S. Lee (2001) has observed how storage pits in the MBA are often associated with distinct clusters of two to three dwellings, and based on this, it has been argued that these clustered dwellings represent the 'fissioning' of households in the MBA; this fissioning entailed the division of extended families residing in single residences (represented by the multiple hearth longhouses of the EBA) into

⁵⁹ The burials of the Songgugni culture will not be examined here as they are discussed at length in Chapter 7 (pp.144-146) in which we discuss late MBA burial activity in the Yongdam complex.

smaller family units living in separate dwellings. The proposed reason for this fissioning of households is that they were brought about by *changes in labour requirements stemming from wet-rice farming* – an interpretation most likely influenced by the current paradigm of Korean archaeology which regards wet-rice farming as the motor behind social and economic change in the MBA, as already mentioned.

The nature of these ‘new labour requirements’, however, is not explored by Lee (2001), nor is it fully explained why they may have required smaller family units. Also overlooked is the archaeological evidence which contradicts this assumed link between changes in residence size and storage pit location and intensive wet-rice farming in the MBA. For example, the gradual reduction of residence size has been identified from the mid EBA onwards (Ahn 1996; Miyajato pers. comm.), which shows that the appearance of smaller dwellings was part of a wider trend taking place prior to the emergence of the Songgugni culture. Outdoor storage pits have also been identified in association with pre-Songgugni type dwellings at the late EBA sites of Kungukri and Jodongri (Cho 2004). While these outdoor storage pits are relatively few in number and dispersed rather than clustered, their presence in late EBA contexts makes it possible to suggest that the change in storage pit location was not the result of wet-rice farming practices associated with the Songgugni MBA.

Of course this is not to deny that there exists a relationship between the changes noted above and the establishment of the MBA of southern Korea. What is being refuted, rather, is the idea that these changes were the *passive results* of a new MBA way of life. In doing so, it becomes possible to approach the reorganisation of residence and storage in a different way – as actively facilitating the conditions in which the Songgugni way of life emerged. This is because the reorganisation of the residence unit and the reorganisation of storage facilities would have entailed, in essence, a change in the physical conditions which structured practice; it is in the practices and experiences which emerged from these newly reorganised conditions of MBA dwelling and storage that the reality

of a Songgugni way of life can be found.

As well as being associated with clusters of two to three roundhouses, MBA storage pits have also been found in groups separate from the residential area but within the settlement. This has been identified at settlements such as Daehungni, Majeonni, Sanuri, Seokgokni and Yeodeni (Cho 2004). This organisation of storage pits separate from specific households seems to indicate that storage was no longer carried out within the privacy of the residence. In the research area, evidence of such 'non-private' storage can be seen at the Nongsan settlement (Kim and Lee 2001). Here, rectangular and round storage pits were found together, in the centre of the settlement site, surrounded by the dwellings of the early MBA (Figure 6.5).

In the Yongdam complex, this evidence of 'non-private' storage is accompanied by evidence of what may possibly be communal production. The composite site of Yeouigok yielded a field system covering around 107 metres x 40 metres which appears to have been contemporary to the burial ground (Kim and Lee 2001: 527). What is noticeable about this field system is the absence of identifiable field boundaries. Of course, field boundaries can be marked in such ways which do not appear in the archaeological record (e.g. Malinowski 1935). Likewise, the presence of field boundaries may not necessarily mean a division of production (e.g. Börjeson 2004). However, as a general regularity can also be identified in the spacing of ridges and furrows at the Yeouigok field system (Figure 6.6), which can be taken to represent communal practices of farming (R. Johnston pers. comm.), it appears possible to suggest that the production of food in the MBA of the Yongdam complex may have possibly been communal in nature.

It also appears that consumption in the MBA, or at least the cooking of food, took place within the public arena of the settlement, rather than within the privacy of the residence. This can be seen by the absence of indoor hearth structures, which is a key feature of Songgugni type dwellings. It is generally accepted that there must have been some form of heating in these dwellings given

the harsh nature of Korean winters (J. C. Lee 2006), but the cooking of food may not have necessarily taken place inside the houses. Of the numerous pit features which are found outdoors in MBA settlements, many contain ceramic vessels *in situ* (Figure 6.7) and are therefore regarded as storage pits (Lim 1999). However, other pit features have been found containing pottery fragments and layers of ash, possibly indicating their use as cooking pits (J. G. Kim 1996). In the Yongdam complex, several such pit features were found at the Nongsan settlement. Pit No. 20, for example, which is rectangular in shape (190 x 135 x 23 cm), was found to contain a central area of burnt earth and charcoal, surrounded by a layer of unburnt pebbles. The north side of this pit yielded a thick layer of broken pottery, and the remains of two complete vessels were also found within (Figure 6.8). This structure was therefore interpreted as an outdoor cooking facility (Kim, Lee and Kim 2001b: 196). Burnt earth, charcoal and pottery fragments were found in another irregular shaped pit (155 x 85 x 15-20 cm) which the excavators described as an 'outdoor hearth' (Figure 6.9) (*ibid*: 107).

Finally, it can be suggested that the production of stone tools in the MBA was organised at the level of the settlement. As was discussed above, this period of the MBA appears to have witnessed a marked increase in the production of farming and carpenter's tools. Based on the large amounts of stone debris found in certain MBA structures, it has been suggested that this increased production of stone tools was carried out at specific workshops within the settlement (Son 2003). The greater standardisation which can be observed for many of the stone tools (J. M. Lee 2003) acts to suggest the emergence of specialised roles within the community. While such specialised roles in production may have existed in the EBA as well, what is significant is the fact that it was in the MBA that these roles came to be objectified through physical structures – the workshop – which leave traces in the archaeological record. For example, the rectangular and square buildings which co-existed with typical Songgugni dwellings, but which do not have the characteristic central pit and post hole feature of Songgugni dwellings, have often been interpreted as areas in which specialised functions took place (J. C. Lee 2006). The division of space identified at certain large-scale MBA

settlements can also be understood in this context. The site of Gwanchangni, for example, is comprised of a residential area, a storage area, an area comprised of pile building, an area containing kiln structures and a burial area, all of which are found at different locations along a hillside (KUM 2001).

Based on the evidence outlined above, it can be suggested that one of the key principles structuring a Songgugni way of life in the MBA may have been the organisation of production, redistribution and consumption at the level of the settlement unit. In other words, it can be argued that production, redistribution and consumption which took place at MBA settlements was 'communal' in nature. The way in which the field system at Yeouigok was left undivided, the way in which storage facilities at Nongsan were located in the centre of the settlement, easily accessible to all, the way in which the cooking of meals took place out in the open, and the way in which the production of stone tools took place at specialised locations designated within the settlement all seem to reflect a structuring principle of communal practice. At present, it is difficult to understand why, in this period of the MBA, production, redistribution and consumption came to be organised at the level of the settlement – it can only be hoped that research looking at settlement change in conjunction with issues of farming practices, land use, tenure etc. will provide answers in the future. However, I would argue that this need not be a problem, for the objective of the current research is not to understand how the structuring principles of a Songgugni way of life emerged, but rather how they were *reproduced* through practices associated with dolmen construction.

Fundamental to living life according to the structuring principles of communal production and consumption would have been a commitment to one's 'social role' within the mechanism of production and redistribution that was the 'settlement'. It was argued earlier that the emergence of workshop spaces and the spatial distinction of areas where certain activities took place (e.g. the kilns at the bottom of the settlement at Gwanchangni) may indicate the emergence of more

specialised roles.⁶⁰ The existence of such roles and their physical manifestations would again have acted to objectify the fact that production, be it subsistence or stone tools and ceramics, was not organised by the domestic group, but by the settlement itself. Consequently, it can be argued that it was this totality of practices in which community members produced and consumed at the level of the settlement that defined a Songgugni way of life. However, this could only have been maintained if village members were committed to such practices – if they were committed to the ‘social roles’ that they occupied within village life. I will now examine how such social roles would have been negotiated, objectified and reproduced in the Youngdam complex through the practices associated with constructing linear conjoined dolmens.

6.3. The linear conjoined dolmens of the Yongdam complex

As mentioned above, linear conjoined dolmens are found at all seven burial sites in the Yongdam complex.⁶¹ The greatest number of these dolmens has been identified at the site of Yeouigok, forming eight conjoined dolmen lines. The sites of Anjadong, Pungam, Sujwadong, Gugok, Mangduk and Mogok, on the other hand, contain a significantly fewer number of dolmens, in some cases yielding just a single line of conjoined dolmens. The way in which these dolmen burials were built and conjoined appears to have been similar, for the most part, throughout the Yongdam complex. Therefore, in considering practices associated with the construction of conjoined dolmens, analysis will focus primarily on the dolmens of Yeouigok, as it is highly likely that the practices identified here would

⁶⁰ The most likely answer to why such an increase in stone tool production may have taken place is an increase in subsistence production. This ‘increase in subsistence production’ is of course what most Korean archaeologists have been positing as the motor behind the changes observed in the Songgugni MBA (Kim J.S. 2003). However, what I wish to make clear is that I believe an increase in production to have been *facilitated* by the conditions of communal production, and that it was when such an increase of subsistence production took place that social roles came to be more differentiated.

⁶¹ A list of the Phase II dolmens from the seven sites, a plan of each site, the structural components of burials, the artefact assemblage and the object deposition patterns are presented in the Appendices.

have been shared elsewhere in the Yongdam complex.

6.3.1. Identifying the sequence of dolmen construction

Most of the conjoined dolmen lines in the Yongdam complex were identified as having been formed by attaching dolmens in a linear sequence (☐→☐→☐). As mentioned earlier, this linear directionality, which appears to be a key characteristic of Yongdam dolmens in the early MBA, has led archaeologists to suggest that the construction of these dolmen burials represented the establishment of kinship ties or the construction of lineages (S. O. Kim 2003a). The basis for this, it would seem, is the way in which the physical linkages between dolmens burials may act as a metaphor for the establishment of social links between the deceased. However, while this interpretation may indeed be valid – in fact, a similar conclusion is arrived at in the current research – it can be suggested that the linear directionality of conjoined dolmens burials can be better understood by considering the construction practices which would have led to, and resulted in, this linear directionality, and by exploring the experiences which would have emerged from these practices. In this sense, the burial evidence from Yeouigok is ideal for this inquiry, for diachronic change has been observed in the way in which conjoined dolmen lines came to be formed, that is, from a non-linear fashion to a linear fashion.

The dolmens burials of Yeouigok are located at the foot of a hillside which has yielded the remains of Songgugni settlement. Running parallel to the Jungja River, which lies 80 metres east of the site, are the lines of conjoined dolmens and the trackway along which dolmen capstones would have been transported. A contemporary field system has also been identified flanking the dolmen trackway to the east (Figure 6. 10). The burial structures of Youigok include the linear conjoined dolmens of the early MBA and the detached dolmens and non-dolmen burials of the late MBA; the latter are generally found surrounding the former. The linear conjoined dolmens are found at three separate

locations within the site (see Figure 6.10), and it is at Yeouigok A-I, the largest of the three cemeteries, that we find evidence of how the construction sequence of conjoined dolmen lines may have changed with time.

According to the excavators, the dolmen burials of Yeouigok A-I can be divided into two groups – the ‘South Group’ and the ‘North Group’ – according to differences in the spatial organisation of conjoined dolmen lines and the presence or absence of later dolmens attached to the sides of these dolmen lines (Figure 6.11). A slight bend in the contour line of the hill, where the dolmens are situated, also acts as a boundary between the two groups (Kim and Lee 2001: 495). Based on the nature of the grave goods, the South Group was interpreted as having been established first (*ibid*: 517).

It appears that in the South Group, the two conjoined dolmen lines were each formed by erecting a dolmen in between what had previously been two detached dolmens (■→■←■).⁶² This is indicated, first of all, by the architectural evidence: Dolmen No. 26 was built after Dolmen No. 25 and 27; Dolmen No. 29 was built after Dolmen No. 28 and 30; Dolmen No. 31 was built after Dolmen No. 30 (Kim and Lee 2001: 516). To this we can add the artefact evidence – of the South Group dolmens, the only burials which do not contain objects which are generally regarded as ‘early grave goods’ (i.e. the stone dagger with divided hilt and pots with straight or inward curving rims) are Dolmen No. 25, 26, 29 and 31.⁶³ Therefore, if we assume that these dolmens were constructed later than those containing ‘early grave goods’, it is possible to present the following sequence for dolmen construction in the South Group: 1) three square platform dolmens (Dolmen No. 27, 28, 30) are constructed in a row, with three earlier, detached dolmens present → 2) Dolmen No. 25 is constructed, after which

⁶² In this and following schematic representations of conjoined dolmen construction, ‘■’ represents earlier dolmens, while ‘■’ represents the last dolmen to be constructed.

⁶³ It should be noted that these ‘early grave goods’ have also been found in the three detached dolmens standing in row southwest of the conjoined dolmen lines, which have been interpreted as being the earliest dolmens to have been constructed at Yeouigok (Kim and Lee 2001: 517). It may therefore be suggested that these three dolmens represent the continuation of the Phase I dolmen tradition – discussed in Chapter 5 – into the earliest stages of the early MBA, albeit with smaller dolmen burials.

Dolmen No. 26 is built in between it and Dolmen No. 27; Dolmen No. 29 and 31 are attached to the pre-existing dolmens (Figure 6.12).

As for the North Group, the structural evidence indicates that the four dolmen lines were all formed according in a unidirectional, linear sequence (■→■→■). However, the temporal relationship between the separate dolmen lines must be considered here. In other words, were these four lines formed roughly at the same time, or were they formed one after the other? Given the lack of radiocarbon dates and the absence of temporally sensitive artefacts (i.e. the 'early grave goods' which were useful in establishing the sequence of the South Group dolmens), it appears that the only way in which to address this issue is by examining certain architectural components of dolmen burials which may be chronologically sensitive.

Table 6.1 presents the key structural attributes of the first and second dolmen burials from the four North Group conjoined dolmen lines (see accompanying Figure 6.13). Unfortunately, it appears that differences in the architectural features of dolmen burials are not temporally meaningful: dolmens with stone cist burial chambers can come before (Line I) and after (Line II, III) dolmens with stone lined burial chambers. Nor do any of the structural attributes correlate with specific dolmen clusters: burial chambers large enough to contain supine interments can be observed at all four dolmen lines. It therefore appears that, at present, there is no way of identifying the formation sequence between the North Group conjoined dolmen lines – it can only be hoped that future excavations of similar dolmen burials will shed light on this matter. Nevertheless, the fact that North Group dolmen lines were formed according in a one directional, linear sequence (■→■→■) in itself provides valuable information, as this can be juxtaposed against the non-linear sequence (■→■←■) observed for the South Group.

Line no.	Dolmen sequence (no.)	Burial chamber type	Burial chamber location	Burial chamber dimension
I	1 st (no.21)	Stone cist	Underground	170x40x50
	2 nd (no.20)	Stone lined	Underground	120x55x50
II	1 st (no.40)	Stone lined	Underground	155x55x50
	2 nd (no.39)	Stone cist	Underground	155x55x40
III	1 st (no.17)	Stone lined	Underground	110x40x30
	2 nd (no.16)	Stone cist	Above ground	147x70x45
IV	1 st (no.36)	Stone lined	Underground	140x40x50
	2 nd (no.35)	Stone lined	Underground	175x60x30

Table 6.1. The key structural attributes of the first and second dolmen burials from the four North Group conjoined dolmen lines

6.3.2. Experiencing the construction of linear dolmen clusters

The utility of 're-experience' as an interpretative tool in understanding mortuary behaviour was demonstrated by Mizoguchi (2005) in his study of Yayoi jar burials from northern Kyushu, Japan. The way in which he approached sequential episodes of jar burial was by considering the position and the gaze of the mourners. In establishing that the gaze of mourners would have been directed towards pre-existing burials, it was argued that these visual experiences would have led to the remembrance of those who had been buried before, as well as their relationships with each other, thereby generating the reproduction of genealogical knowledge. This approach is, of course, not without its own problems. The degree to which an archaeologist in the present may be confident about the positioning of

mourners in the past will always be an issue. However, it may be argued that in considering the *possible* positioning of mourners (which would have been structured by the pre-existing conditions of the burial architecture), and in exploring the *possible* experiences deriving from this, this approach of re-enactment can offer much to our understanding of the experimental possibilities surrounding linear conjoined dolmens.

With regard to experiences emerging from dolmen construction, it must first be noted that the actual act of conjoining dolmens in a linear direction (■→■→□) requires conscious observation of earlier dolmens. In some cases, the gaze of those participating in dolmen construction would have focused on the long single line of pre-existing dolmens (e.g. Mogok and Gugok C), whereas in other cases, the builders did not have to look too far back. But either way, it can be suggested that the practice of attaching dolmens brought about certain visual experiences which acted to both confirm the position of the burial at the end of a pre-existing line of burials. It is possible that this may have led to moments in which the sequential links existing between the deceased and those who came before were considered, as well as the participant's own place within the sequence. This experience can be compared with that of dolmen construction in the South Group of Yeouigok A-I where practices of construction would have focused on filling in the gap between pre-existing dolmens (■→□←■). It can be suggested that, in this case, the conjoining of dolmens may have had more to do with making simple connections, rather than establishing sequences.

In contrast to the comparatively straightforward practice of attaching dolmens to pre-existing burials, ritual practices are not easily identified; even when they are, they suggest a myriad of possible experiences. In our case, the ritually derived debris, consisting of pottery fragments and broken and whole stone objects, found in and around the stone cairn platform of linear conjoined dolmens may provide a starting point from which ritual practice and its resulting experiences may be approached. It should be noted, however, that some of the dolmen burials yield very little in terms of the object debris, making it difficult to

reconstruct the locale of ritual practice. Moreover, many of the excavation reports for the Yongdam complex do not note the location where the artefacts were found within the stone cairn platform (this is a problem which will be addressed in Chapter 8, pp.200-2). Fortunately, in the case of the Yeouigok dolmens, the location of objects found within the stone cairn platform was relatively well recorded, making it possible to pursue this line of research.

An examination of the ritually derived debris shows that a similar pattern of deposition was practiced among all conjoined dolmens, regardless of their construction sequence. In the South Group (■→■←■), the dolmens that would have originally stood detached show ritual deposits around the front and back areas of the platform, while the attaching dolmens (No. 26 and 29) have yielded artefacts to the side of the burials (Figure 6.14). In the North group (■→■→■), ritual activity is generally identified on the western side of dolmens in the western row and on the eastern side for the eastern row (Figure 6.15). What is of particular interest here is that few pieces of debris are found at the far end (i.e. opposite to the attaching end) of dolmens, which may have been considered – had the ritual debris not suggested otherwise – a natural focus for ritual practice. Consequently, from the location of ritual activity alone, it is difficult to establish any experiences that were specific to the linear conjoined dolmen. Based on the current evidence, it then appears that the only way to discuss such experiences is by looking at the possible position of mourners as structured by the dolmen architecture. If we cautiously assume that the mourners would have stood around the edges of the dolmen platforms, it is possible to identify how the position of mourners at ‘attaching’ burials (Figure 6.16) would have been different from the position of mourners at ‘connecting’ burials (Figure 6.17), this ultimately leading to different visual experiences.

To summarise, it has been possible to demonstrate how, in their construction and use, dolmens conjoined in a linear direction, which represent the majority of early MBA dolmens in the research area, would have structured practices confirming the position of the deceased at the end of a burial sequence.

It was tentatively suggested that these practices may have contributed to the reproduction of genealogical knowledge. This therefore brings us to the question of why such linear sequence conjoined dolmens came to be constructed in the first place.

A way of life exists as a reality which comes about through a network of practices. These practices exist, in turn, because they have a role to play in the lived lives of people. Therefore, although the intention behind their construction may not be approached, it may at least be argued that one of the reasons why the construction of such linear conjoined dolmens continued to be maintained was because they – or rather their associated practices – had an important role to play in bringing about and reproducing the lived reality of the MBA in the Yongdam complex. The specific mechanism by which practices of dolmen construction and use may have facilitated the reproduction of a Songgugni way of life – the structuring principles of which were discussed earlier as a commitment to one's social role within the mechanism of production, redistribution and consumption organised at the level of the settlement – will now be explored.

6.4. Linear conjoined dolmens and social reproduction

Our discussion regarding the role of dolmens burials in reproducing a Songgugni way of life in the Yongdam complex must first begin by considering the absence of dolmens burials in the Songgugni core region. As was noted in the previous chapter, dolmens were being constructed in the Upper Geum River region from the late EBA, and dolmen burials have also been identified in the western coastal areas where the Geum flows out into the Yellow (West) Sea (e.g. Boryeong Pyongrari and Gwanchangri). However, in the middle and lower reaches of the Geum River, which is the core region of the Songgugni culture (see p.112), there is a conspicuous absence of dolmen activity for both the late EBA and MBA. Instead, stone cist burials, earth cut burials and jar burials are found in

this core region,⁶⁴ leading them to be regarded as a diagnostic feature of the Songgugni culture (S. O. Kim 2001). In areas beyond this core region, however, in which other aspects of the Songgugni culture may have been actively adopted from the early MBA, these Songgugni type burials were not, and the indigenous tradition of dolmen burials continued to be maintained. Indeed, in the Yongdam complex, it was only in the late MBA (the fifth to fourth century BC), centuries after other elements of the Songgugni culture appear, that Songgugni type burials came to be used.

This continuation of dolmen burials outside the Songgugni core region has not been problematised within Korean archaeology; it appears to be regarded simply as representing the continuation of the certain cultural traditions which were less open to change (e.g. S. O. Kim 2003a). However, it may be argued that the continuation of mortuary traditions is not a given, but contingent upon the successful reproduction of these traditions through the practice of agents. These practices of agents are carried out due to reasons which exist at the level of both practical and discursive consciousness. Mortuary practices may be followed because, for the knowledgeable agent, that is what makes himself or herself feel 'secure'. Adherence to such practices may also be the result of more conscious deliberation, as mortuary events may provide an ideal arena in which the 'knowledge' of agents can be objectified (Barrett 1994). Hence, both these functions must be considered when investigating the continued use of dolmen burials with the advent of a new Songgugni way of life.

⁶⁴ The highest concentrations of Songgugni type burials are found in the prefectures of Gongju, Buyeo, Iksan and Nonsan (S. O. Kim 2001).

6.4.1. Dolmen construction as a means of objectifying, negotiating and reproducing social roles

It was suggested above that the Songgugni way of life emerged through practices of producing and consuming at the level of the settlement. Communal production and consumption in a village context has been identified by Fried (1967) as a feature of 'rank societies', as has the existence of a regular and repetitive authority which extends into various aspects of social life (*ibid*: 134). And although the concept of 'rank society' in itself may be problematic, these organising principles, as identified by Fried (i.e. production and consumption in a village context and the existence of a regular and repetitive authority), provides us with a starting point from which to consider how practices of dolmen construction and use may have contributed to the ethos of communal production and consumption.

It can be argued that communal production can only exist when those participating in it feel secure that redistribution will take place in a way that is acceptable, and that this is assured by the presence of a regular and repetitive authority extending into various aspects of social life. This authority has generally been portrayed as an *individual*, ergo the 'managers', 'chiefs' and 'big-men' that appear in the literature. However, just as the power of state is seen to lie not in a physical presence, but in the idea of 'surveillance' (Foucault 1977), it is possible to maintain that the authority which ensures the ontological security of members participating in communal production exists as an intangible presence permeating all aspects of social life. It exists in the 'knowledge' that each and every individual has a justifiable 'role' within this mechanism of communal production and redistribution. Of course, this is not to deny the presence of a 'leader' (i.e. the organiser of collective economic activity) or the prestige that he or she may have had. But, as Fried has noted, "In rank society leaders can lead, but followers may not follow. Commands are given, but sometimes they may not be obeyed" (Fried 1967: 133). Indeed, that it is the 'role' which has the authority and not the person has long been posited by those advocating a 'managerial' chief *vis-à-vis* a

‘controlling’ chief. But what I wish to do is take this idea further and suggest that the legitimacy of the individual who organises production and redistribution lies not in the ‘role’ itself, but in the ideology of *there being a role for everyone*. It is this ideology, I argue, which provides an individual with the authority to redistribute, just as others in their respective roles are provided with the authority to farm, cook, make tools and so on and so forth.

If we accept that this communal production and redistribution was contingent upon the idea of social roles for everyone, it becomes clear that the continuation of a Songgugni way of life was contingent upon the successful reproduction of this idea of everyone having a social role to play. The way in which this ideology of roles – and indeed one’s commitment to one’s role – would have been reproduced was through a recursive relationship with the practices it structured. In other words, the knowledge that such a way of life worked, as validated by the everyday experiences of living, would have been drawn upon by individuals, leading to the reproduction of this ideology of roles, and consequently the reproduction of a Songgugni way of life. However, this knowledge would have at times been objectified through more discursive means, such as the intense construction of dolmens⁶⁵ which took place periodically⁶⁶ throughout the MBA

⁶⁵ If we consider the ratio of burials to dwellings identified at key Songgugni culture sites in the middle to lower Geum River region, it becomes possible to gain some understanding of the intense nature of dolmen construction undertaken in the Yongdam complex. At the site of Songgugni, 57 dwellings and 40 burials (including 27 from the Namsanri burial ground which lies 2.5 km from the settlement) were excavated (Jung 1991) while at Gwanchangni, 18 burials were identified along with 147 dwellings (KUM 2001). On the other hand, a total of 10 dwellings and 103 dolmen burials were identified for the MBA in the Yongdam complex. Therefore, even if factors such as poor settlement preservation and the possibility of future settlement discoveries, and the issue of burial ground life-span are taken into account, the sheer number of dolmen burials (compared to dwellings) found in the Yongdam complex seems suggest that this dolmen construction in the early MBA was intensely carried out.

⁶⁶ Based on the intense nature of construction, it may be possible to suggest that dolmen construction would have taken place periodically in the Yongdam complex, using general estimates of settlement population, capstone weight and dolmen numbers. Settlement population can be estimated from Nongsan, which represents the only ‘complete’ village to have been excavated in the study area. Even assuming that all structures found are contemporary and were dwellings representing a family unit that could provide around four able-bodied male adults (male adults are estimated as the experimental projects of

in the Yongdam complex.

That funerary events may act as a mechanism of social reproduction is a theme which has been explored in depth in the context of the British Neolithic and Bronze Age (e.g. Barrett 1990; 1994; Parker Pearson 1993), as well as other contexts (e.g. J. I. Kim 2001; Miller and Tilley 1984; Parker Pearson 1982; Shanks and Tilley 1982). In these studies, the focus of inquiry has generally been on the way in which the dead play an active role in reaffirming or obfuscating social relations (e.g. Shanks and Tilley 1982) or how the actual practices of funerary ritual may act to reproduce certain understandings of the world (e.g. Barrett 1994; Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina 1998). The latter is a theme which is explored in this thesis as well.

But in many cases, funerary events also happen to be large-scale projects of construction. Such large-scale funerary projects have generally been understood in terms of social power (Trigger 1990; Renfrew 1973; 1984) or political expression (Leach 1983), and therefore discussions have tended to focus on labour force organisation and management (Cavallaro and Shimada 1988) or

dolmen capstone transportation has only been done with men), we can only assume a labour force of around 32 able-bodied adults for the Nongsan settlement. But even this generous estimate barely covers the amount of labour needed for moving an average size capstone (3 tonnes) which would come out as 30 adults, based on the guideline of 10 adults per ton (Ha and Kim 2001). Taking into account the fact that the entire project of dolmen construction would have required even more labour, it appears possible, therefore, to say that several settlement communities would have participated in the construction of a dolmen. As mentioned previously, sites of the Yongdam complex cluster around the Anja River to the north and Jungja River to the south. If we look at the Jungja River area, where the Nongsan settlement is located, four burial grounds and two settlements (and the possible trace another settlement) have been identified within an area of around ten square kilometres. Thus, it would not be impossible to assume that all three communities would have come together in dolmen construction, which in turn means that each dolmen would have represented an event of construction that all members in this area had participated in. Consequently, if we divide the time span of the Phase II and III (I combine the time period of Phase II and III and count the number of all dolmens constructed in this period to gain a higher resolution of the frequency of dolmen construction) which is around 400 years, by the number of dolmens (63: it should be noted that this number does not take into account the non-dolmen burials which would have been constructed in Phase III), it is possible to estimate that dolmens were constructed at least once a decade (the estimate comes out as once every 6.35 years), thus making it possible to consider them as 'periodic' events.

labour cost estimates (Abrams and Bolland 1999). However, funerary architecture may also be approached in terms of the experiences facilitated by the practices of construction. In her work on British long barrows, McFadyen (2006) has proposed that the act of 'building' be considered a practice in its own right; that architecture be regarded not just as a technology of engineering or a technology of social organisation or as a physical structure, but also as an act of construction. It is based on this idea of 'architecture as construction' that we can begin to consider how as a large-scale construction project, an event of dolmen construction may have facilitated the reproduction of a Songgugni way of life by objectifying the understanding of 'there being a role for everyone'.

A key facet of any large-scale construction project is the number of different tasks involved. A flowchart of the tasks that would have been involved in dolmen construction is presented in Figure 6.18. It is likely that some individuals were given relatively specialized tasks while other may have had to undertake several different tasks. Rivalry, discontentment and negotiation may have featured in the dividing of tasks, and in doing these tasks, some may have worked harder than others, and others less. Coming together to construct a dolmen was, in a way, a microcosm of Songgugni life, and therefore the experiences of communal dolmen construction could have acted as a lens through which the everyday experiences of communal production could be objectified. The completion of a dolmen burial through the division of, and commitment to, certain tasks would have brought about the knowledge that this way – and by extension, this *way of life* – worked, and drawing upon this experience, individuals, as strategic actors (Giddens 1979), would have reproduced that way of life in everyday practice. In addition, it is possible to suggest that every new project of dolmen construction would have required the renegotiation of tasks, as with the passing of time, some community members would have become adults, while others passed away. And amongst this renegotiation of tasks, the renegotiation of roles in everyday life could have also taken place. Finally, this notion that dolmen construction was a means of making discursive the knowledge that a commitment to social roles made one ontologically secure – the ideology which insured the successful

reproduction of a Songgugni way of life – provides the starting point for understanding why, in particular, dolmen construction was undertaken in such an intensive way in the Yongdam complex.⁶⁷

As was mentioned earlier, the non-dolmen burials used in the core areas of the Songgugni culture require considerably less in terms of construction labour than dolmen burials. Therefore, it is questionable whether the construction practices associated with Songgugni type burials would have been able to provide an arena in which the ideology of there being social roles for everyone could be successfully objectified and reproduced. Of course, mortuary events are not the only context in which knowledge of the world could have been made discursive. The existence of wooden irrigation channels and man-made water reservoirs has been identified for the MBA at the sites of Mugeodong Okhyun (S. G. Lee *et al.* 1999) and Nonsan Majeonri (KUCPRI 2004). Thus, it may be suggested that, as large-scale events – which, as in the case of maintaining irrigation channels, would have had to have been undertaken periodically – construction projects associated with wet-rice farming may have served a similar role to dolmen construction. It could also have been that in the Songgugni core area, where, compared to the Yongdam complex, social differentiation appears to have taken place at a greater speed and to a greater extent, the everyday practices of village living with the reality of increasing social differentiation may have been enough to successfully reproduce the ideology of social roles. As such, it can be suggested that the mechanisms by which a Songgugni way of life could be reproduced was contingent upon the specific conditions in which communities found themselves. It may be that in the Yongdam complex, where environmental conditions do not appear to have been favourable to wet-rice farming, and where social differentiation in the early MBA does not appear to have been significant enough to clearly manifest itself in the dwelling or burial evidence, it was the event of dolmen construction and use which provided the ideal means by which the notion

⁶⁷ It was noted earlier that 10 dwellings and 103 dolmens have been identified for the MBA of the Yongdam complex, in contrast to the 57 dwellings and 40 burials found in and around Songgugni and 147 dwellings and 18 burials found at Gwanchangni.

of 'social roles for everyone' could be reproduced. In other words, although the presence of dolmen burials itself may be attributed to the indigenous tradition of the research area, the intensive nature of dolmen construction observed in the Yongdam complex in the early MBA may be because it was well-suited as a mechanism of social reproduction, given the environmental, economic and social conditions of the area.

6.4.2. Constructing lineages

If the social outcome of dolmen construction was the reproduction of a Songgugni way of life in the Yongdam complex, its material outcome was the linear clusters of dolmens themselves. Then how may these dolmens be understood within the context of a Songgugni way of life? First of all, it was identified that the majority of linear dolmen clusters in the Yongdam complex were the result of a developmental sequence that was deliberately linear (■→■→■), unlike the earliest dolmen clusters from the Yeouigok A-I South Group which had been formed by connecting two pre-existing dolmens(■→■←■). It was therefore suggested that the later dolmen lines embodied notions not just of establishing links, but also of establishing origins and from there, establishing genealogical sequences. In addition, it was further maintained that this genealogical knowledge was reproduced through the practices of conjoining dolmens in a line, as well as the practices of mourning taking place at these linear conjoined burials. This is because both sets of practices, as structured by the dolmen architecture, would have led to visual experiences which reaffirmed the sequence of the dead who had gone before.

The burials of the core region of the Songgurkri culture, on the other hand, show a different pattern of organisation. At some cemeteries, such as Songgugni (K. S. Kim 1998) or Gajungri (Aramichi 1959) it was possible to observe that the burials were constructed in a row, albeit not attached like the dolmen burials of the Yongdam complex. However, at other cemeteries, such as Oseokni (N. S. Lee

1995) or Sanuri (N. S. Lee 1999), burials were organised in a chaotic fashion, with no common axis or identifiable pattern, although it has been suggested that some burials appear to form clusters of three (S. O. Kim 2001). The interpretation given for this difference in cemetery organisation has been that the former represent 'elite' burial grounds, while the latter were burial grounds used by the non-elite (S. O. Kim 2001; K. S. Kim 1994). I would suggest that a more cautious way of considering this issue would be to follow the approach adopted by Mizoguchi (2005) in interpreting a similar dichotomy identified among Japanese Yayoi jar burials. In discussing how some Yayoi jar burials are organised in a linear fashion, while others are not, Mizoguchi utilises Sahlins' idea that there exist two distinct modes of time/history reckoning: deep and genealogical or shallow and habitual. Based on this, it is argued that the differentiated organisation of jar burials in the Yayoi period may have resulted from emerging social stratification which led some groups to be conscious of genealogical depth, and therefore have 'history', while others did not. If we transfer this understanding back to the Korean MBA, it becomes possible to suggest that the differential organisation of burials identified at different cemeteries in the Songgugni core area may have to do with the stratification of society which led to some social groups 'having histories', while others did not. In the Youngdam complex, however, it appears that all social groups in the early MBA – or at least those represented by dolmen burials – maintained notions of genealogy. How may we account for this?

It must firstly be stressed that this mode of constructing genealogies in the ground is generally not representative of the 'indigenous' dolmen burial tradition which existed outside the Songgugni core area. Indeed, many of the MBA dolmen cemeteries in south-eastern and south-western Korean illustrate a 'clustering', rather than a 'linear' mode of burial organisation (Figure 6.19). In addition, even when dolmen burials are organised in a line, they may actually lie side by side, rather than along the long-axis of the burial chamber (e.g. Daegokri Dorong). This indicates that the linear mode of conjoining dolmens observed in the early MBA of the Yongdam complex was strategic and deliberate.

Secondly, it must be noted that while the construction of linear conjoined dolmens has been identified at several other MBA cemeteries in the southern regions of Korea (S. O. Kim 2006a; S. G. Lee 2006), it is only in the Yongdam complex and in the neighbouring Hwang River region, at the site of Geochang Sanpo (Lim *et al.* 1987), that we see multiple conjoined dolmen lines within a burial ground. Both of these regions are located in the uppermost reaches of their respective rivers and are characterised by relatively narrow valleys and narrow alluvial plains. The farmland in these two areas is relevantly poor, compared to that of the middle and lower reaches of the Geum and Hwang rivers, (ASIS 2007) (Figure 6. 20). It may therefore be suggested that the intensive construction of conjoined dolmen lines in these areas must be understood in association with the establishment a Songgugni way of life in these particular economic (i.e. 'marginal') conditions. How this intensive nature of dolmen construction and the resulting conjoined dolmen lines may have facilitated the reproduction of the Songgugni culture in these areas will now be discussed.

The reason that establishing genealogies in the ground became important with the advent of a Songgugni way of life in this region may be considered in connection with the fate of the extended family. It is generally accepted that in the EBA, it was the extended family, represented by one or several longhouses, which was the basic unit of production (Miyajato pers. comm.). In this context, ties between extended family members living, producing and consuming under the same roof was confirmed on a day-to-day level in terms of everyday practices. However, as was discussed earlier, it can be suggested that the MBA saw the division of the extended family into smaller residence units, and the reorganisation of these separate units – often suggested as representing the 'nuclear family' within the Korean literature (e.g. Ahn 2006) – into a wider system of production, consumption and distribution which was the settlement. This would have meant that in the MBA, the extended family was no longer a physical entity as represented by the residence. It can also be suggested that, although the extended family would have maintained some reality as a social unit in the MBA, the degree to which it was reproduced in day-to-day practices in this period may

have been considerably reduced. In this context, other means of reproducing the ties between the extended family may have been needed, and one way in which this could have been done is by objectifying the reality of such kinship ties through the construction of conjoined lines of dolmens.

A similar scenario in which the transition from multi-family to single family residences was accompanied by the objectification of social ties in a mortuary context has been observed for the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in the Netherlands. Fokkens (2003) has noted how the longhouses of the Late Bronze Age become much smaller in size in the Early Iron Age, and how this is accompanied by a transition from tomb burials, possibly representing the head of the local community, to urn burials in which the dead of the community come to be buried together in communal cemeteries. This new mode of communal burial, it is argued, was a means of accentuating the unity of the local community at a time when the traditional bonds of society were disappearing in conjunction with the fragmentation of the extended family longhouse.

It may be, therefore, that in the early MBA, the conjoining of dolmens – non-directional at first, but ultimately in a linear sequence – provided an ideal and necessary stage in which kinship ties and genealogy could be experienced through ritual practice. Whether this need to objectify such ties was the primary motive behind the construction of such linear cluster dolmens is unclear; as I have discussed earlier following Barrett (2005; 2006a; 2006b), it may be argued the intentions behind events which took place in the past lie beyond the scope of our archaeological inquiry. However, equally important is the fact that, once constructed, the material conditions of linear conjoined dolmens would have been inhabited by ‘fields’ of social practice (Barrett 2001) which generated the experiences reconstructed in Section 6.3 – experiences which would have acted to make discursive kinship ties which lay beyond the residence unit.

Of course, it must be acknowledged that the interpretation presented above is based on the assumption that the relationship between those interred in the same cluster was one of kinship within an extended family and not, for

example, that of a husband and wife. Unfortunately, the absence of skeletal evidence makes it difficult to explore this issue any further. Attempts have been made to infer sex and age from grave good assemblages and burial chamber size in some MBA burial contexts (e.g. S. O. Kim 2001), but again, the lack of skeletal evidence to substantiate these associations makes it unlikely that these approaches can be useful in uncovering the relationship between those interred in the conjoined dolmens of the Yongdam complex. However, it should be noted here that it is in keeping with the general consensus of Korean Bronze Age archaeology to posit such a kinship relationship between the burials of conjoined dolmens. Indeed, S. O. Kim (2006b: 56) has similarly suggested that conjoined dolmen lines, generally consisting of three to five dolmen burials, may represent the extended family, which in this period of the early MBA, came to be divided into around three separate residence units.

The reason why the construction of such conjoined dolmen lines and the commitment to establishing genealogical links was so marked in the Jinan and Upper Hwang River region may be found in comparisons which can be made with the burials of the Songgugni core area. As was noted earlier, the majority of burials from this area were organised in such a way that make it difficult to suggest notions of origins and kinship sequences; it is only in the so-called 'elite' cemeteries that burials which may have embodied genealogies may be observed. Given that establishing kinship links through the conjoined dolmens was regarded above as a means of making references to a social unit – the extended family – the reality of which had diminished with the advent of the MBA, it can be suggested that in the Songgugni core area, the majority of the population no longer felt compelled to maintain the idea of the extended family in a mortuary context. This may have to do with the nature of social and economic life in which an allegiance to the settlement, such as Gwanchagni (see pp.120-21) for a brief description of the site), existed foremost in the actions and minds of MBA individuals. On the other hand, it may be that in the Jinan and the Upper Hwang River region, the conditions of the land resulted in MBA settlements being more limited in scale, as can be seen at Nongsan in the Yongdam complex and at the Daeyari settlement (Lim

et al. 1987) in the Upper Hwang River region. It may perhaps be that these smaller-scale settlements allowed the extended family to be more evident in daily life, as opposed to large-scale settlements of the Songgugni core area where dwellings could be up to 150 in number (e.g. Gwanchangni), and that that is why the extended family continued to be referenced through conjoined dolmen burials.

It may finally be suggested that wide-spread use of linear conjoined dolmens in the Yongdam complex may have actually presented an obstacle for social differentiation in this region. The differentiation of mortuary practices identified in the Songgugni core area indicates the emergence of contradictions⁶⁸ within a Songgugni way of life, in which certain social roles began to gain authority in their own right and came to be used as a means of obtaining unequal access to resources.⁶⁹ According to Sahlins (1985), the forming of lineages was one way in which this was legitimised. It can be suggested that a similar means of reproducing social differentiation was adopted in the Songgugni core area, as evidenced by the cemeteries with linear burial organisation. In terms of the Yongdam complex, social differentiation cannot be observed from the settlement evidence that we have at hand,⁷⁰ and the common use of linear conjoined dolmens may be regarded as a feature of this lack of social differentiation. Moreover, it can be argued that this shared tradition of linear conjoined dolmens in the Yongdam complex would have made it difficult for any particular group to use 'genealogical history' as a means of setting themselves aside from the rest of the community, or to legitimise any claims to authority, as can be suggested for the Songgugni core area or Kyushu in the Middle Yayoi period (Mizoguchi 2005). Thus, in the Yongdam complex, attempts to differentiate within a funerary context

⁶⁸ Here, I adopt Giddens' definition of the concept which sees social contradiction as an '*opposition or disjunction of structural principles of social systems, where those principles operate in terms of each other but at the same time contravene one another*' (Giddens 1979: 141).

⁶⁹ The conditions which may lead to this are explored by Fried (1967: 191-226) and alternative understandings are presented by Friedman (1998).

⁷⁰ Admittedly, this settlement evidence is sparse. It is to be hoped that future excavations of the area which lies above the waterline of the dam, and which therefore was not part of the 1995-2000 excavations, will provide more settlement evidence for the Yongdam complex, as it is along these hill slopes that MBA settlements are most likely to be found.

may have taken place in other ways. We will conclude this chapter by considering one of these possibilities.

The dolmens of Yeouigok A-II, consisting of one line of three conjoined dolmens and two Phase III (late MBA) dolmens, have been interpreted as the burials of an elite group (see Figure 6.21). All five dolmens yielded large amounts of ritual debris, but more interestingly, the first two dolmens of the dolmen line were covered with an earthen mound upon which a capstone was erected (Figure 6.22). The presence of this additional structure has usually been understood in terms of the 'elite' nature of dolmens (e.g. S. O. Kim 2003b). However, these earthen mounds could also be understood as representing an attempt by a group to objectify their social position *vis-à-vis* the rest of the community in the context of the Yongdam complex in which all groups represented in the burial grounds 'had histories'. With regard to whether building earthen mounds beneath dolmen capstones would have had the same power to differentiate or legitimise authority as the construction of genealogies in the ground would have had, the former represents a physical accentuation of shared funerary architecture, while the latter represents the presence – as opposed to absence – of history. Therefore, it would not be implausible to suggest that the former did not have the efficacy of the latter. Consequently, the possibility that linear cluster dolmens also had a role in maintaining the ethos of communal production and communal redistribution in the MBA of the Yongdam complex can also be considered.

It must also be noted that, although we have focused on the ways in which dolmen burials may have contributed to the reproduction of society within a funerary context, this reproductive role would have also continued within the context of everyday life. We must therefore consider the ways in which this reproductive role was maintained in the intervening years between events of dolmen construction which, as discussed in earlier (p.132-3), would have been, on average, seven years. First of all, based on the fact that the MBA cemeteries of the Yongdam complex are located along the alluvial plains of the Geum and its tributaries, it is possible to suggest that community members, in their day-to-day

movements along the riverbanks,⁷¹ would have recognised the burials and have been reminded of the notions of genealogy and ancestors they projected. In addition, we may also consider the burials of Yeouigok A-I, which are situated next to a contemporary field system. The proximity of the cemetery and the field system again makes it possible to suggest that the burials would have been observed, and the social meanings they generated experienced, within the context of everyday subsistence production.

The two wooden trackways which lead to the dolmens of Yeouigok cemetery A-I provide further insight into the ways in which the funerary realm was intertwined with the lives of the living in a non-funerary context. Each trackway consists of a pair of wooden rails along which the dolmen capstones were transported. Due to the acidic conditions of the soil in this region, it is highly unlikely that the wooden rails could have been kept intact during the intervals of dolmen construction. However, excavation has yielded evidence which shows that these trackways did not deviate from their original routes. In other words, it is possible to suggest that the upkeep of the trackways continued to take place – that they were continuously maintained (Kim and Lee 2001: 372) – even in the years that dolmen construction did not. Consequently, it may be that some of the practices and experiences associated with dolmen construction discussed earlier (see p. 139), as well as opportunities for social negotiation, continued beyond the realm of the funerary event (i.e. in events associated with the upkeep of the trackways). It is also possible, of course, that the wooden rails were left to rot and only refurbished during an event of dolmen construction. We can argue, however, that even in this case, community members would have maintained an awareness of the existence and location of the trackway itself. This is evidenced by the way in which the western boundary of the field system at Yeouigok A-I goes up to, but does not intrude upon, the features of the wooden trackway. This again indicates that some of the meanings associated with the maintaining of the trackways, and

⁷¹ Given the terrain of the region, the riverbanks would have provided an important route of movement throughout the case study area.

indeed the construction of dolmens which utilised these trackways, would have been remembered.

It was in this process of reproducing and maintaining a Songgugni way of life, through the construction and use of linear conjoined dolmens, as well as other practices, that the social and economic conditions necessary for the emergence of social complexity in the Yongdam complex were established. One element of this social complexity which emerged in the late MBA was the use of diverse burial forms, comprising both dolmen and non-dolmen burials. The following chapter will examine the way in which strategies of social differentiation may have been performed within the context of funerary activities in the late MBA.

Chapter 7. Performing social differentiation: **The dolmen and non-dolmen burials of the late MBA**

7.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the early MBA linear conjoined dolmens, which were approached primarily as a form of architecture. The investigation focussed on the ways in which the architectural properties of the dolmens structured the movement and gazes of those participating in practices of funerary construction and use. Following a consideration of the possible experiences emerging from these practices, it was proposed that in their construction and use, Phase II linear conjoined dolmens helped to facilitate the reproduction of the Songgugni culture in the Yongdam complex during the early MBA

The linear conjoined dolmens were followed, in the late MBA (fifth to fourth century BC) by other forms of burial, namely round platform dolmens, stone cist burials and earth cut burials (Figure 7.1).⁷² This has been observed at four cemeteries in the research area: Yeouigok, Mangduk, Mogok and Sujwadong (Figure 7.2).⁷³ The majority of these late MBA burials (hereafter referred to as ‘Phase III burials’) appear to have entailed a significant reduction in labour investment compared to the earlier linear conjoined dolmens, both in terms of effort expended in their construction and in terms of the grave goods deposited. It has therefore been suggested that the Phase III burials represent the dissolution of late MBA society in the Yongdam complex (S. O. Kim 2003a). However, not only is it problematic to establish such casual links between funerary evidence and past society (an in-depth discussion of this issue was presented in Chapter 2), this

⁷² Jar burials also make an appearance in this period. However, as they are found in a settlement context, rather than within burial grounds, they will not be considered in this thesis. This will also be the case for the three stone cist burials from Yeouigok C

⁷³ A list of the Phase III burials from the four sites, a plan of each site, the structural components of burials, the artefact assemblage and the object deposition patterns are presented in the Appendices.

interpretation pays little attention to what is most striking about the Phase III burial evidence – the diverse nature of the funerary architecture. A more productive way of understanding late MBA burial activity may be, therefore, to consider the actual practices associated with the construction and use of Phase III burials, as it is through an understanding of these practices that the social consequences of using such different burials in the late MBA may be explored. Moreover, it is when the burial evidence is viewed as a part of the material conditions which structured past human experience, rather than as the mere ‘fossil records’ of past processes (following Barrett 1994), that a better understanding of late MBA society in the Yongdam complex may be achieved.

In the first section of this chapter, we will briefly examine these Phase III burials in terms of their origins and the temporal context in which they appeared in the Jinan region. In doing so, it will be argued that the adoption of new burial forms in the late MBA of the Yongdam complex cannot simply be attributed to wider cultural forces (i.e. the spread of the Songgugni culture throughout the southern regions of the peninsula), but rather, must be understood as resulting from deliberate choices made by Yongdam communities within the specific social context of the late MBA.

The Phase III burials of the Yongdam complex are positioned so that they surround the attached dolmen lines of the early MBA, as can best be observed at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I (Figure 7.3). This reference to the earlier dolmens makes the use of new burial forms in the late MBA more intriguing, as the adoption of round platform detached dolmens, stone cist burials and earth cut burials seems to suggest, in essence, an intention to *differentiate* from the earlier tradition of linear conjoined dolmens. While the specific motivation behind the use of such new burial forms may be difficult to understand, it is, however, possible to consider what it would have meant – in terms of practice and experience – to construct and use these burials, and how this experience would have been different from that involving the Phase II linear conjoined dolmens. The second section of this chapter will therefore begin with a comparative

analysis of Phase II and III burial architecture; from this we consider how the structural properties of the latter may have brought about changes in construction practice in the late MBA. In addition to this, the mortuary practices of Phase II and III burials will also be examined, making it possible to discuss the nature of late MBA mortuary ritual *vis-à-vis* that which came before. It should be mentioned that this undertaking will also allow us to supplement our understanding of linear conjoined dolmens, adding to the discussion of their architectural aspects outlined in the previous chapter.

As was mentioned above, Phase III burial forms are diverse in nature, and it is possible to suggest that this diversity may reflect active attempts to make distinctions between those using these different burials. Therefore, in the third section of this chapter, we will examine the way in which different Phase III burials appear at cemeteries in the Yongdam complex, and consider the different architectural properties of these burial types. In doing so, it will be possible to discuss how funerary monuments may have been used by late MBA communities in the objectification and reproduction of social differences – how they provided a theatre in which performances of social differentiation could take place.

Finally, in the fourth section of this chapter, we will try to consider the social conditions in which this new, late MBA burial tradition came to be established in the Yongdam complex. Unfortunately, the limited and incomplete nature of the settlement data means that little is known about the social, economic or political circumstances of the Jinan region for the late MBA. We will therefore approach this issue by looking at other MBA cemeteries in southern Korea. By examining the different developmental trajectories of these MBA cemeteries – in particular, those in which linear conjoined dolmens are followed by diverse forms of dolmens and non-dolmen burials – it will be possible to gain a better understanding of the late MBA burial activity of the Yongdam complex and the wider social context within which it took place.

7.2. The establishment of Phase III burials

Unlike the transition from Phase I detached dolmens to Phase II linear conjoined dolmens, which can be understood as deriving from *indigenous* change in burial form, the transition to Phase III burials in the Yongdam complex involved the introduction of foreign elements from outside the Jinan region. Stone cist burials and earth cut burials, which comprise the non-dolmen component of the Phase III burial assemblage, are believed to have originated further downriver, in the core area of the Songgugni culture (i.e. the middle and lower reaches of the Geum River). As they, along with jar burials, are considered to represent the burial tradition of the Songgugni culture (S. O. Kim 2001), stone cist burials and earth cut burials are also referred to as ‘Songgugni type burials’ (e.g. S. O. Kim 2001).

A typical stone cist burial (*seokgwan-myo*) from this period consisted of a subterranean burial cist, usually around 1-2 metres long and 40-70 centimetres, which was made of multiple stone slabs placed upright to create the cist walls (see Figure 7.1). The floor of the burial cist could be left plain, paved with stone, or covered with ceramic vessel sherds, and the cist structure was sealed off using stone slabs (single or multiple layers), and in some cases, wooden planks. Some of these stone cist burials appear to have been covered with small earthen mounds, but this was not a general practice (S. O. Kim 2001). The earth cut burial (*togwang-myo*), on the other hand, consisted of a pit structure, usually around 1-2 metres long and 40-70 centimetres deep, which was dug into the earth (see Figure 7.1). The floor of the burial pit could be left plain, paved with stone, or covered with ceramic vessel sherds.⁷⁴ Some of these earth cut burials were also sealed off using stone slabs; they are known as ‘stone cover earth cut burials (*seokgye togwang-myo*).

An examination of stone cist burials and earth cut burials from the research area reveals that Yongdam communities were fairly knowledgeable about

⁷⁴ It is possible that these pit structures may have also contained wooden cists or coffins. An example of this was identified at one of the earth cut burials in the research area (Yeouigok No. 56). However, due to the poor presentation of organic remains, the presence of these additional wooden structures is difficult to confirm in most cases.

the intricacies of Songgugni burial architecture. First of all, it is possible to observe that the previously mentioned variations in Songgugni burial structure are well represented in the Yongdam complex. In addition, it can be noted that ‘double-tiered’ versions⁷⁵ of stone cist burials and earth cut burials, both of which frequently occur in the Songgugni core area (S. O. Kim 2001), are also present in the Yongdam complex (Table 7.1).

Burial Type	Burial No.	Floor			Double-tiered burial Pit	Other features
		Stone	Bare	Pottery		
Stone cist burial	No. 6	■				
	No. 7		■			Earthen mound
	No. 8	■				
	No. 9		■			Earthen mound
	No. 37		■			
	No. 51		■			
	No. 52		■		■	Square stone pavement
	No. 53		■		■	Square stone pavement
	No. 55		■		■	Oval upper burial pit
	No. 57		■			
Earth cut burial	No. 13	■			■	Possible used of wooden cover
	No. 54			■		
	No. 56		■		■	Possible use of wooden coffin

Table 7.1. Architectural features of Yeouigok A-I Phase III stone cist and earth cut burials.

⁷⁵ The primary burial structure is erected in the lower level of the double-tiered pit and covered with stone slabs. The upper level is then filled with stones, earth or even left empty, after which it is covered with stone slabs.

Based on this, it seems highly unlikely that the appearance of stone cist burials and earth cut burials in the Yongdam complex was simply a matter of cultural diffusion, whereby ideas emanating from the Songgugni core region were passively adopted. Rather, it can be argued that the use of these new burial types was the result of *strategic adoption* by Yongdam communities who were clearly aware of, and chose to reproduce, the various permutations of Songgugni burial architecture. The fact that Songgugni type burials only came to be used in the late MBA, centuries after they would have been introduced into the Yongdam complex with other elements of the Songgugni culture, further attests to the deliberate nature of their adoption, as does the way in which these Songgugni type burials were further embellished with distinctly ‘indigenous’ architectural components derived from dolmen burials (this strategic mixing of indigenous and foreign elements is discussed in detail in Section 7.4).

The late MBA in the Yongdam complex also witnessed the appearance of a new form of dolmen burial: the detached dolmen with a round stone cairn (see Figure 7.1). Unlike the Songgugni type burials of this period, the round platform dolmen appears to have been an indigenous development. What is significant, however, is the fact that this new form of dolmen made its appearance around the time that Songgugni type burials also came to be used in the Yongdam complex (S. O. Kim 2006a)

It therefore appears that the use of diverse burial forms in the late MBA – of stone cist burials, earth cut burial and detached dolmens with round stone cairns – was a deliberate act, representing the strategic choices made by Yongdam communities. In order to consider what may have generated this change in burial tradition, we must first gain a better understanding of the nature of this change. Therefore, we will now examine the reality of late MBA burial activity, *vis-à-vis* that which came before, by comparing the ritual practices of construction and deposition observed at Phase II with the Phase III burials.

7.3. Transformations in mortuary practice

Chesson (2001b: 3) has recently proposed four main ‘categories of information’ through which mortuary practices may manifest themselves in the archaeological record: 1) the processing and elaboration of the remains of the deceased by the living, 2) the deposition of material culture with the deceased by the living, 3) the nature and scale of funerary monuments, and 4) the differing patterns of skeletal remains, funerary monuments, and material culture associated with primary and secondary mortuary practices. While the nature of preservation at sites in the Yongdam complex does not easily allow the identification of either primary/secondary mortuary practices or the treatment of the deceased, practices of monument construction and object deposition may indeed be observed through our data.

7.3.1. The construction of burials

In the previous chapter, we considered the construction of linear conjoined dolmens and, in retracing the process by which these dolmens came to be built, we were able to explore the way that certain stages of construction may have acted to structure communal experiences of work (i.e. the performance of transporting the dolmen capstone) or communal experiences of viewing (i.e. the observation of preceding dolmens when attaching a dolmen to an existing line). The construction of Phase III burials, on the other hand, entailed a different series of actions which would have generated a fundamentally different set of experiences. It is from here that we begin our consideration of late MBA burials.

If we first examine the round platform dolmens of Phase III *vis-à-vis* the linear conjoined dolmens of Phase II, it can be observed that both forms of burial share similar architectural components – each consists of a central burial chamber surrounded by a stone cairn platform and covered with a large capstone. Indeed, it is only in the superficial shape of the stone platform that the two dolmen types

differ. This may be taken to indicate that round platform dolmens and linear conjoined dolmens shared many of the same steps in their construction and grave ritual, which in turn allows us suggest that the experiences emerging from these construction practices were shared as well. On the other hand, unlike the linear conjoined dolmens, round platform dolmens were never attached to one another (Figure 7.4). As such, key steps which would have been present in the *chaîne opératoire* of linear conjoined dolmens – most importantly, the *aligning* of burials or the *conjoining* of burials – were not present in the *chaîne opératoire* of round platform dolmens. In the previous chapter (see Chapter 6, pp.127-29), it was discussed how this practice of attaching dolmens may have involved the establishment of direct sequential links between the dead. Thus, the construction of round platform dolmens in the late MBA would have meant that the experience of establishing such links could no longer be possible.

The adoption of round platform dolmens, and therefore, the abandonment of direct sequential links between the dead, can be better understood when we situate their appearance within the wider narrative of change observed at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II where most of the round platform dolmens are found.⁷⁶ Subsequent to the construction of the North Group dolmen lines (i.e. conjoined dolmens), which represented the burial tradition of the early MBA, changes began to appear in burial practice. This is most clearly illustrated by the No. 41-42-49 burials, which are broadly contemporary to the round platform dolmens (S. O. Kim 2006a) (see Figure 7.4). Here, burial No. 41 and No. 42 were found to have been attached to the pre-existing dolmen line No. 40-39-38 in a N-S direction, clearly subverting the S-N linear conjoinment sequence which had existed prior to this (Kim and Lee 2001: 516). In addition, burial No. 41 represents one of the earliest usages of non-square platforms in dolmens, and it appears that burial No. 42 may have been deliberately built without a capstone. The latter is indicated by the layer of soil found covering the structure of burial No. 42 but beneath the structure of adjacent burial No. 49 (Kim and Lee 2001: 295). It should also be

⁷⁶ Of the seven round platform dolmens identified in the Youngdam complex, five come from Yeouigok A-I and two come from Yeouigok A-II.

mentioned that burial No. 49 is a *weiseok* type dolmen,⁷⁷ which is generally regarded to be one of the later dolmens of the Korean MBA (S. O. Kim 2006b). Thus, it may be argued that what we are seeing in these experimentations with new burial forms and in the subversion of the S-N burial sequence is an unravelling of the early MBA burial tradition. It was against this backdrop of change that round platform dolmens came to be used in the Yongdam complex, and it was within a similar context of change that Songgugni type burials came to be used, as will now be examined.

The Songgugni type burials (i.e. stone cist burials and earth cut burials) entailed a process of construction fundamentally different from that of dolmen burials.⁷⁸ The absence of certain architectural components, such as the dolmen capstone or the surrounding stone platform (see Figure 7.1),⁷⁹ indicates that certain stages were no longer present in the *chaîne opératoire* of Songgugni type burials. These include the quarrying and transportation of the capstone, the collecting of stones used in the stone platform, the actual laying down of the stone platform, and the preparation and management of the wooden rails along which the heavy capstone was moved. The absence of these stages would have meant that an event of stone cist burial construction or earth cut burial construction need not have required as many people as an event of dolmen construction. It would have also meant that practices pertaining to Songgugni type burial construction need not have been spread over the wider landscape. This is not to suggest that *fewer* people participated in Songgugni type burial construction, or that construction practices were *limited* to the cemetery and its environs – it is not entirely impossible for stones used in the burial chamber of stone cist burials to have come from afar, or for their journey to the burial ground to have passed through wide swathes of the landscape and to have been witnessed by a wide

⁷⁷ A *weisuk* type dolmen typically does not have a separate burial chamber structure and consists of a capstone which is held up by several stone pillars (Yoon 2003).

⁷⁸ The differences which exist *between* different types of Songgugni burials will be explored in Section 7.4.

⁷⁹ The two exceptions to this are stone cist burials No. 52 and 53, both of which were covered by square stone platform structures. They will be examined further in Section 7.4.

section of the community. However, considering that all archaeological interpretation can essentially be regarded an investigation into past *possibilities* (see Chapter 3, p.44), the key to interpretation would therefore be to establish what possibilities are most plausible. Given that the burial architecture clearly indicates the absence of certain steps in the construction of Songgugni type burials *vis-à-vis* dolmen burials, it is possible to maintain that performances of construction at funerary events featuring Songgugni type burials were more contained in terms of space, shorter in terms of time, and more intimate in terms of those involved. In this sense, one might be tempted to suggest that the more significant transition in burial tradition took place between dolmens and Songgugni type burials, rather than between Phase II and Phase III burials. However, as will be discussed in the following section, an examination of deposition practices shows that this is not the case – that it is indeed between burials of the early MBA and late MBA that the significant transition in burial tradition can be observed.

To summarise, it can be said that the transition from the early to late MBA in the Yongdam complex brought with it a fundamental change in funerary behaviour. First of all, sequential links between deceased members of the community, and therefore possible notions of genealogy, were no longer made manifest or perpetuated in the ground through dolmen burials. In addition, funerary construction no longer came to require the agency of the collective community with the use of Songgugni type burials. This change in funerary behaviour can be explored further by comparing practices of deposition which took place at Phase II and Phase III burials.

7.3.2. Practices of deposition

As was discussed in Chapter 5, the deposition of objects at burials in the Yongdam complex took place within a variety of different contexts. Artefacts have been found inside the burial chamber, underneath the burial chamber floor, within the burial chamber walls, on top of the burial chamber walls, and amongst the stone slabs which cover the burial chamber. Outside the burial chamber, artefacts have been found beneath the surrounding cairn structure, as well as amongst stones of the cairn structure. In the case of non-dolmen burials (i.e. those which do not have a surrounding cairn), artefacts have been found scattered around burials, or when these burials are covered by earthen mound structures, within these earthen mounds. These artefacts, found in different contexts, are a material reminder of the different ritual practices which would have taken place at an event of burial. They illustrate that deposition practices took place prior to burial construction, during burial construction, during the rites of funeral and indeed after the deceased had been laid to rest. In theory, each of these different contexts of deposition should therefore be regarded as a separate unit of analysis in examining diachronic change in deposition practices, or in comparing the nature of deposition between contemporary burial types. Unfortunately, some of the Yongdam complex cemetery sites were excavated, recorded and published in such a way that it is nigh impossible to identify the specific contexts in which the artefacts were found. This is a problem which was mentioned in Chapter 5 and will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

In the current research, deposition practices are divided into two broad categories according to the locale of practice: deposition *inside* the burial chamber and deposition *outside* the burial chamber⁸⁰. It is according to this categorisation that the following issues are considered: 1) diachronic change in the nature of object deposition taking place *inside* the burial chamber of Phase II and Phase III

⁸⁰ In dolmen burials, this would mean deposition which took place amongst the stone cairn structure, including deposition which took place before, during and after cairn construction.

burials and 2) diachronic change in the nature of object deposition taking place *outside* the burial chamber of Phase II and Phase III burials. In investigating these issues, it will be possible to illuminate the nature of Phase III deposition practices *vis-à-vis* Phase II deposition practices, and as a result, achieve a better understanding of burial practices in the late MBA. In addition, in structuring the analysis of Phase II and Phase III object deposition according to the location in which such practices took place, it will also be possible to further explore one of the key issues raised earlier in Chapter 5 (p.99). In our discussion of Phase I burials, it was suggested that objects deposited in Phase I burials may have been items central to the personhood of the deceased. However, this raised the question of why some objects were deposited inside the burial chamber, while others were not. Analysis of the Phase I data set (comprising evidence from seven dolmen burials) was inconclusive, revealing no significant difference in the nature of objects found inside and outside the burial chamber. It is therefore hoped that analysis carried out in this section will provide us with insight into the different meanings which may have been embodied in practices of depositing objects into *vis-à-vis* outside the burial chamber of the Yongdam burials.

The deposition of objects into the burial chamber

Deposition into the burial chamber of linear conjoined dolmens in the early MBA was an extremely varied practice, involving a wide range of objects (See Appendix VII for a table of all objects).⁸¹ Stone daggers and arrowheads occur most frequently within the burial chamber and account for two thirds of all such depositions. These daggers and arrowheads have been found together, separately and in association with other types of objects. These 'other' object types (which can also occur by themselves) include the stone slab with a circular indentation, flake tool, piece of worked stone material, fish net sinker, axe, tubular jade bead, polishing stone, adze, quartz, and both plain and red burnished ceramic

⁸¹ Here, I refer specifically to objects which have been found within the internal space of the burial chamber. In an attempt to differentiate these objects from those found within the fabric of the burial chamber or deposited onto the burial chamber walls (both which are discussed later on), they will also be referred to as 'grave goods' at times.

vessel parts. The diverse nature of the grave goods therefore makes it possible to suggest that, as was argued was the case for the detached dolmens of Phase I (see Chapter 5, pp.96-7), objects deposited into the burial chamber of dolmens were, above all, items closely associated with the life history of the deceased. Indeed, if this is the case, it allows us to explain the increased diversity of objects observed at early MBA linear conjoined dolmens, *vis-à-vis* late EBA dolmens, for the greater number of early MBA burials (93 as opposed to the seven burials for late EBA) would have involved a greater number of deceased individuals, and therefore a greater number of diverse life histories expressed through a wider range of objects.

At the cemeteries of Yeouigok-II and Mangduk A, where Phase III burial activity is generally represented by dolmens with round stone cairn platforms, a varied range of objects continued to be used as grave goods during the late MBA. However, at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I, where Phase III burial activity was at its most intense, grave goods deposition in the late MBA witnessed a dramatic change. Deposition into the burial chamber of Phase III burials at this site became much less complex, with daggers alone (not taking into account organic objects which would not have been preserved) being selected as grave goods (see Appendix VIII). The fact that single daggers were commonly used as grave goods at stone cist burials, earth cut burials and dolmens with round platforms makes the appropriation of these different burial forms at Yeouigok A-I – which will be considered in Section 7.4 – even more intriguing. How, then, can this emergence of single dagger burials be understood?

It appears possible to suggest, firstly, that the rationale structuring the deposition of single daggers at Yeouigok A-I Phase III burials was significantly different from that which structured object deposition at earlier burials. It may be argued that if, in the late EBA and early MBA, deposition practices had articulated and commemorated various aspects of the deceased's personhood (which is perhaps why we find a tubular jade bead with a stone dagger at JJ Anja No. 4, or a stone polishing tool with a stone dagger and arrowheads at Yeouigok A-II No. 4),

in the late MBA, it was one specific aspect of the deceased's identity – as represented by the single stone dagger – which became the centre of focus. The social consequences resulting from this new mode of deposition would have been significant: if object deposition did indeed provide a mechanism by which memories (both of the deceased and of past events associated with the deceased) were made social (see Chapter 5, p.107), the decision not to include ceramics and other stone items, whilst depositing daggers, would have meant that certain memories (i.e. memories associated with stone daggers) were continuously presented with opportunities to be shared within a mortuary context and claim their place within the annals of community history, while other memories were not. Secondly, the fact that this transition to single dagger deposition took place at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I, where late MBA burial activity was most intense, must also be considered. This aspect will be discussed further in Section 7.5 of this chapter.

In addition to a change in the nature of grave goods, the late MBA also witnessed the discontinuation of certain deposition practices taking place within the burial chamber – deposition practices which represent different stages in the sequence of funerary ritual. The first of these practices was the incorporation of objects into the fabric of the burial chamber (i.e. within the stone walls of burial chamber or beneath the floor of the burial chamber). In all, this practice was observed at 16 burials in the Yongdam complex, occurring most commonly at early MBA linear conjoined dolmens, but also at late EBA detached dolmens (see Chapter 5, p.90). The only example of this practice in the late MBA comes from Yeouigok A-II round platform dolmen No. 2. As objects deposited in this manner include whole and fragmented stone arrowheads, adzes, a *yugu* stone axe and a quern stone fragment, it may tentatively be suggested that the incorporation of these objects (which are not dissimilar in nature to those 'grave goods' found inside the burial chamber of late EBA and early MBA dolmens) into the fabric of the burial chamber may have been yet another way in which burial architecture became a repository for the memories of the deceased.

Objects came to be deposited at burials in the early MBA through yet another type of practice, namely the placement of objects on top of the outwardly jutting stones which lined the walls of the burial chamber (Figure 7.5). Observed at eight early MBA linear conjoined dolmens in the Jungja River area, this method of depositing objects appears to have come to an end with the late MBA, with only one Phase III burial, again from Yeouigok A-II (round platform dolmen No. 1), yielding evidence of this practice. If and how this mode of deposition differed from the more straightforward practice of placing grave goods into the burial chamber is difficult to ascertain at present, due to the limited nature of the data which consists of a stone dagger fragment, two pottery base fragments, and several whole and fragmented arrowheads. However, it is at least possible to suggest that, as with artefacts found within the fabric of the burial chamber, these artefacts mark a moment in the course of a funerary event in which the deposition of objects once again came to the forefront of mortuary ritual.

Finally, this period of the late MBA also saw an end to the deposition of fragmented objects as grave goods. The reason why objects may have been deliberately broken and the way in which fragmented objects could have been involved in practices of enchainment were considered in Chapter 5 (see p.105-6), where we discussed the presence of broken artefacts at the late EBA detached dolmens of Yongdam Phase I. The deposition of fragmented objects continued to take place at the linear conjoined dolmens of the early MBA,⁸² and it is from such a linear conjoined dolmen that we are provided with undeniable evidence of deliberate fragmentation: at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I it was possible to observe that a stone arrowhead had been broken into two parts, one piece of which was deposited into the burial chamber of dolmen No. 20, and the other piece outside the burial chamber of the same dolmen. As was argued in Chapter 5, the deposition of fragmented objects would have added yet another dimension to funerary rituals, since the fragments taken from these objects could have been

⁸² Fragmented daggers: Pungam No. 12, JJ Anja No. 5-2, Mangduk A No. 7. Fragmented arrowheads: Pungam No. 11, JJ Anja No. 5-1, Yeouigok A-I No. 22, 35, Yeouigok A-II No. 4. Fragmented axes: JJ Anja No. 2, Yeouigok A-I No. 35

used to establish links between the deceased and the mourners, as well as between the mourners themselves (Chapman 2000). Consequently, it was precisely this additional dimension which was lost in the late MBA when the grave goods assemblage came to be dominated by *whole* single daggers.

To summarise, it appears that the late MBA in the Yongdam complex witnessed the simplification of object deposition – both in terms of the range of objects deposited (i.e. single daggers), as well as in the number of ritual stages in which this deposition could take place. This, it can be argued, would have entailed a reduction in opportunities in which objects and their associated meanings could be considered within the context of mortuary rituals. The result of which would have been profound change in the way in which funerary events were involved in strategies of social reproduction.

Practices of deposition (II): The deposition of objects outside the burial chamber

As was observed for the late EBA detached dolmens, deposition outside the burial chamber (i.e. into the surrounding stone cairn structure) of early MBA linear conjoined dolmens involved both ceramic vessels and other objects. With regard to the latter, it is possible to note that a wide range of objects were deposited, some of which were fragmented, unfinished or even recycled. In Chapter 5, a similar diversity in objects deposited led us to suggest that, as with artefacts found within the burial chamber, artefacts found outside the burial chamber of dolmens may have been personal belongings (of the deceased or even of the mourners) which were somehow relevant to the life history of the deceased (see p.97-9). However, the rationale for depositing objects *outside* the burial chamber, as opposed to *inside* the burial chamber, could not be considered in depth due to the limited nature of the Phase I data, which came from seven burials. Fortunately, the Phase II material consists of a much broader data set (coming from a total of 86 burials), allowing us to compare deposition inside and outside the burial chamber, and identify patterns which may be meaningful.

A comparative analysis of all objects (apart from ceramic vessels) from linear conjoined dolmens reveals that deposition inside and outside the burial chamber involved similar object types (see Tables 7.2). If we consider the most frequently occurring object types, it can be observed that 50 percent of stone dagger finds (Table 7.2 top) and 49 percent of arrowhead finds occur inside the burial chamber (Table 7.2 middle). As for objects other than daggers and arrowheads, a fifth of all finds occur within the burial chamber (Table 7.2 bottom), but even in this case, stone axes, adzes, polishing tools, fishnet sinkers and ornamental beads are found both inside (albeit less frequently) and outside the burial chamber (see Appendix VIII). It is only with stone knives, all ten of which are found outside the burial chamber, that the exclusion of certain object types as grave goods can be observed.

Daggers	Whole	Fragmented	Total
Inside bc	17	2	19 (50%)
Outside bc	0	19	19 (50%)
Total	17	21	38 (100%)

Arrowheads	Whole	Fragmented	Total
Inside bc	19	9	28 (51%)
Outside bc	18	9	27 (49%)
Total	37	18	55 (100%)

Other stone objects	Whole	Fragmented	Total
Inside bc	8	12	20 (20%)
Outside bc	64	17	81 (80%)
Total	72	29	101 (100%)

Table 7.2. Deposition frequency of stone dagger (top), stone arrowheads (middle) and other stone objects (bottom) inside and outside the burial chamber of Phase II linear conjoined dolmens

On the other hand, when we look at the *nature* of artefacts found inside and outside the burial chamber of dolmens, a significant difference may be identified. Firstly, whole daggers occur only inside the burial chamber and never outside. Secondly, 60 percent of ‘other’ stone objects (i.e. apart from daggers and arrowheads) found inside the burial chamber of dolmens are fragmented, whereas only 21 percent of these ‘other’ stone objects are found in a fragmented state outside the burial chamber (Table 7.2 bottom). Interestingly, whole and fragmented stone arrowheads occur in similar frequencies inside and outside the burial chamber (see Table 7.2 middle). Finally, it can be noted that unfinished objects and recycled objects are only found outside the burial chamber (see Appendix VII and VIII).

We can therefore confirm that the deposition of objects into the burial chamber of dolmens was indeed a practice distinct from the deposition of objects into the surrounding stone cairn structure, as we can identify the exclusion of certain object categories in both practices: whole daggers are never deposited outside the burial chamber and unfinished or recycled objects are never found deposited inside the burial chamber. One possible interpretation for these different modes of deposition, proposed earlier in Chapter 5 (p.98-9), was that objects placed within the burial chamber of dolmens were the personal belongings of the deceased, while objects placed within the surrounding cairn structure were the belongings of the mourners which held memories pertaining to the deceased. However, given that parts of a fragmented arrowhead were found both inside and outside the burial chamber of Yeouigok A-I dolmen No. 21, a more cautious interpretation may be required. Indeed, it may perhaps be suggested that the difference between object deposition inside and outside the burial chamber of dolmens lies not in the objects themselves, but in the actual *rituals* of deposition which entailed different ways of depositing different object categories at different points within the architecture of the burial.

This practice of depositing objects outside the burial chamber of dolmens ceased to take place at the majority of late MBA burials in the Yongdam

complex. At the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I, only three out of the 18 ‘typical’ Phase III burials⁸³ were found to have objects deposited outside the burial chamber, one of these being a round platform dolmen (No. 33) and the other two being stone cist burials (No. 13, 37). At Mangduk A, the sole example of late MBA object deposition outside the burial chamber – an unfinished arrowhead – again comes from a round platform dolmen (No. 1). Finally, none of the late MBA burials from Mogok or Sujwadong (represented solely by stone cist burials) contain any evidence of non-ceramic object deposition outside the burial chamber. It is only at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II that Phase III burials (consisting of two detached dolmens with round stone platforms) have been found to contain a significant number of objects outside the burial chamber, which is in keeping with the rich nature of object deposition observed for this cemetery in the earlier MBA (i.e. conjoined dolmen line No. 3-4-5).

What, then, would this cessation of deposition outside the burial chamber have meant for those participating in the funerary event? If object deposition did indeed provide a mechanism by which memories became social, as has been argued above (see p.107), the absence of this practice among Phase III burials would have meant an absence of certain key opportunities in which community identity, as mediated by shared memories, could be reproduced within a context of constructing and using burials. In addition, as was similarly argued for the deposition of single whole daggers as grave goods in these late MBA burials, the lack of objects, and therefore the lack of *fragmented* objects, outside the burial chamber of dolmens would have meant that the material conditions in which practices of enchainment could take place (i.e. fragmented objects) were no longer present within the highly charged context of mortuary rituals.

As many of the Phase III burials consist of the architecturally less elaborate Songgugni type burials, it is possible to question whether this cessation of object deposition outside the burial chamber in the late MBA was a deliberate

⁸³ By ‘typical’ Phase III burials, I am excluding the *weisuk* type dolmens and transitional dolmens discussed earlier in Section 7.3.1.

act, or whether it was an inevitable consequence arising from the structural properties of the burials (i.e. the lack of a surrounding stone cairn structure into which objects could be deposited). That it was the former, rather than the latter, is evidenced by the five Phase III round platform dolmens from Yeouigok A-I: while all five dolmens have stone cairn platforms, only dolmen No. 33 was found to yield evidence of object deposition outside the burial chamber, while the remaining four dolmens (No. 14, 18, 45, 50) contained no such evidence of deposition. Moreover, the presence of ceramic vessel parts found outside all burial forms in the late MBA, including stone cist burials (Sujwadong stone cist No. 1, 2, Yeouigok A-I No. 8, 9, 37, 53, 55, 56) and earth cut burials (Yeouigok A-I No. 13, 56), clearly indicates that the lack of a surrounding stone cairn structure was no impediment to deposition outside the burial chamber.

The practice of depositing ceramic vessel parts outside the burial chamber was first considered in Chapter 5 (see pp.99-101), where it was observed taking place at late EBA burials. Although some of the vessel parts may have indeed been deposited as objects central to the personhood of the deceased, it was suggested that the majority of these vessel parts were the material remains of a different field of ritual practice, namely feasting, in addition to ceremonies of libation or offerings of food to the deceased. The wider set of data provided by burials from the early and late MBA indicates that ceramic vessel deposition continued to take place in the early MBA, representing the most frequently occurring of all deposition practices (Figure 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8). More important is the fact that in the late MBA, while the deposition of stone objects outside the burial chamber came to be abandoned for the most part, ceramic vessel deposition continued to take place, both at dolmen burials and non-dolmen burials. This seems to indicate that the deposition of ceramic vessel parts and the deposition of stone objects, which both took place outside the burial chamber, did indeed belong to different categories of ritual practice. The results of this analysis may therefore be used to support the interpretation made in Chapter 5 (p.100) – that they were parts of vessels destroyed following practices associated with the consumption of food or drink – although further substantiation is required using residue analysis.

In summary, the late MBA in the Yongdam complex witnessed, for the most part, the cessation of object deposition outside the burial chamber, the adoption of new burial forms, some of which appear to have been significantly less labour intensive compared to the earlier burials, and the selection of single daggers as grave goods. This scaling down of burial architecture and the simplification of certain mortuary practices would have meant a restriction of opportunities in which community members could participate in funerary events, either through participation in burial construction or through the sharing of memories as mediated by the objects deposited in and around the burials. Consequently, it can be suggested that in the late MBA of the Yongdam complex, funerary events became less of a communal arena in which notions of togetherness could be reproduced through the mechanisms identified in late EBA and early MBA mortuary rituals. It may be that, rather, a concern with the deceased individual came to monopolise late MBA funerary events. Indeed, it may not be a coincidence that the one funerary practice which continued unchanged into the late MBA in the Yongdam complex was the deposition of ceramic vessel parts, these vessel parts most likely deriving from rituals in which food and/or drink were used to honour the deceased.

7.4. The active appropriation of diverse burial forms in the late MBA

As was discussed above, the demise of ‘community friendly’ burials – for want of a better word – in the late MBA went hand in hand with the adoption of a diverse range of burial architecture: Phase II linear conjoined dolmens were followed by stone cist burials at the cemeteries of Mogok and Sujwadong, round platform dolmens at Yeouigok A-II, stone cist burials and round platform dolmens at Mangduk A, and stone cist burials, earth cut burials and round platform dolmens at Yeouigok A-I. The fact that linear conjoined dolmens could be followed by either stone cist burials or round platform dolmens makes it possible

to regard these two burial forms as having been broadly contemporary. The contemporality of the different Phase III burials is also widely accepted in the literature (see S. O. Kim 2003a; 2006a; 2006c). The way in which these different burial forms came to be adopted at different cemeteries in the late MBA in the Yongdam complex, and indeed the way in which different burial forms came to be used with a single cemetery location, will now be considered.

Discussion regarding the use of different Phase III burials at different cemeteries in the late MBA must begin with an examination of the intra-cemetery variation (in this case for object deposition) observed for the preceding period. The greatest disparity in early MBA deposition practices can be observed between Phase II burials of neighbouring cemeteries. For example, if we consider the neighbouring cemeteries of Gugok A and Gugok C in the Anja River area, object deposition rarely takes place inside the burial chamber at the former, but is observed in five out of seven burials at the latter. As for deposition outside the burial chamber, numerous objects – whole, broken or unfinished – were found deposited at Gugok A, while at Gugok C, deposition took place in the form of single, whole objects only (Figure 7.9). In other words, funerary practices of deposition at the cemetery of Gugok A focused predominantly on depositing objects *outside* the burial chamber of dolmens, whereas at the cemetery of Gugok C, deposition of objects *into* the burial chamber of dolmens constituted a key component of funerary ritual. At the neighbouring cemeteries of Mangduk A and Mangduk B in the Jungja River area, object deposition inside the burial chamber involved stone objects at the former, but mainly ceramic vessel parts at the latter. In addition, while there was evidence of whole, broken and unfinished objects outside the burial chamber of the linear conjoined dolmens of Mangduk A, only one such example of deposition outside the burial chamber could only be observed at Mangduk B (Figure 7.10).

As disparities in deposition practice are most marked between neighbouring cemeteries, it becomes possible to suggest that, rather than being a simple consequence of different groups using separate burials grounds (in which

case one would expect to see a similar degree of variation between all cemeteries), these contrasting practices of deposition were carried out selectively and deliberately. In other words, they were employed as an *active* means of differentiating ‘us’ from ‘them’, with groups using neighbouring burial grounds being particularly committed to making these distinctions. Indeed, while not relating to deposition practices, the way in which the linear conjoined dolmens (No. 3 and 4) of Yeouigok A-II were embellished with earthen mounds (discussed in Chapter 6, pp.141-42) may also be understood in this context – as a possible means by which those using this cemetery could set themselves apart from those using the neighbouring cemeteries of Yeouigok A-I and Yeouigok A-III.

In the late MBA, however, the ritual practice of object deposition could no longer provide a suitable arena in which the social discourse of differentiation between groups using separate burial grounds could take place. This was due to the diminished role of object deposition in late MBA funerary events (i.e. following the cessation of non-ceramic vessel deposition outside the burial chamber and the use of single daggers as grave goods), and it was within this context that different burial forms came to be used at different cemeteries in the Yongdam complex. It is therefore possible to suggest that what we are seeing in the differential use of these Phase III burials at different cemeteries is a process whereby burial architecture came to replace deposition practices as the versatile medium through which distinctions between groups using discrete burial grounds could be performed and made manifest. Unfortunately, the reason why, for example, those using the burial ground at Sujwadong came to adopt *stone cist burials*, while those at Yeouigok A-II chose to use *round platform dolmens*, is beyond the bounds of our understanding. However, one topic which can be explored further with regard to the differential use of burial forms in the late MBA of the Yongdam complex is the way in which several different Phase III burial forms came to be used within a single cemetery, as will now be considered.

Mangduk A and Yeouigok A-I are the two cemeteries in the Yongdam complex where more than one type of Phase III burial has been identified.

However, as the latter contains both a greater number and a more diverse range of Phase III burials than the former, and as the preservation of such burials was also found to be very poor at the former, our discussion concerning the use of diverse burial forms within a single cemetery in the late MBA will focus on the Phase III burials of Yeouigok A-I.

The Phase III burials of Yeouigok A-I are usually categorised into three broad types: round platform dolmens, stone cist burials and earth cut burials (e.g. Kim and Lee 2001: 515).⁸⁴ But a more detailed examination of the burial evidence reveals the presence of further structural variation among stone cist burials and earth cut burials, as is illustrated in Table 7.3.⁸⁵ This structural diversity makes meaningless the establishment of ‘stone cist burials’ and ‘earth cut burials’ as discrete categories, since the use of different building materials (i.e. the basis upon which ‘stone cist burials’ and ‘earth cut burials’ are divided into separate categories) represents but one of several ways in which non-dolmen burials at Yeouigok A-I could be differentiated. The lack of spatial differentiation between stone cist burials and earth cut burials (see Figure 7.3)⁸⁶ and the adoption of certain burial practices, such as the deliberate infilling of the burial chamber using two different types of soil, at both burial types (stone cist burial No. 51 and earth cut burial No. 13) also attests to the lack of utility in categorising burials in this way. Consequently, it may be argued that stone cist burials and earth cut burials need not be treated separately in our discussion of Phase III burial activity at Yeouigok A-I. Rather, they should be considered together as representing ‘non-dolmen burials’, the diversity of which contrasts greatly to the uniformity of the round platform dolmens.

⁸⁴ I am again excluding the *weisuk* type dolmens and transitional dolmens discussed earlier in section 7.3.1.

⁸⁵ The round platform dolmens of Yeouigok A-I are not presented here as they show little structural variation among themselves.

⁸⁶ This lack of spatial differentiation between stone cist burials and earth cut burials is also observed in the Songgugni core area. For example, three stone cist burials and two earth cut burials with stone lids were found in a row at the Songgugni cemetery (Area 51, 52), which has been interpreted as the elite burial ground for the Songgugni settlement (J. H. Kim 1998).

These Phase III non-dolmens burials indicate a significant deviation from Phase II burial practices, both in that they represent the use of new burial forms, and more importantly, in that they illustrate a diversity in burial architecture which is in stark contrast to the standardisation of the earlier linear conjoined dolmens. It has been suggested that diversification in burial practices may represent the renegotiation of social positions within an existing social order (Arnold 2001: 211). We will now examine in greater detail the nature of this diversification.

Burial type	Burial No.	Notable features	Grave good
Stone cist burial	No. 6	Oval surrounding stone platform structure	Dagger
	No. 57	N/A	Dagger
	No. 37	N/A	
	No. 51	Deliberate infill using two types of soil.	Dagger
	No. 55	N/A	
	No. 52	Square surrounding stone platform structure	
	No. 53		Dagger
	No. 7	Covered with earthen mound	
	No. 9		Dagger
	No. 8	Square surrounding stone platform structure	
Earth cut burial	No. 13	Deliberate infill using two types of soil.	
	No. 56	Oval shaped upper tier, use of wooden coffin	
	No. 54	Burial chamber floor paved with pottery shreds	Dagger

Table 7.3. Variations within stone cist burials and earth cut burials at Yeouigok A-I

What is most noticeable about the non-dolmen burials at Yeouigok A-I is that they often contain architectural elements borrowed from dolmen burials. For example, stone cist burial No. 6 was found to be surrounded by a round stone platform feature (Kim and Lee 2001: 155), while double-tiered, stone covered earth cut burial No. 56 was found to have an oval-shaped upper tier, rather than a

square-cut space as one would expect (*ibid*: 335) (Figure 7.11). It should be mentioned that both of these burials, containing round structural features, are located amongst contemporary round platform dolmens (see Figure 7.3). In addition, non-dolmen burials are also found to have architectural features borrowed from the earlier Phase II dolmens. For example, stone cist burials No. 52 and 53 were each surrounded by a square stone platform feature (Kim and Lee 2001: 325-329) (Figure 7.12) and stone cist burials No. 7 and 9 were each covered with an earthen mound⁸⁷ (Kim and Lee 2001: 159-169) (Figure 7.13). Interestingly, the non-dolmen burials which contain elements of Phase II dolmen architecture are found on either side of the Phase II South Group linear conjoined dolmens (Figure 7.14).

It can be argued from these observations that two different mechanisms were at work in the appropriation of dolmen features at non-dolmen burials in Yeouigok A-I. On the one hand, the adoption of these dolmen features would have allowed the diversification of burial architecture, which would in turn have led to the active subversion of the prevailing burial tradition – a burial tradition which, until this period of the late MBA, had maintained standardisation in burial architecture. This subversion of the prevailing burial tradition may have been closely linked with certain strategies, such as the establishment of new social identities, which were played out in the context of funerals. This is an issue which I will return to later in the chapter. On the other hand, the incorporation of dolmen features into the structure of non-dolmen burials could also have been a means by which references were made to the previous tradition of dolmen burials, which, up to that point, had dominated Bronze Age burial activity in the Yongdam complex. In other words, non-dolmen burials may be regarded as an innovative burial custom which was deliberately different from, but at the same time maintained links with, the past and present custom of dolmen burials.

Similar innovations in burial customs have often been related to the desire

⁸⁷ Earthen mounds were first used at the neighbouring cemetery of Yeouigok A-II (No. 3 and 4) in the early MBA.

to create new identities; this is a topic which has been explored, in particular, within Greek archaeology. For example, Georganas (2002) has argued that the use of stone tumuli (an uncommon burial feature for the region in which they appear) to cover cremation pyres at the cemetery of Halos in Early Iron Age Thessaly – an innovation observed only at the Halos cemetery – represented a community ‘trying to promote its individuality by detaching itself from past and contemporary traditions’ (*ibid*: 295). In the context of the Early Helladic period in Mainland Greece, Cultraro (2006) has also discussed how themes of innovation and conservatism appearing in burial architecture may represent strategies of social competition and emulation within local communities. It is therefore possible to suggest that the innovative use of non-dolmen burials at Yeouigok A-I in the late MBA may have also involved such strategies of social negotiation, in particular those pertaining to social differentiation.

Any further discussion regarding strategies of social negotiation requires, however, a better understanding of the social group(s) which operated within the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I. Unfortunately, this is difficult to achieve due to the lack of skeletal evidence, the homogenous nature of grave goods and the paucity of non-mortuary evidence from which the social conditions of the late MBA in the Yongdam complex can be deduced. We must therefore consider the social implications of Yeouigok A-I Phase III burial practices (i.e. the contemporary use of dolmen and non-dolmen burials) in a different way, namely by situating these practices within the wider context of burial practices identified at other cemeteries of the ‘stone platform dolmen’ cultural tradition. This will allow us to see if similar burial practices were taking place elsewhere, and if so, in what social conditions. However, before we do this, we will briefly consider one more issue: did the use of non-dolmen burials *vis-à-vis* dolmen burials at Yeouigok A-I represent the earliest appearance of differentiating practices within the confines of a shared burial ground, or was it simply a more visible manifestation of previously existing distinctions (i.e. in the form of separate conjoined dolmens lines) in early MBA cemeteries?

The use of multiple conjoined dolmen lines can be observed seven out of eleven burial grounds dating to the early MBA. Why some communities in the Yongdam complex chose to construct separate dolmens lines within a shared burial ground (Figure 7.15), while others chose to maintain a single line of dolmens (Figure 7.16) is a difficult question to answer. The poor preservation of human remains has meant that scientific methods cannot be used to investigate the nature of kinship relationships between those buried, and not buried, within the same conjoined dolmen line. The lack of skeletal evidence also contributes to this problem by making it difficult to consider issues of age and gender. We are therefore left to explore this issue of multiple conjoined dolmen lines and what they meant (i.e. were separate dolmen lines used as a means of objectifying social distinctions within the community?) through other avenues of research, such as the comparative analysis of mortuary practices.

As was discussed earlier (see p.161), it is difficult to observe any significant difference in the deposition practices carried out at separate lines of linear conjoined dolmens within a single burial ground. In fact, the artefact evidence points more strongly towards the *sharing* of mortuary practices between separate dolmen lines. For example, at the cemetery of Gugok A, ceramic vessel bases with holes drilled in the centre were found deposited within the stone platform structure of burials No.1-1 and 1-3 and burials No. 5-1 and 5-2, which belong, respectively, to two separate lines of conjoined dolmens (see Figure 7.8). This sharing of mortuary practices is also evident in the treatment of the deceased. In one of the few examples where mortuary practices not involving object deposition could be observed at a Yongdam complex burial, it was possible to identify that charcoal was used to line the chamber of Gugok A burials No. 1-1, 1-2 and 5-3, which again belong to two separate dolmen lines. In each case, the burial chamber was found to be a stone cist structure large enough to contain a supine interment,⁸⁸ and it was along the inner walls of the stone cist that the

⁸⁸ GG A No. 1-1: 174 x 68 x 32 cm; GG A No. 1-2: 162 x 62 x 21 cm; GG A No. 5-3: 166 x 50 x 32 cm.

charcoal was found.⁸⁹ Consequently, as differences in mortuary practices are not observed between the separate lines of conjoined dolmens, the use of non-dolmen burials in the late MBA does indeed appear to represent the earliest attempt at differentiation within the confines of a shared burial ground in the Yongdam complex.

7.5. Burial practices and the social reality of the Yongdam complex in the late MBA

Based on the above discussion, two main features of Phase III burial activity can be identified which may be relevant to understanding the social reality of the late MBA in the Yongdam complex. The first is the simplification of deposition practices and, in particular, the use of single daggers as grave goods. The second is the use of diverse burials forms (comprising both dolmen and non-dolmen burials) within a single burial ground at certain cemeteries in the Yongdam complex and, in particular, the way in which elements of dolmen architecture were incorporated into non-dolmen burials. It is this second aspect of Yongdam Phase III burial activity which we will first try to situate within the wider regional context.

7.5.1. Situating Yongdam Phase III burial practices in a wider regional context

The burials of the Yongdam complex belong to a wider Bronze Age burial tradition which is characterised by the distinctive use of stone cairn platform

⁸⁹ It is also of interest to note that all three burials were found to contain human remains near the southern end of each cist. However, as human remains have also been found at burial No. 2-1 (which contains no charcoal), it is possible to suggest that the presence of human remains in the charcoal lined burials may be due to the general conditions of preservation at this site, rather than deriving from any practices pertaining to the treatment of the deceased which went hand in hand with the use of charcoal.

dolmens; this 'stone platform dolmen tradition' is observed at cemeteries allocated along the Nam and Hwang Rivers, the lower reaches of the Nakdong River, the upper reaches of the Geum River, and the Daegu Basin are (S. O. Kim 2006a; S. G. Lee 2006a) (Figure 7.17). A recent study of this burial tradition has revealed a developmental sequence similar to that identified for the burials of the Yongdam complex (S. O. Kim 2006a). In other words, it is possible to observe, within the wider region, a transition from detached dolmens with square stone platforms to conjoined lines of three to five dolmens, and from this, a transition to Songgugni type burials and detached dolmens with smaller square/round stone platforms. With regard to the late MBA of this burial tradition, it has also been possible to identify the co-existence of dolmen and non-dolmen burials, the construction of round platform dolmens near earlier square platform dolmens, and the use of Songgugni type burials around earlier square platform dolmens (S. O. Kim 2006a: 76-78), all of which can provide valuable insight into understanding the nature of late MBA burial activity in the Yongdam complex.

If we look at the cemetery of Yigeumdong in Sacheon (KNARI 2001) it is possible to identify the use of detached round/square platform dolmens and Songgugni type burials (Group B1 and B2) subsequent to the establishment of the linear conjoined dolmens (Group C) (Figure 7.18). However, while this sequence of burial use at Yigeumdong may be similar to that identified for Yeouigok A-I, the relationship between dolmen and non-dolmen (i.e. Songgugni type) burials was clearly not. At the Yigeumdong cemetery, Group B1 and B2 stone platform dolmens were found to contain a considerable number of objects, including jade necklaces (e.g. No. B-6 and B-15), while non-dolmen burials located in a more peripheral location (i.e. attached to the western side of the main band of burials) were found to contain little in terms of grave goods. In contrast to this, both dolmen and non-dolmen burials were found to contain single daggers as grave goods at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-I. Interestingly, the Yigeumdong cemetery yielded another group of non-dolmen burials (Group D-1, D-2 and D-3) which are located south of the dolmen burials. In this case, several of the non-dolmen burials were found to contain grave goods, including bronze daggers (No. D-4) and jade

necklaces (No. D-10). It therefore appears that what we are seeing at the cemetery of Yigeumdong is the differential use of non-dolmen burials according to the requirements of those who used the burials.

The cemetery of Jindong, in Masan (KNDRI 2005) provides further insight into the relationship between dolmen and non-dolmen burials. As was mentioned above, the late MBA witnessed a reduction in the size of platform dolmens. But at certain cemeteries located in the southern costal region of the peninsula, the opposite is observed, with late MBA dolmens becoming surrounded by extremely large platforms (S. O. Kim 2006a). The site of Jindong is one such cemetery where several of these enormous platform dolmens have been excavated. For example, the excavation of dolmen No. 1 from Area A of this site yielded evidence of a stone cairn platform of 20.2 metres in diameter which was further enclosed by a circular ditch containing vast amounts of ceramic debris and covered with a huge earthen mound (Figure 7.19). However, what is of particular interest here is not the grand nature of these dolmens *per se*, but the fact that 41 stone cist burials were also found at the Jindong cemetery, albeit in a *separate* area 200 metres north of the platform dolmens. This is in stark contrast to other burial grounds, such as Sawolri (BKUM 1998), Dohnagri (NRICPCW 1996) and Okbang Area 5 (H. G. Lee 2001), where Songgugni type burials are found in close association with stone platform dolmens. Of course, in the case of these latter cemeteries, the stone platforms of the dolmens are significantly smaller than the grand platforms of the Jindong dolmens, and perhaps here lies the key to understanding the separation of stone cist burials and platform dolmens at the Jindong cemetery. It may be that when stone platform dolmens are less substantial in size, Songgugni type burials can be perceived as a similar category of burial (or even a viable alternative), leading to both forms of burial being used together, whereas when stone platform dolmens are as grand as the Jindong dolmens, Songgugni type burials are inevitably perceived as an entirely different category of burial, and are therefore used in a separate area within the burial ground.

The complex relationship between dolmen and non-dolmen burials is further evidenced by the interchange of architectural features between the two, which was examined earlier with regard to the Yeouigok A-I burials, and can also be observed throughout the wider region. For example, the addition of stone cairn platforms to stone cist burials has been identified at the cemeteries of Dongcheondong and Sangdong in Daegu (S. O. Kim 2006a). It has also been observed that numerous variations of Songgugni type burials (i.e. stone cist burials and earth cut burials) were used to form the burial chamber of stone platform dolmens (S. O. Kim 2006c; S. J. Lee 1999).

Thus, it may be suggested that, as a new form of material culture introduced into a pre-existing burial tradition of stone platform dolmens, Songgugni type burials came to be utilised in different ways according to the different social conditions in which the burials were used, or even according to the different nature of the pre-existing and/or contemporary burial architecture of dolmens. If we apply this understanding to our examination of Phase III burial activity at Yeouigok A-I, it is possible to argue, firstly, that Songgugri type burials may have been involved in the establishment of new identities through strategies of differentiation. This is suggested by the way in which the majority of Songgugri type burials maintain a distance from the round platform dolmens by being built on either side of the South Group linear conjoined dolmens (see Figure 7.3). However, it is also possible that strategies of emulation were involved in the use of non-dolmen burials as is evidenced by the two Songgugni type burials which contain round structural features – stone cist burial No. 6 and earth cut burial No. 56 – and are found among the round platform dolmens of the North Group (see Figure 7.4). Finally, the possibility that non-dolmen burials may have been employed in strategies of social competition can also be considered, based on the diverse nature of the burial forms and the way in which several of these burials appear to have strategically adopted the grand architectural features (e.g. large square stone platforms or earthen mounds) of the earlier Phase II dolmens.

In contrast to the diversity of burial forms, little insight can be gained regarding the other key feature of Yongdam Phase III burial activity – the simplification of deposition practices and the use of single daggers as grave goods – through a comparative analysis with other cemeteries of the stone platform burial tradition. This is because the deposition of objects within a burial context appears to have taken place in different ways at different cemeteries in the region. For example, at the cemetery of Sogokri in Sinwol (DUM 1988), it can be observed that both linear conjoined dolmens and detached round platform dolmens had ceramic vessel parts deposited outside the burial chamber that contained nothing in terms of actual grave goods. At the Yigeumdong burial ground (KNARI 2003), it was possible to observe how the deposition of objects outside the burial chamber (as represented by burial No. A-1) was a practice that came to be adopted, rather than abandoned, during the late MBA.

It is, in fact, from an entirely different tradition of Bronze Age burials that we are provided with a means of understanding the nature of Yongdam Phase III burial activity. The exclusive and consistent deposition of certain objects as grave goods, which is represented by the use of single daggers as grave goods at the Yongdam Phase III burials, has also been observed as taking place at the ‘elite’ burial grounds of the Songgugni culture.⁹⁰ At the cemetery of Gajungri in Buyeo (Aramichi 1959), four out of five burials were found to contain a set of grave goods consisting of a stone dagger and arrowheads; the fifth burial contained stone arrowheads alone. At the cemetery of Milyang Gainri (MUM 2002), a single stone dagger was placed within the burial chamber of eight out of thirteen burials; one other burial was found to contain a red burnished vessel. It can therefore be suggested that the transition to single dagger grave goods in the Yongdam complex may have involved the adoption of Songgugni elite deposition practices, which were introduced into this region in the late MBA along with the Songgugni burial architecture itself. The circumstances in which the burial architecture and

⁹⁰ The ‘elite’ cemeteries are regarded as such due to the linear organisation of their burials. They present a stark contrast to the so-called ‘non-elite’ burial grounds which are chaotic in their organisation (S. O. Kim 2003b; Bae 2006).

the elite deposition practice of the Songgugni culture came to be adopted by Yongdam communities in the late MBA will now be discussed where we consider the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II, which appears to have been immune to these Songgugni influences.

7.5.2. The agency of Phase III burial practices

In our earlier examination of Phase III burial activity, we were able to observe that the late MBA burial practices of Yeouigok A-II did not follow the burial practices identified elsewhere for the late MBA in the Yongdam complex: not only was the transition to single dagger grave goods noticeably absent, but object deposition outside the burial chamber continued to take place in the late MBA. In other words, it was at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II that the mortuary traditions of the late EBA and the early MBA continued to be preserved into the late MBA.

Burial No.	Objects found outside burial chamber				
	Stone objects	Ceramic vessels (sherd no.)			
		Plain		R burnished	
		Rim	Base	Rim	Base
Yeouigok A-II Burial No.1	Dagger (f), 2 arrowheads (f), axe (f), polishing stone (f), stone knife (f), flake tool (w), stone material (w), stone plane blade (f), 2 unfinished stone plane blades (w), fish net sinker (w), stone slab with circular indentation (f)	6	23	2	3
Yeouigok A-II Burial No.2	2 daggers (f), 8 arrowheads (2 w/6f), axe (f), adze (f), polishing stone (f), stone knife (f), unfinished plane blade (w), 3 unfinished flat narrow objects (w), fishnet sinker (w), 5 stone materials (2 w/1f/2 recycled)	6	22	3	2

Table 7.4. Objects found outside burial chamber of Phase III dolmens at Yeouigok A-II (w: whole, f: fragment)

Indeed, not only were these traditions preserved, practices involving the deposition of objects outside the burial chamber of dolmens became even more

intense, with an unprecedented number of stone objects and ceramic vessels being deposited into the surrounding stone cairn of dolmen No.1 and No.2 (Table 7.4). A vast number of objects were also deposited along a 12-13 metre long stone paved track way which led to burial No. 1.

It is also possible to note that the Yeouigok A-II round platform dolmens are significantly larger in size than the Yeouigok A-I round platform dolmens (Table 7.5), and that they are also more elaborate, with each surrounding platform containing a square, alter-like feature attached to its northern end. It is therefore clear that the nature of late MBA burial activity observed for the round platform dolmens of Yeouigok A-II is in sharp contrast to that observed for the much smaller dolmen and non-dolmen burials of Yeouigok A-I, with their simplified deposition practices and single dagger grave goods.

Cemetery	Burial No.	Round platform dimension
Yeouigok A-II	No.1	570~445
	No. 2	540~480
Yeouigok A-I	No. 14	295~245
	No. 18	275~200
	No.33	340~290
	No. 45	360~210
	No. 50	340~270

Table 7.5. Round platform dolmen dimensions from the Yeouigok cemetery

S. O. Kim (2006a; 2006b) has identified a similar divergence in burial practice at the late MBA cemeteries of the ‘stone platform dolmen tradition’. At the majority of cemeteries, detached stone platform dolmens became smaller in size (compared to the conjoined dolmens of the early MBA) and were used in association with Songgugni type burials, but at a small number of cemeteries, detached stone platform dolmens became enormous in size (e.g. Jindong) or had elaborately-constructed burial chambers (e.g. Boseong Dongchonri). The

diverging histories of stone platform dolmen use at different cemeteries in the late MBA has been interpreted as representing an extremely stratified society in which wealth and power were controlled by a few select individuals for whom the highly elaborate and grand stone platform dolmens were used, while others had to make do with the Songgugni type burials and smaller stone platform dolmens (S. O. Kim 2006a: 89).

Although we must be very cautious of applying the notion of a ‘stratified society’ to the communities of the Yongdam complex, particularly given the paucity of the non-mortuary archaeological evidence, it may tentatively be suggested that the social and/or economic circumstances of those using the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II in the late MBA was different from those using the burial grounds of Yeouigok A-I, Mangduk A, Mogok or Sujwadong. This possibility was also considered in the previous chapter in which we discussed how dolmens No. 3 and No. 4, which formed part of a conjoined dolmen line at Yeouigok A-II, had been covered with an earthen mound (see Chapter 6, p.142). Indeed, it may have been that those using the burial ground of Yeouigok A-II had the most to gain by maintaining the status quo in the Yongdam complex. Perhaps the lack of an incentive to change is why many of the burial practices of the late EBA and the early MBA continued to be maintained into the late MBA at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II.

At other cemeteries in the Yongdam complex, the late MBA brought with it a halt to dolmen construction. The reason why dolmen burials were no longer used at the cemeteries of Mogok and Sujwadong is difficult to understand; it may have been due to the active adoption of stone cist burials or this may have been a decision deriving from pragmatic concerns. Either way, the social consequences of this transition to stone cist burials would have been the same – the various reproductive mechanisms associated with dolmen construction and use would no longer have been available to those communities using stone cist burials at Mogok and Sujwadong. Consequently, the social realities reproduced by communities using dolmens burials (e.g. at the cemetery of Yeouigok A-II) may not have been

reproduced by the Mogok and Sujwadong communities, and this, in turn, would have acted to further amplify the divergent social conditions between communities which may have contributed to the differential use of late MBA burials in the first place.

It may be suggested, finally, that for those using the cemeteries of Yeouigok A-I and Mangduk A, the funerary context was an important arena in which new social identities could be established, the status quo could be challenged and the negotiation and manipulation of social reality could take place. The round platform dolmens of Yeouigok A-I were, for example, all found to contain single daggers, and if we accept that this mode of deposition may have been influenced by Songgugni elite burial practices, it is possible to suggest that what we are seeing here is the strategic appropriation of non-indigenous, elite burial practices as a means of establishing new social identities. Indeed, it is possible that those who used the round platform dolmens of Yeouigok A-I felt a need to actively differentiate themselves from those who used the much larger and elaborate round platform dolmens of the neighbouring cemetery of Yeouigok A-II, against whom they could not compete. As was mentioned briefly above, Songgugni type burials may have also been actively used to establish new identities. Innovative features were often added to these non-dolmen burials, such as earthen mounds and square platforms of dressed stone, and these architectural features could have been a means by which references were made to the earlier dolmen burials, thereby imbuing these 'non-indigenous' forms of burials with a sense of tradition and continuity.

It was through these diverse scenarios that the Phase III burials came to reproduce the social conditions in which late MBA lives were lived out in the Yongdam complex. Freed from the principles which, in the early MBA, had structured the linear conjoining of dolmens, not only did the late MBA burials represent a change of focus from the wider community to the individual or individual groups, they also came to play an active role in shaping the fate of the different late MBA groups in the Yongdam complex.

Chapter 8. Discussion

8.1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis has been to explore the role of dolmen burials in the reproduction of Korean Bronze Age society. This was done by investigating how practices of dolmen (and non-dolmen) construction and use observed at cemeteries in the Yongdam complex may have helped maintain the reality of the late Early Bronze Age to late Middle Bronze Age in the Jinan region of southern Korea. The archaeological implications of this research have already been discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Therefore, this chapter will address the wider implications of the theoretical and methodological stance adopted in this thesis.

8.2. An archaeology of inhabitation

In formulating an alternative understanding of the Korean dolmen material, this thesis has relied heavily upon the ideas of Barrett (1994; 2000; 2001; 2005; 2006a; 2006b) – ideas which have provided the basis for an ‘archaeology of inhabitation’ (Barrett 2000: 66). Drawing upon the social theories of Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1977) – in particular, notions of ‘knowlegebility’ and ‘ontological security’ from structuration theory, and the concept of *habitus* from practice theory – Barrett (2000; 2001) proposes that we approach the archaeological material as the physical conditions of social life, rather than as a passive representation of past processes, and that archaeological interpretation should focus on exploring the practices which could have emerged from these conditions. It is in these possibilities of practice that human agency is recognised and the meaning of past actions found. It will be seen that the foregoing thesis has followed such an interpretative approach.

In drawing upon structuration and practice theory, an archaeology of inhabitation has also been able to consider the relationship between episodic events and the long-term narrative of history. This is because central to the social theories of Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1977) is the recursive relationship between structure and agency; to quote Giddens (1984: 25), “the structural properties of a system are both the medium and the outcome of practices they recursively organise”. It is this recursive relationship which has allowed archaeologists to link practices operating at the level of the agent to the continuous recreation of large-scale structures. In the case of this thesis, the recursive relationship between structure and agency made it possible to explore how the funerary practices of dolmen construction and use may have contributed to the reproduction of large scale social and economic structures.

The number of archaeological studies which have taken on board the ideas of Giddens and Bourdieu, adopting a similar concern with agency and practice, has multiplied in recent years (e.g. Joyce and Lopiparo 2005; Pauketat 2001; Sassaman 2005; Silliman 2001). However, these studies have not been without their detractors. The most significant criticism has come from Hodder (2000a), who has argued that applications of structuration and practice theory to archaeology have overlooked the individuality of agents and the intentionality of agency. In addition to echoing Hodder’s concerns, Whittle (2003) has also commented on the fact that these social theories of Giddens and Bourdieu are not as well suited to dealing with social change as they are in dealing with social reproduction. As both of these criticisms may be considered relevant to the current research, they will now be addressed in the following section of this thesis.

8.2.1. An archaeology of ‘individual lived lives’?

According to Hodder, recent accounts of agency have left “little room... for the individual construction of events and processes. An adequate account of agency needs to supplement structurationist and phenomenological accounts with

dimensions of experience which can be gained from an examination of individual lives” (Hodder 2000a: 25). These accounts of agency have also been found guilty of ignoring intentionality, idea and plan. Thus, what Hodder proposes as a response to this is an alternative interpretative approach which can take into account the subjectivity and intentionality of individual agents. A similar emphasis on the intentionality and individuality of agents can be seen in the work of Meskell (1999). However, this alternative approach, which may appear attractive at first, is not without its problems.

First of all, in putting the emphasis on individual events and persons, Hodder (2000a: 25-26) has problematised the undifferentiated nature of past agents in archaeological discourse – the way in which agents are often ‘faceless blobs’ whose gender, age and identity are ignored. However, we must ask whether this undifferentiated, universal agent is necessarily a problem. Indeed, it has been argued by Fowler (1999: 54) that the problem with an universal agent lies not in its faceless nature *per se*, but in the fact that when a social being is defined as faceless and universal, other possibilities of being are denied. In other words, once a social agent is defined as a universal being, other possibilities of being, such as that of a female being or an infirm being, are inevitably forced out.

Interestingly enough, Fowler (1999: 54-55) suggests that this problem of the universal agent – the way in which it constrains us from considering alternative modes of personhood – is mitigated to a certain extent within an archaeology of possibilities as proposed Barrett (1988; 1994). The reason for this, it seems, is because when the aim of archaeology is to consider possibilities of practice and possibilities of being, the universal agent can be regarded as a *neutral* agent onto which these various possibilities can be projected. In other words, within the framework of an archaeology of possibilities, the facelessness of an agent need not be approached as a constraining factor. Rather, it can be perceived as an *enabling* factor.

In addition, we must bear in mind that the ‘individual’ which lies at the centre of Hodder’s quest for an archaeology of individual events and persons is in itself a problematic concept. As Hodder himself has noted, along with Hutson (Hodder and Hutson 2004: 7), “[c]ritical and philosophical scholarship has documented that the individual is a very recent construct, tied closely to the development of modernity in the west”. An emphasis on ‘individual events’ should also be approached with caution, for it is imperative that we do not lose sight of the long-term cycles of history, which these events are part of, in our quest to observe, in detail, the reality of the experiences.

Hodder (2000a: 22-23) has also expressed concern regarding the way in which current applications of structuration theory to archaeology have denied the role of discursive intentionality in agency. However, this need not be a problem for agency need not be tied up with notions of intentionality. As Dornan (2002) has noted, there exists a wide range of opinions regarding the application of the agency in archaeology: on one end of the spectrum is the view that agency should be approached “in terms of individual forward-looking intentionality and creativity” (Hodder 2000a: 23), while at the other end is the view that agency should be regarded as “a process of intersubjective engagement with the material and social world” (Dobres and Robb 2000: 9). In concurrence with the latter opinion, Barrett (2000) has argued that our focus in considering past agency should lie, not in ‘recovering’ agency from the archaeological record (which Hodder attempts to do through a reading of past intentionality), but in exploring how that agency – the actual practice of engagement – was achieved and what its consequences were. It is in its *consequences*, including its *unintended consequences*, that the significance of agency is found.

Finally, it can be argued that Hodder’s (2000a: 27-31) call for an understanding of ‘individual lived lives’ acts to limit the scope of archaeological interpretation. In demonstrating how archaeological interpretation should take into consideration not only the details of an individual’s life but also the way in which that life may have fitted into and influenced the structural conditions to which he

or she belonged, Hodder uses the example of the 'Ice Man' found in the Austrian Alps. However, it is clear that 'Otzi the Ice Man' represents the exception, rather than the norm, in terms of the available archaeological data. Similar concerns have been raised by Dornan (2002: 311) with respect to the way in which Hodder's approach relegates discussions of agency to extremely limited data. It would therefore be foolish to abandon an 'archaeology of practice' for an 'archaeology of individual lived lives', since it is the former which allows us to consider the practice of agents – albeit, perhaps, universal or undifferentiated agents – in circumstances in which the actual individual may have left little trace of himself or herself. Indeed, given the nature of the Yongdam complex Bronze Age material, and in particular the poor preservation of human remains, the extent to which Hodder's approach would have been helpful in this thesis is questionable.

8.2.2. Structuration theory, practice theory and the issue of social change

It has been noted, both within sociology (Baert 1998; Jenkins 2002) and archaeology (Hodder 2000a; Jones 2005; Whittle 2003), that the social theories of Giddens and Bourdieu are unable to address the issue of social change. Indeed, while structuration and practice theory have provided archaeologists with a useful framework in which to consider the issue of social reproduction, they have offered little insight into understanding how the practices of agents may have contributed to the transformation of society. Of course, it is possible to suggest, on one hand, that this inability to account for social change is a reasonable, and therefore unproblematic, limitation of these theories – a limitation perhaps akin to the way in which a telescope may be suited to looking at stars and galaxies, but not atoms and particles. However, given that many would regard the study of *long-term diachronic change* as that which provides archaeology with its unique frame of reference (e.g. Knapp 1992; Renfrew 1981), it may be argued, on the other hand, that this inability to account for social change is indeed a significant problem which must be addressed.

Bourdieu and practice theory

To understand why a theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977; 1990) may have difficulty in dealing with the issue of social change, we must go back to its conception. Bourdieu's main objective in formulating a theory of practice was to transcend the dualism between objectivism and subjectivism; this was a reaction against both the existentialist phenomenology of Sartre and the structuralism of Levi-Strauss. The way this was achieved was by introducing the concept of *habitus*. *Habitus* can be understood, above all, as a schema of socially acquired dispositions which generate practice; it is both structured by the objective conditions of the world, as well as structuring those conditions through practice. In other words, *habitus* is situated within a *recursive* relationship with the objective conditions of the world which Bourdieu refers to as *field*. It was this recursive relationship between *habitus* and *field* that allowed Bourdieu to posit a dialectic relationship between the objective conditions of the world and the subjective practices of individuals – a dialectic relationship which, in turn, made it possible to bridge the dualism between objectivism and subjectivism. However, it may be suggested that this same recursive relationship is in part responsible for the way in which Bourdieu's theory of practice has been unable to consider matters of social change.

According to Bourdieu, 'the *habitus*, a product of history, produces individual and collective practices – more history – in accordance with the schemes generated by history' (1990: 54). In other words, *habitus* is the product of social conditions, for the dispositions of *habitus* are learned and generated through observation and emulation (Gosden 1999b: 126). This is not to suggest that the actions of agents are mechanically determined by the objective conditions via *habitus*. *Habitus* may indeed constrain practice, but it does not determine *tempo*, and as Bourdieu (1997) has demonstrated using the example of gift exchange, it is this *tempo* which provides agents with the room to manoeuvre strategically within the parameters of *habitus*. Nevertheless, if *habitus* is the product of social conditions, and the practices generated by *habitus* are disposed to reproduce the

conditions from which *habitus* emerged, how can the dialectical relationship between the objective conditions of the world and *habitus* lead to anything other than the perpetuation of the status quo? It is precisely this problem which led Jenkins (1992) to note that, while Bourdieu's theory can account for the continuity and regularity of the social structure, it cannot account for social change other than that stemming from external factors.

Habitus can also be understood as a schema of *internalised* dispositions which exist beyond the self-conscious workings of the individual – it is a 'feel' for the game. Practices generated by *habitus* are therefore not consciously deliberated, but emerge from an awareness in the back of an individual's mind of what is 'right'. However, this lack of conscious deliberation also means that when the practices generated by *habitus* 'work' within the circumstances of the world (i.e. when individuals are able to become competent social actors), there is no possibility for reflection on why these practices feel right or why the social circumstances are as they are. It is this state in which social life is taken for granted and there is no conscious awareness for change that Bourdieu refers to as *doxa* (Bourdieu 1990: 20).

The notion of *doxa* has been critiqued from both socio-anthropological (LiPuma 1993; Throop and Murphy 2002) and archaeological (Smith 2001) perspectives. The main thrust of these arguments has been that individuals were not, and are not, doxically bound. However, while the idea of doxically bound individuals can indeed be questioned, it must also be pointed out that within Bourdieu's theory of practice, *doxa* is not a description of the human condition *per se*. Rather, it is a conceptual state which emerges when *habitus* 'works' – when "the coincidence of the objective structures and the internalized structures... provides the illusion of immediate understanding, characteristic of the practical experience of the familiar universe, and which at the same time excludes from that experience any inquiry as to its own conditions of possibility" (Bourdieu 1990: 20). Hence, it may be argued that if the concept of *habitus* is to be utilised in discussions of social practice, allowances must also be made for the

possibility of *doxa*, for the two are casually bound. In other words, if we are to draw upon Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, we must also accept the presence of an agent who is not entirely aware, and therefore unable to stand back and contemplate actions which may bring about social change.

Giddens and structuration theory

As with Bourdieu's theory of practice, Giddens theory of structuration (1979; 1984; 1990) presents a way of transcending the dualism between structure and agency by establishing a recursive relationship between the two.⁹¹ However, Giddens differs from Bourdieu in that, borrowing from Goffman's interaction theory, he defines the social actor as a 'knowledgeable agent'. This represents a significant development from Bourdieu's agent who may have an 'inkling' or 'feel for the game' but is never truly aware (Tucker Jr., 1998). Given that this lack of knowledgability can be identified as one of the reasons why Bourdieu's theory of practice is unable to deal with social change, one might assume that the introduction of a 'knowledgeable agent' would allow Giddens' theory of structuration better deal with issues of social change. This, unfortunately, has not been the case.

The knowledgeable agent in structuration theory is an autonomous individual who engages in skilful social interaction in an attempt to maintain his or her *ontological security*. This concept of ontological security can be understood, above all, as a belief in the reliability of social life, and in the continuity in ones self-identity over space and time (Giddens 1984: 375). The desire for this ontological security is not cognitive but grounded in unconsciousness, rooted in an infant's relationship with his or her caretakers (Giddens 1990: 92-97; Tucker Jr., 1998: 83); this is why Giddens presumes that the knowledgeable agent will

⁹¹ It should be noted here that the recursive relationship between structure and agency is approached differently by Giddens and Bourdieu in their respective attempts to overcome structural determinism. While Bourdieu's focus is on how social practices are not mechanically determined by objective conditions, Giddens' focus is on how the agency is able to structure these objective conditions.

always act in ways which will further enhance his or her ontological security. However, it should be noted that, as with Bourdieu's habitus, ontological security is a product of social conditions; an individual's perception of what makes oneself ontologically secure is based on past experiences which have been structured by the social conditions of the world. Consequently, given that notions of ontological security are a product of society, and given that the practices of agents are generated by an unconscious desire for ontological security, it is possible to assume that Giddens' knowledgeable agent will only act in a way which conforms to the values and norms of society. In other words, the concept of ontological security, which lies at the heart of structuration theory, can be identified as a conservative mechanism which leaves the rational, knowledgeable agent with no desire to consider actions which may bring about fundamental social change.

The knowledgeability which allows Giddens' agent to maintain his or her ontological security exists at the level of both practical consciousness (*practical knowledge*) and discursive consciousness (*discursive knowledge*) (Giddens 1984: 31-35). Consisting of unarticulated beliefs and motivations, practical knowledge exists at the level of non-discursive consciousness. Therefore, there is little room for self-reflexivity in the actions of agents guided by a practical knowledge – an absence of self-reflexivity which means that there is no possibility of deviation from the status quo, and thus no possibility for social change (Mouzelis 1995). Discursive knowledge, on the other hand, does exist at the level of consciousness, providing Giddens' agent with the means to reflexively monitor his or her actions. In theory, therefore, the concept of discursive knowledge should make it possible to address the issue of social change within the confines of Giddens' structuration model. However, we must bear in mind that an agents' ability to be reflexive does not necessarily ensure a true agency for social change.⁹² First of all, this has to do with the fact that that discursive knowledge will, to a large extent, be produced

⁹² We must also remember that Giddens' objective in promoting reflexivity was not provide agents with the capacity for social change, but to save them from becoming Parsonian cultural dupes (Tucker Jr. 1998)

and disseminated by structures existing beyond the agent – structures which may be controlled by those who wish to maintain the status quo or even manipulate social change (Beck *et al.* 1994; Foucault 1990). Perhaps this is why discursive knowledge is often approached within archaeological interpretation as a means of making manifest and reinforcing what is known at the level of practical consciousness, therefore reproducing the status quo (e.g. Silliman 2001) or as something that is manipulated by the elite and used as a means of coercion (e.g. Barrett 1997). Secondly, we must bear in mind that reflexivity (generated by discursive knowledge) need not necessarily lead to rational action on the part of the agent. This is because the actions of individuals are also influenced by *non-rational factors*, such as human emotions and the irrational forces at work in the psyche (Meštrović 1998). Giddens' failure to acknowledge this has been identified as a key problem of structuration theory.⁹³

To summarise, the following have been identified as the key factors which are responsible for structuration and practice theory's inability to account for social change: 1) the dialectic relationship between agency and structure which leads to the reproduction of the status quo, 2) the non-discursive nature of *habitus* and practical knowledge which brings about a state of *doxa*, and 3) the complex relationship between discursive knowledge, reflexivity and action. It is due to these factors that history is seen as a culmination of "an ongoing and seamless series of moments... continuously carried forward in a process of production and reproduction in the practices of everyday life" while moments of fundamental change which cannot be explained within the 'closed feedback loop' of structure and agency are overlooked (Jenkins 1992: 80) within archaeological studies that draw upon the ideas of Giddens and Bourdieu. It is therefore tempting to facilitate a discussion of social change by deconstructing the foregoing tenets of

⁹³ It has been argued that "Giddens' attempt to construct a social theory on solely cognitive grounds and to leave out people's histories, habits, customs, feelings, and other aspects of non-agency – in a word, culture – is insufficient for understanding human behavior and social processes" (Meštrović 1998: 25), and that his oversight of these aspects of humanity have made his agent into "a caricature of a human being, with all mind and no heart" (*ibid*).

structuration and practice theory. However, this is unlikely to be fruitful, for it is clear that those facets of structuration and practice theory which hinder a discussion of social change are often those same facets which facilitate a discussion of social reproduction. Smith (2001), for example, has attempted to provide past agents with the capacity for change by problematising the notion of *doxa*. But as *doxa* is casually linked with the concept of *habitus* (as was discussed earlier), to abandon *doxa* would require an abandonment of *habitus*. Consequently, given this situation, it is possible to question whether the issue of social transformation will ever be addressed within archaeological studies which utilise the social theories of Giddens and Bourdieu. To this, I would suggest that archaeologists need to reconsider the way in which they approach the subject of social change.

Archaeological considerations of social change have focused primarily on the agency of transformation – on the impetus that led to change, on the motor which sustained this change, and on the actual trajectory of change. In other words, archaeological studies are generally concerned with the actual *force* of social transformation. In considering this force, archaeologists have tended to regard transformative agency as being driven by the rational choices of past agents. Change is assumed to have taken place according to a ‘logic’ of some sort; it is regarded as deliberate and meaningful, therefore allowing us to better understand past humanity. Therefore, when archaeologists explore the transition from dispersed to nucleated settlements in the Korean EBA, for example, these transformations are approached as intended and meaningful events which can provide insight into the social and economic conditions of the time.

There have, however, been voices of dissent in response to this perception that change is generated by rational dynamics. From an archaeological perspective, McGlade and van der Leeuw (1997) have argued that we must also acknowledge the spontaneity and disorder of human events when considering the dynamics of social change. What is therefore proposed is an alternative approach to long-term change which can take into account the discontinuous, non-linear and non-

directional nature of societal change. From a sociological perspective, Mattausch (2003) has drawn on the ideas of the sociologist Raymond Boudon and the evolutionary biologist Jared Diamond to advance a theory of change which explores the role that 'chance' may play of processes of societal change. It is argued that "chance is not simply a residual analytical category, nor an ignorable aspect of social life" (Mattausch 2003: 520) – it is a concept which must be 'rehabilitated' into sociological explanations. This is because, not only is its exclusion empirically and theoretically unjustified (*ibid*: 506), chance can act as a bulwark against narratives of societal change in which events are presented as causally determined. Of course, this is not to suggest that all social change is random. However, what it does do is illustrate the fact that forces of social transformation may not always have been rational or intended in the past, and therefore cannot always be 'made sense of' by archaeologists in the present. Thus, given that the forces of social transformation may not necessarily be studied within our discipline, it now becomes possible to relinquish our preoccupation with these forces of social transformation and consider other ways of approaching the issue of social change, just as Barrett's consigning of past motivation into the category of 'that which is futile to study in archaeology' opened the doors for a new 'archaeology of possibilities' (Barrett 2005; 2006a; 2006b).

An alternative way of approaching the issue of social change may be to look at the *underlying conditions* which allowed these forces of change to take hold and manifest themselves in the first place. Unfortunately, archaeological studies of social change have yet to fully appreciate the importance of these underlying conditions. Therefore, two examples are now presented which illustrate the crucial role that they may have played in bringing about change, be it change deriving from internal factors, or change generated by external factors.

The first example comes from Kuhn's famous paper *Energy Conservation as an Example of Simultaneous Discovery* (1977) which addresses the most striking example of simultaneous discovery in the history of science: in the years between 1842 and 1847, the hypothesis of energy conservation was publicly

announced by four scientists scattered around Europe, three of which working in complete ignorance of the others. The way in which Kuhn approaches this event of simultaneous discovery is by asking “[w]hy, in the years 1830-50, did so many of the experiments and concepts required for a full statement of energy conservation lie so close to the surface of scientific consciousness?” (Kuhn 1977: 104). The answer to this is found in three factors: 1) the availability of conversion processes, 2) the contemporary concern with engines, and 3) the *Naturphilosophie* movement. However, these factors are not considered to be directly responsible for the discovery of energy conservation. Rather, what Kuhn focuses on is how developments in these factors – in scientific infrastructure, experimental methods and philosophy – led to the establishment of concepts and experiments which were crucial in formulating the energy conservation hypothesis. It is when these conditions were met that the floodgates of scientific discovery were opened. Therefore, it can similarly be argued that when dealing with change deriving from an internal impetus (which is essentially what scientific discoveries are), we must consider the underlying conditions which allowed this impetus to emerge in the first place.

The second example comes from Sørensen’s study on the delayed adoption of iron technology in Scandinavia (1989). In considering why iron technology was, for the most part, ignored for several hundred years after its initial introduction, Sørensen focuses on the cultural tradition of the Scandinavian late Bronze Age in which bronze was highly valued. It is suggested that this cultural preference for bronze objects led to iron being treated as an uninteresting and unattractive material, and that it was due to this cultural context that the adoption of iron technology was delayed. The point which is therefore made is that ‘technological change and innovation do not necessarily gain immediate sociocultural importance’ (Sørensen 1989: 183). If society does not feel the need, or is indeed not ready, for a new technology, its adoption will be delayed and ignored, regardless of the actual superiority of the technology. Drawing upon this, it can similarly be argued that even when the impetus of change comes from external sources, the underlying social conditions must still be taken into account, for it is

these conditions which determine whether or not the impetus of change will be accepted, delayed or ignored.

If we take on board this alternative approach to social change, it becomes possible for archaeological studies based on structuration and practice theory to be freed from the stigma of being unable to account for social change. This is because, in their capacity to consider the reproduction of society, these studies can also shed light on the issue of how the social conditions facilitating change may have been maintained, and thus contribute to a discussion of social change. An example of this is now provided using the case studies presented in this thesis.

The research carried out in this thesis has been organised into three case studies, all of which explore the common theme of how funerary practices may have contributed to the *reproduction* of social realities in the Bronze Age of the Yongdam complex. Thus, Chapter 5 deals not with the *emergence* of nucleated settlements in the late EBA, but with how a commitment to such settlements may have been *maintained*. Chapter 6 deals not with the *establishment* the Songgugni culture in the early MBA, but with how this way of life may have been *reproduced*. Finally, Chapter 7 deals not with the *development* of social complexity in the late MBA, but with how social differentiation may have been *performed*. As these case studies do not directly address the transformation of social realities, it may at first appear that the current research has little to say on the topic of long-term social change in the Korean Bronze Age. However, it may be argued that these practices of reproduction also acted to establish the parameters which structured the direction future social transformations. Indeed, it is questionable whether a Songgugni way of life could have been established in the Jinan region in the early MBA (the reproduction of which is discussed in Chapter 6), had there not been a pre-existing commitment to nucleated settlements (the reproduction of which is discussed in Chapter 7). Similarly, it is unlikely that the increased social complexity observed for the late MBA in the Yongdam complex could have emerged without the pre-existing social and economic conditions of a Songgugni way of life. In other words, each of these case studies

can provide insight into understanding the nature of subsequent social transformations. In this sense, it becomes clear that each of these case studies has an important place within the archaeological discourse on social change in the Korean Bronze Age.

8.3. Dolmen burials and *chaîne opératoire*

The aim of this thesis has been to understand how dolmen burials may have functioned as a mechanism of social reproduction. In order to do so, the dolmens have been approached in terms of their *chaîne opératoire*. *Chaîne opératoire* is a concept usually applied to artefact production (Dobres 2000), but in the current research, I have applied it to the burial material as way of incorporating a human presence into the various stages of dolmen construction and use. This has made it possible to move beyond studies of burial structure and grave goods, and to understand the how rituals taking place around the dolmen burials may have acted to transform the conditions of life.

Following this approach, the Yongdam dolmens were introduced in Chapter 5 by outlining the various stages of their construction and use, rather than by describing the structural attributes of their burial architecture. The artefact assemblage of the Yongdam dolmens was also approached by considering the different practices which may have led to the deposition of objects. In Chapter 6, one particular stage in the *chaîne opératoire* of the Phase II dolmens – the conjoining of dolmens – was examined, a feature distinctive to the linear conjoined dolmens. In recognising that the dolmen burials were created via a series of operational sequences, it was also possible to highlight the way in which dolmen construction embodied a sharing of ‘tasks’, as illustrated in Chapter 6. Finally, it was by comparing the *chaîne opératoire* of Phase II burials *vis-à-vis* Phase III burials that the issue of diachronic change in dolmen burials from the early to the late MBA was considered in Chapter 7. The implications of this methodological approach – of having used *chaîne opératoire* as a method of study

– will now be discussed.

8.3.1. Implications for funerary studies in Korean archaeology

In considering the *chaîne opératoire* of dolmen construction and use, it has been possible to obtain a detailed understanding of how agency operates in the context of burials. This has significant implications for funerary studies in Korean archaeology. As was discussed in Chapter 2, the Korean dolmens – and burials in general – have generally been regarded in a passive way; studies have focused primarily on the way in which burial evidence may reflect past society. This is not to say that Korean archaeologists have been unaware of the strategic nature of burial use, or indeed the role that burials may have had in reproducing past society. However, these possibilities have been considered, more often than not, in the briefest and most superficial of ways. The best example of this can be found in Park's (1998) seminal work on Baekche state formation, in which attempts are made to associate the pyramid-shaped stone cairn chamber tombs of the third century AD with the emergence of the Baekche state. Here, he puts much effort into establishing links between these monumental burial structures and the Baekche state, but gives little consideration to the ways in which the construction of these pyramid-shaped stone cairn chamber tombs may have embodied strategies of state formation.

This unwillingness on the part of Korean archaeology to consider the active nature of burials arises due to a number of different factors. Firstly, we can identify the hegemony of social evolutionary thought; the untenable nature of this was discussed in Chapter 2. The language barrier is also an issue, since much of the literature on this subject is in English and therefore difficult for a Korean audience to access. In addition, even when attempts have been made to introduce some of the literature regarding the active nature of burials to a Korean audience, this has failed to make much impact. For example, the works of Barrett (1994), Hodder (1990), Thomas (1999) and Whittle (1996) have been introduced and

drawn upon by Lee S. J. (2000) to suggest that the ‘megalithic monuments’ (i.e. dolmens) of Bronze Age Korea played an important role in ‘farming life’. However, as Lee has simply transposed those ideas regarding the role of burial architecture from a western context, without elaborating on the specifics of its reproductive mechanism or indeed taking into account the differences in the nature of farming and animal husbandry practices or systems of tenure, this interpretation has had little influence on subsequent studies of the Korean dolmens.

It can therefore be suggested that new ideas and approaches to the archaeological material will only be adopted within Korean archaeology insofar as they are perceived as being useful interpretative tools which can be used, with relative ease, to address the empirical concerns of Korean archaeologists. In other words, a clear exposition of how interpretative concepts actually ‘work’ with regard to the specifics of the archaeological data is crucial. In this sense, the *chaîne opératoire* approach used in this thesis constitutes an ideal format in which to illustrate and introduce the active nature of burials. This is because, in providing a detailed discussion of how different practices taking place at different moments of dolmen construction and use may have acted to reproduce different facets of Bronze Age social reality, this thesis provides a range of options from which Korean archaeologists may consider how various aspects of funerary behaviour may be associated with social reproduction.

8.3.2. Implications for a critique of the phenomenological approach

The interpretations presented in this thesis have been based primarily on bodily practice and experience; this is also true of the phenomenological approaches in archaeology (e.g. Cummings and Whittle 2004; Tilley 1994; 2004b). The key difference, however, is that while phenomenological approaches have attempted to find meaning in the *motivation* behind practices, the interpretative approach adopted in this thesis has found meaning in the *possibilities* of practice.

It can be argued that this interpretative approach has significant advantages over the phenomenological approach as there is less room for presentist assumptions of the past. In addition, in using *chaîne opératoire* as a method of study, the current research has avoided making the kinds of imprecise and vague interpretations that phenomenological approaches have often been criticised for.

In each of the three case studies in this thesis, I have presented the archaeological material and the interpretation of this material in the following ways. Firstly, the wider archaeological context has been established. Secondly, the archaeological material has been described. Finally, when these steps have been completed, an interpretation of this material has been offered. This is not to say that the act of ‘describing’ is not interpretative. However, it can be argued that, with respect to such ‘interpretation’ involving the description of archaeological material, a standard archaeological consensus can be achieved. Interpretation regarding the *meaning* of the material, on the other hand, is inevitably more subjective in nature. Therefore, in this thesis, I provide two distinct layers of interpretation: a detailed description of the dolmen material at different points in its *chaîne opératoire*, and a consideration of the possibilities of practice and experience, as structured by the material conditions of the dolmen architecture. As the dolmen material is presented separately from the interpretation, readers are given the means to judge for themselves how satisfactory the suggestions regarding bodily practice and experience provided in this thesis are

This separation, it has been argued, is precisely what phenomenological approaches have lacked; there is insufficient clarity in presenting the archaeological material upon which the phenomenological interpretations have been based (Brück 2005: 52). Indeed, it is often difficult to get a feel of what features are actually present in the landscape, and it is therefore difficult to evaluate the plausibility of the practices and experience which are outlined as having taken place. As Fleming has pointed out (1999; 2005; 2006), the way in which phenomenological approaches select certain features to be of significance is extremely *ad hoc* in nature. This has meant that unless one is familiar with the

material discussed in the text – or more importantly, the material which has been overlooked – it is difficult to assess the validity of the narratives of practice and experience presented in these phenomenological works. Various methods have been employed to address this issue, as Brück (2005: 52-4) has discussed. They include use of 360 photomontages of the landscape around a site (e.g. Cummings 2000; Cummings, Jones and Watson 2002), multimedia approaches which incorporate photographs, video footage and sound recordings (e.g. Mills 2000), virtual reality modelling (VRM) (e.g. Pollard and Gillings 1998), and geographical information systems (GIS) (e.g. Wheatley 1996; 2004). However, given that photographs and video footage are often selected and edited versions of the landscape (Chadwick 2004), and as they are generally presented as *part of* the interpretation, it may be suggested that these media may not be wholly reliable in evaluating phenomenological arguments. In addition, VRM and GIS are based on Cartesian models of space, and as they go against the spirit of phenomenological programme, they have not played a significant role in phenomenological accounts (Brück 2005).

Consequently, it can be argued that, in contrast to phenomenological approaches, the interpretative programme adopted in this thesis allows interpretations of practice and experience to be evaluated by the reader with relative ease. This is because a description of the burial architecture – or rather, the *chaîne opératoire* of the burial architecture – can provide a base for judging whether these interpretations are satisfactory or not.⁹⁴

8.3.3 Implications for future excavations of dolmen burials

As has just been examined, the use of *chaîne opératoire* has the potential to bring about developments in funerary studies in Korean archaeology, as well as contributing to a critique of phenomenological approaches. However, this

⁹⁴ It should also be noted that I also provide, in the Appendix, additional information regarding the dolmen architecture – the material conditions which structure practice and experience.

approach can only be adopted in circumstances where the excavation and publication of the archaeological material is adequate. For example, the reason why it was possible to demonstrate how ceramic and stone object deposition took place at different points in the *chaîne opératoire* of dolmen burials was because the vertical location of artefacts within the stone platform cairn had been recorded for certain sites (e.g. Sujwadong) in the Yongdam complex. In addition, it was only because the excavators at the site of Yeouigok had the foresight to record and plot out the specific location of artefacts that the sequential relationship between object deposition into the stone cairn platform and the placing of the capstone could be identified. Finally, it is only at the site of Yeouigok, where the recording of artefact locations was extremely detailed, compared to other sites in the Yongdam complex, that evidence of deliberate fragmentation could be found.

The use of *chaîne opératoire* has the potential, therefore, to bring about a fundamental change in how the dolmen burials are excavated, recorded and published, for it brings about an awareness that the dolmen material was formed through a series of practices, with each practice influencing the next. In highlighting the *chaîne opératoire* of dolmen burials, it also becomes possible to reconsider and expand what we regard as the object of analysis. For example, it was discussed in Chapter 5 that the acquisition of stone material for the dolmen burials took place over a wide area; in theory, therefore, this entire area should be regarded as an object of study. In addition, the *chaîne opératoire* method allows us study the life-history of an artefact beyond the end of its construction, and up to its final abandonment. For example, the broken vessels and stone objects found amongst the stone cairn of the Yongdam dolmens were not deliberately covered at time of burial. What, then, would have happened to these objects? Would the stone cairn have become covered with sediment within a year due to the annual summer flooding, or would the objects have remained open to the elements year after year? If the latter is the case, might it be that the missing objects pieces, which we suggested derived from practices of fragmentation and enchainment,

were taken away, not at the time of burial, but at a later date? These issues may never be addressed with satisfaction, but at least in adopting *chaîne opératoire* as a method of study, we can take these issues into consideration when designing our investigative programme, for example by incorporating microsoil analysis. In doing so, it will be possible to provide the basis for a richer understanding of the Korean dolmen material.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

British prehistory is influential. Masters and Ph.D. programmes offered by British universities remain popular... [to] students whose first introduction to theoretical archaeology is through the 'theoretical' interpretations currently popular in British prehistory. When students learn to 'apply' theory, what they actually 'apply' are these interpretations, especially to those classes of material culture which have the same romantic appeal.

(Whitley 2002: 119-20)

This thesis has proposed an approach to the archaeology of the Korean dolmens which emphasises their active role in reproducing Bronze Age society. The intellectual inspiration for this research comes from work which was carried out during my MA course at the University of Sheffield. It was then that I first became aware of the diverse ways in which material culture in general, and megalithic monuments in particular, could be approached, and this led me to consider the possibility of applying these 'new perspectives' to the Korean dolmen material. The result of this was a MA dissertation in which the works of Hodder (1990), Tilley (1996), Bradley (1993), Sherratt (1990; 1995), Whittle (1996), Thomas (1999) and Barrett (1994) on the emergence of megalithic monuments were considered in order to ascertain whether they could offer insight into sudden emergence of dolmen burials at the beginning of the Bronze Age in Korea.

At the core of most of these interpretations lay the idea that megalithic monuments were a mechanism of ideological transformation which allowed communities to become 'farmers'. However, given that sedentism and small-scale cultivation were already present in the previous period of the Korean Neolithic, it became clear that these British interpretations could not be directly applied to the Korean archaeological material. What was taken from these interpretations, rather, was an alternative way of approaching burial architecture – as a mechanism which

actively reproduced ways of life. It is this understanding of burial architecture, and indeed of material culture, which forms the basis of the current research.

The MA dissertation also functioned as an intellectual exercise in which I attempted to work out the relationship between western theories and Korean data. To what extent should western theories be applied to the Korean context given the discrepancies in the archaeological paradigms? What should the role of archaeologists who have studied abroad be in the development of Korean archaeological discourse? Should they 'water down' their interpretative approaches in an attempt to integrate with the wider archaeological community or should they remain purists and possibly contribute to the polarisation of the discipline? Finally, can it be that Korean archaeology may offer insight into these western theories as well?

The process of undertaking the current research was influenced by these issues, and during the course of research, it has been possible to address some of these concerns. Firstly, I have come to realise that, although it is produced within a British academic environment, this thesis must also take into account the Korean audience. Attempts have therefore been made to acknowledge the reality of the Korean archaeology paradigm, providing a critique of social evolution which may be understood and hopefully accepted. Secondly, I have also come to realise that the nature of the Korean archaeological material, constrained by the reality of an archaeological fieldwork dominated by rescue excavations, must also be considered in formulating the analytical programme. Therefore, the limitations of the dolmen material, as much as theoretical concerns, were taken into consideration in adopting a 'structuring' approach to the interpretation of the Korean dolmens. Finally, I have come to realise that new theories will inevitably be met with some hostility and scepticism, and that it is the archaeologist's responsibility to take this into account. In this thesis, attempts have therefore been made to stress the utility of the 'structuring' approach by illustrating how its interpretations may be incorporated into the most current discussions taking place in Korean Bronze Age studies.

In the course of integrating 'British archaeological theories' into the context of Korean archaeology, this thesis also contains some insights which may be of use to British archaeological theory. The work carried out in this thesis, in which the key concepts of social evolutionary theory (and the concomitant notion of chiefdoms) are identified and critiqued, was originally met with varying degrees of incomprehension and bemusement by many of my British peers for whom these were antiquated concepts, long discarded from archaeological discourse. However, in examining the literature, it became clear that this was not the case. Although certain facets of social evolutionary theory may have been problematised (e.g. Bawden 1989; McGuire 1983; Paynter 1989; Shanks and Tilley 1987b; Yoffee 1979; 1993), the epistemological fallacies of this theory were never thoroughly examined, dissected and critiqued, at least within the context of archaeology. As this epistemological deconstruction never took place, the foundations of social evolutionary theory were never shaken. The result of this is that beyond the confines of British prehistoric archaeology, social evolutionary approaches continue to have influence over archaeological interpretation. The original terminology may be replaced by terms such as 'social complexity' or 'social inequality', but in essence, the issue of how stratified societies 'emerge' remains a key focus of investigation. It is therefore not surprising that volumes such as *The Evolution of Human Societies: From Forager Group to Agrarian State* (Johnson and Earle 2000) have come to be reissued in second editions. In addition, an examination of the recent volumes of American archaeology journals will yield articles such as 'Some political processes of ranked societies' (Rosenswig 2000) or 'Demography and cultural evolution: How adaptive cultural processes can produce maladaptive losses – the Tasmanian case' (Henrich 2004). Consequently, in transporting British archaeological theories into a Korean context and having to structure our interpretative programme accordingly (i.e. beginning with a critique of social evolution), we are reminded that social evolutionary thought continues to have currency within world archaeology, and therefore that British theoretical archaeology must remain vigilant against its threat.

It is thus by taking into consideration and respecting the conditions of Korean archaeology, whilst at the same time actively using the Korean archaeological material to clarify, develop and critique ideas formulated in the context of British archaeology, that studies such as the current research can avoid criticisms of intellectual 'imperialism'. It is hoped that this thesis will inform future studies, so that British archaeological theories are not merely 'applied', but are fully explored and developed within the context of Korean archaeology.

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