ASPECTS OF CEREMONIAL BURIAL IN THE BRONZE AGE OF SOUTH-WEST BRITAIN

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Summary

The aim of this study is to investigate the ways in which actions involving the construction of funerary mounds facilitated the continuity of Beaker and Bronze Age society in South-West Britain by creating and renewing meaningful traditions of knowledge.

Following a brief introduction (Chapter 1) which reviews the character and contents of the study, the second chapter considers some theoretical issues arising from the practice of interpretative archaeology, and concludes with a discussion of death rituals and their archaeological appropriation. Chapter 3 is a critical review of the modern tradition of barrow study, and proposes an alternative perspective pursued in later chapters.

Chapter 4 involves an examination of the environmental and social context surrounding later third and second millennium burial practices in the South-West in terms of its implications for community regionalization, social structure, and funerary function.

Chapter 5 contains an overview of the funerary sites, a discussion of the analysis employed in their examination, and a contextual history of Bronze Age funerary practices, integrating the results into a general view of social and ritual development.

Chapter 6 elaborates upon Beaker/Bronze Age traditions of knowledge by detailing the form and content of the meaningful taxonomies which structured perception, and how such taxonomies were forwarded and reproduced through tomb construction and related ritual actions. The chapter concludes by considering the results of the analysis against the current approaches to the subject.

The picture of Bronze Age ceremonial burial which emerges differs from that produced by traditional and current perspectives, in that local contingent circumstances and cosmological constructs are shown to have been of equal importance to both power relations and large scale economic structures in influencing site location, monument appearance, material culture use, and funerary action.

Appendices and tables summarise individual site histories and supporting data.

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Chapter 1 An introduction

1.1 Introduction

Hermeneutic philosophers have described the process of historical interpretation as one which involves both the horizon[1] of the interpreter or reader, and that of the object, text, or action of the past. No distinction is demanded for the following work beyond its status as a personal, timely, situated product of interpretation, so therefore, as a way of beginning, I would like to reveal how the merging of the two components of this hermeneutic discourse on South-Western Bronze Age funerary practices contributed to its form and content.

When I began looking at Bronze Age ceremonial burial, my main objective was to break out of what I have referred to below as a generalizing, or modernist perspective. My dissatisfaction with the traditional, systemic, and social evolutionary studies which constituted the modernist discourse on barrow burial at that time, arose from an immediate perception of the inability, or disinclination of these studies to address the enormous variability of site form and ritual action which constituted my first and very strong impression of the material. The history of events, that is - the history of situated local action it seemed, was being compromised in favour of an exemplification of evolutionary long term structures and systemic change. The central problem, as elaborated elsewhere (Barrett 1994), involves the issue of scale.

Critiques of a perception of historical time and social space which consists of a series of varying analytical units between "event" and "individual site", and *longue duree* and "world system" have stressed that social and historical analysis must operate with a recognition of the dialectic between these extremes or scales: the dialectic between agency and structure (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1979; 1984). Further, the adoption of postmodernist social theories in the human sciences has cast suspicion on generalizing projects of any sort, and encouraged investigation of strategy, difference, context, and contingency. Justification for

redressing the balance in funerary studies from the general to the particular and the situated is, however, not strictly dependent upon theoretical concerns. Additional support can perhaps be gained for a local situated funerary study by considering Giddens's notion of the time-space "stretching" of societies (Giddens 1981; 1984:142, 143). The concept of stretching concerns how widely distributed the structuring properties of communities are within time-space, and as such, allows the determination of appropriate "scale" in social analysis to leave the conceptual realm, and instead focus on the modes of regionalization, or institutional articulation within societies. In tribal societies or small oral cultures (like those of the Beaker and Bronze Age South-West) Giddens notes, structuring principals operate through tradition and kinship, which are embedded in both time and space. Therefore, the delineation of the particular institutional character of Bronze Age society, and consequently, the appropriate scale with which to initially consider funerary practices, also involves a sensitivity towards the patterning of material culture and action in the archaeological record.

In addition to social theory, the comparatively recent anthropological literature concerning death rituals provides a wealth of exemplary material for enriching the perception of Bronze Age ceremonial burial. Many of these studies have stressed or illustrated how funerary rituals not only function as a means to legitimate and perpetuate the socio-political order, but also reproduce and create, through action, the central values of society. These values are generally represented within and through a set of related symbolic associations which in turn, reference and objectify a cosmological order. Consequently, cultural perceptions of life and death can be identified which structure the form, nature and content of funerary rituals, and sepulcher construction.

As noted above, the funerary record was not an entirely passive participant in this endeavor to rewrite Bronze Age funerary practice. In describing the hermeneutic issue of understanding, Ricoeur (1971:558) has spoken of an "injunction **starting** from the text" which encourages a particular way of looking at things, and consequently enables alternative perspectives. The means by which this was accomplished in the particular encounter being addressed here are multiple and varied, but principally concern the manifestation, the constitution, and the particular South-Western character of the funerary

monuments.

Of perhaps all the sites both funerary and ritual which occur across the British landscape, it is the barrows which were the most visible, and the most approachable. During the 1000 or so years in which they were constructed, they appropriated and filled up sections of the landscape in ways and in numbers no other class of monuments preceding them had ever accomplished. There is some encouragement here then, for a belief that as the primary objects of human labour for at least part of this time, and as important community monuments, their participation in the reproduction of society was multifaceted, and complex. The sites themselves were also visually and physically evocative. In the South-West, this is especially the case, as builders or funerary specialists incorporated a number of different coloured and textured caps, crusts, and so on into the body of the mound from a variety of sources and moreover, regulated the performance of ritual actions involving the corpse and items of material culture through a number of complex structural devices. The appearance, size, and constituent features and actions at the sites are clearly at odds with functional requirements, and remain in part unaddressed by contemporary barrow analyses which have focused upon the discourse of power relations which was played out through funeral topography and barrow construction (Barrett 1989; 1990b; 1994; Garwood 1991; Mizoguchi 1992; 1994). Other, more particular aspects of the South-Western material discouraged lines of interpretation which involved issues of this nature, thereby necessitating an alternating frame of reference in this study. These aspects are a function both of the regional social character of the peninsula (which in part determined the forms of the funerary practices), and the environmental conditions particular to the region which acted upon the residues of those practices. The South-Western funerary corpus contains relatively few examples of the classic forms of burial so often identified in other regions, and upon which traditional and more recent interpretations have been based. Cremation for example, is at least an equally common early burial rite to inhumation, multiple and/or mixed burials are common, rich and richly accompanied burials throughout the period are relatively rare, and often fragmentary deposits of bone take the place of full burial. Further, the acid soil conditions have compromised much skeletal and some artifactual evidence, further denying interpretations which begin from a recognition of particular and discrete individual burials, and their sex,

age and corpse positions.

Taken together, the social and disciplinary horizon within which my encounter with barrows has taken place, and the horizon of the past itself, each played a role in defining the scale and character of interpretation found in the study below. The outcome of this dialogue between past and present has promoted an approach to Bronze Age ceremonial burial which directly focuses upon the construction of, and movement and actions with respect to the funerary monuments in local settings. These elements have been addressed with the premise that particular meaningful traditions of knowledge, i.e. cosmologies, were being created and renewed through these practices as communities struggled to come to terms with the reality of death within the continuity of their lives. By focusing on these particular aspects of Bronze Age ceremonial burial, my aim has been to augment the current body of knowledge on this topic by elaborating on the way in which funerary practices participated in the constitution of Bronze Age society.

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 briefly elaborates upon the duality of past and present in an interpretative archaeology, and considers other issues relative to the status of its product. The chapter concludes with a consideration of how death rituals participate in the reproduction of society and how such a process can be appropriated archaeologically.

Chapter 3 consists of a situated critique of the past approaches to Bronze Age barrow burial mentioned above, and concludes by proposing an alternative, postmodern approach.

In Chapter 4, the distinctive social and economic context for the funerary practices of the later third and second millennium in the South-West is presented. This is considered in terms of its implications for community regionalization, and for the relative importance of the funerary sphere in structuring knowledge about the world.

After an overview of the funerary sites included in the thesis, and a discussion of the form of analysis employed in their examination, Chapter 5 proceeds with a contextual history of Bronze Age funerary practices, and concludes by integrating the results into a general view of social and ritual development for the period which is supported by the contextual analysis in Chapter 4.

Chapter 6 elaborates upon the local construction of Beaker/Bronze Age meaningful traditions of

knowledge initiated during the contextual analyses of the previous chapter. This details the form and content of the meaningful taxonomies which structured perception, and how such taxonomies were forwarded and reproduced through tomb construction and related ritual actions.

The thesis concludes by considering the results of the study in reference to the current state of knowledge regarding Bronze Age funerary practices.

NOTES

1 The notion of "horizon" for conceptualizing the view, or vision which one brings to discourse or interpretation originates in the work of Gadamer (1975:272).

Chapter 2 From a Theory of Practice to a Practice of Theory

2.1 Introduction

> Looking into dragons, not domesticating them
> or abominating them, not drowning them in vats of
> theory, is what anthropology has been all about.
> It has been the office of others to reassure,
> ours to unsettle. Australopithicines, Tricksters,
> Clicks, Megaliths - we hawk the anomalous, peddle
> the strange. Merchants of astonishment.
> (Geertz 1989:30).

With these words, Geertz touches upon what is perhaps the most important preoccupation of archaeology in recent years - coming to terms with "the other". I would like to begin by briefly considering the extent to which we do get beyond Foucault's "consoling play of recognitions" (1984:88) in the writing of prehistory. To what degree is the strangeness of the past a participant in this endeavour?

Many scientists, apart from hardened realists and positivists, accept to some degree the principal of subject dependency - that is, that nothing has an existence independent of our theoretical interpretations of it. The organization of the observed world, and thus the facts about it, rely upon convention, itself contingent (Goodman 1989). In science, just as in social practice, different conceptions of reality are given shape according to definite interests and particular frames of reference which are part of the contemporary social and political milieu (Tilley 1989a; 1989b). As Bloor has noted, "if knowledge depends upon a vantage point outside history, then we may give it up as lost" (1991:18). In the social sciences, this point

has been convincingly argued by hermeneutic philosophers. Ricoeur (1981:76), following Gadamer (1975: 245-258) has written: "Historical knowledge cannot free itself from the historical condition....history as science receives its meanings, at the outset, as well as the end of research from the link it preserves with a received and recognised tradition." A view of the history of science then, as moving closer and closer to some reality - some "other" - must be rejected. It is rather a teleological progression, as science increases its capacity to fulfil particular aims and purposes defined by its practitioners (Barnes 1974).

Within a conception of scientific practice such as this, the writing of prehistory must inevitably appear as a domestication of difference, of anomaly, of other. We impose our order and meaning upon the past in the present through schemes of classification and rationalization (Thomas 1991a; Tilley 1989b). That this is not an entirely acceptable version of events for many archaeological practioners goes without saying. Indeed, the sophistication of arguments which explore "evidential constraints" (Wylie 1992), "networks of resistance" (Shanks and Tilley 1987b), and "traces" of meaning (Hodder 1991) even among post-positivists, suggests that there exists a lingering desire to ground our knowledge in something autonomous, a-historical or unassailable. The perceived peril of scientific "emasculation" (Lucas 1995:38) through an acceptance of relativism looms large. What seems to be at issue is the particular way the data are involved in our stories about the past. I will return to this point below, but first, some attempt must be made to lay the relativist issue to rest.

2.2 Confronting relativism

To comprehend the writing of prehistory as something having more to do with our **present** concerns enables us to focus upon different views or conceptions of the past, the conditions of their production, and ultimately to an assessment of the validity or truth claims of rival interpretations. Movement towards more political or social assessments of archaeological production however, has been

frustrated by general fears of what might be called the "spectre" (Geertz 1989:12) of relativism. The largely unwarranted view of relativism as pernicious rests on an improper conflation of relativism with both scepticism (or nihilism), and indifferentism. What Feyerabend has rightly called "a curse", the most frequently heard objection to relativism rests upon a view that the recognition of viable theoretical alternatives to one's own position entails a "sceptical suspension of opinion". In short, anything - therefore nothing - "a mutual cancellation of alternatives" (Feyerabend 1987:79; Rescher 1993:88). The sister and perhaps equally aired objection to relativism concerns what is perceived to be its self-refuting nature. If all knowledge/beliefs is/are relative to local or particular contexts, the argument goes, then all are equally acceptable from a rational point of view. Relativism can therefore claim no privileged position (Barnes and Bloor 1982; Bhaskar 1979; Rescher 1993). These objections are easily addressed. Rescher (1993:118), advocating a contextual pluralism, raises the point that only from an "unachievable Olympian point of view" would all alternatives appear equally true and compelling. While there may be an acknowledgement that competing rational alternatives exist to one's own position or theory, a preferential choice based upon contextually rational criteria or standards is always made (Barnes and Bloor 1982; Resher 1993). Further, "sceptical" relativism rests upon an association of the objectivity of knowledge with the truth/objectivity of theories (Feyerabend 1987). Although no absolute determination of objective truth may be possible, this does not prevent judgments of truth being made all the time (Barnes and Bloor 1982; Meiland and Krausz 1982). To be a relativist then, is not to "abandon one's dedication to one's own position" (Rescher 1993:122) for another, any more that it is to helplessly fail to endorse any position at all. Rather, relativism involves an acceptance that beliefs on a certain topic vary contextually in accordance with, or relative to the circumstances of the users. The validity/credibility of these beliefs moreover, should be understood as contingent and local, not subject to a pan-human rational evaluation (Barnes and Bloor 1982; Feyerabend 1987; Goodman 1989; Hollis and Lukes 1982; Shweder 1989). This position is otherwise known as epistemic relativism (Bhaskar 1979; Feyerabend 1987).

Further, such a relativism argues that what appears to be the same "reality" to a number of groups or individuals can be described or understood in a number of different ways, some at odds with one

another, yet all with a degree of authority based upon a host of "reality-posits" and organizing principals which argue for objectivity and are capable of rational reconstruction (Shweder 1989: 127, 134). Therefore this scheme holds that there is not one reality - one real world - but many (Goodman 1989:83; Meiland and Krausz 1982). One could then speak of a multiplicity of objectivities, conceptual schemes, or forms of life. The objective status of a belief or a scientific result is not therefore universally binding but rather contained within particular frameworks of knowledge.

Feyerabend (1987) has convincingly argued for this form of relativism which he views as democratic because it acknowledges many ways of being in the world, and encourages productive debate and understanding. After all, in the every day personal and professional contexts in which the issues of belief or theory are debated, relativism ceases to be less about concepts and more about human relations. For example, the productive debate, acquiescence and cooperation in the excavation, reburial and repatriation issues so important to both scientists and indigenous peoples could not have taken place without a relativistic commitment of this nature (e.g. Allison 1996; Cohen and Swidler 1997; Layton 1989; McGuire 1995). One could also view the rise of engendered archaeologies to scholarly prominence in a similar light (e.g. Gero and Conkey 1991).

2.3 Interpretation as a mode of the possible

Returning now to the debate concerning the participation of "the other" within archaeological production, the unavoidable, though not unwelcome conclusion of an acceptance of the theory-ladenness of data, and therefore of knowledge claims, is that the role of the data as arbiter or final judge is seriously weakened. Indeed, the above discussion suggests that a shift of attention to the contexts within which our constructions of the past are produced would appear to be entirely more appropriate. But does such a position wholly eclipse the role of "the other" in the creative process that is the writing of prehistory? Ricoeur, (1981:93-94) in an attempt to develop a critical hermeneutics through a consideration of the

relationship between interpreter and text, considers this question within a discussion of the relationship between hermeneutics and Habermas' critique of ideology. Seeking to define a new hermeneutics, distanced from Romantic concerns with original meanings and author intentions, he contrasts a search for intention **behind** the text with a view of a possible world **opened up in front of it.** This contrast acts as a useful metaphor for debates in archaeology concerning the data in interpretation. Ricoeur focuses upon the way in which during an interpretative encounter with a text (or human action; Ricoeur 1971:544), the text unfolds a world "in front of" itself which contains a creative imaginary force. As noted above, he contrasts this conception of the interpretative instance with a vision of truth as somehow **hidden behind** a text. Conceived of in this way interpretation becomes both a "mode of the possible" and the foundation for a new being in the world, in which alternative realities "hidden within the self" are drawn out (Ricoeur 1981:93; Shweder 1989:133). This opening up of possibility is reminiscent of the ways in which others have felt that residues of the past, or foreign cultures, or practices represent other, alien realities which both demand our respect, and challenge us to think in new and exciting ways (Fotiadis 1994: 551; Shweder 1989:133). It is in this sense that every hermeneutic encounter between past and present - self and other - has the potential to produce new and alternate prehistories. Ricoeur (1984:97) however, concedes that perhaps this view of the hermeneutic instance does not completely fulfil the demands of a critique of ideology and the emancipatory potential of knowledge which "raises its claim from a different place" than that of hermeneutics, a place where "labour, power and language are intertwined." He suggests, however, that the claims of a critical hermeneutics and of a critique of ideology cross on common ground and, to understand this, it is necessary to consider Ricoeur's definition of "the other" as text or action in the past, in the light of a post-structuralist input; that is, to perceive it as free from the conditions of its production (Barthes 1984; Foucault 1984:101; Gadamer 1975; Ricoeur 1984:159). This serves to put the primary event of archaeology, that is the writing of the past (Tilley 1989b), in the present. Archaeological discourse then, becomes not words with a particular truth value but rather a "practice which produces a certain kind of truth" - a "politics of truth" (Shanks and Tilley 1987a:198; Thomas 1990:22). If truth and emancipation are to be sought through our encounter with "the other" in the present, then our "other", our

material evidence as a force of the possible, is not a constraint, but rather a productive network. The data do not say "No!", they **enable**, and empower (Fotiadis 1994:552). It is with such a conception of "the other" and of the writing of prehistory that we can perhaps appreciate anew the assertion of hermeneutic practioners that time is not something that must be **overcome** in the interpretive process. Instead, the distance between past and present should be seen as a condition of possibility (Gadamer 1975:264-265; Ricoeur ibid.:94), which lies squarely within the framework of present concerns.

2.4 Resurrecting meaning

A related interpretative issue to those just discussed concerns the matter of meaning, both in the pasts we create, and in those we study. Possibly the most important break which post-processual archaeology made with the legacy of the New Archaeology was in its theoretical and practical emphasis on the "meaningful constitution" of culture and material culture (Hodder 1982a:9). The exploration of "meaning" as recoverable in the past, especially in the work of Hodder (1986; 1990) has received criticism for its naivete in attempting to produce a past of the Same (Thomas 1991), and for its conception of its object as lifeless "record" as opposed to social practice (Barrett 1987a; 1987b; 1994). Both criticisms are valid, and the above discussion could be offered as a further critique. It has been suggested that the ethnographies we produce of past and present peoples are best understood as **allegories**, that is, as extended metaphors, or morally charged stories which make the strange comprehensible to us (Brumfiel 1987; Clifford 1986). If our ethnographies are only the latest of a great host of these stories through the ages, then there seems little point in a search for the real meaning of the material culture "text" we examine. In seeking to fulfil our commitment to meaning it will be necessary to shift the emphasis somewhat.

In his discussion of cultural norms, Hodder (1986) also raises the point that all aspects of material culture production can be seen to play a part in the negotiation and fixing of meaning by individuals and

interests groups. This is uncontentious and accords well with Barrett's (1994) insistence (accepted here) that the object of our archaeological inquiry should be interpretative strategies or regimes, which made use of the potential of material culture to be used creatively. This interest in both past and present interpretative regimes is more in keeping with our present postmodern context (see Chapter 3 below and Fotiadis 1994:552) but does not necessarily require that we forego an interest in the "meanings of things." If we own that our reading of the material culture is allegorical - another story or interpretation, both in the presentist sense, and as yet another observation in "the shifting assortment of varied perspectives" (Hodder 1986:159) which acted upon this material through time, then a consideration of strategy and indeed, structuration (see Section 2.6), should involve a consideration of both the variable and dominant readings of this material. "Considering the place of material culture within social practice" (Barrett 1994:165-166) should also, I believe, involve a concern with the creation and reproduction of particular meaningful regimes.

2.5 A theory of practice

I alluded above to regimes of truth which structure our encounter with the material world. These regimes of truth operate in the realm of "general theory" which defines both its objects and the methodology for their study. Until very recently, the fragmentary nature of archaeological evidence, the search for a mode of explanation particular to archaeology, and the sciencing of archaeology in line with broader explanatory concerns within the social sciences were all used to justify the construction of archaeological knowledge at the level of what we might call the long term or the general, which utilized conceptual structures such as cyclical trends or evolutionary structures as explanatory devices. This is not to say that large, deeply layered social systems and institutions should not be archaeological concerns. There has, however, been a dearth of adequate analyses of their origin and persistence which take account of their construction and reproduction within particular contexts of meaningful action (Hodder 1986; 1987;

Johnson 1989). It is not enough to merely note general archaeological variability between different sets of material culture and explain it from "the outside" by reference to laws of social structure and behavioural trends (Hodder 1987: 6). Rather, the specificity of the local context must be addressed in any explanation of the patterning of material culture. This is not merely to assert that an explanation of - to use the topical example - many varying details of Bronze Age funerary practice must be examined from which a generalizing model of the social system for the period can be formulated. It is instead a recognition that material culture is meaningfully constituted, that is, produced in relation to symbolic schemes which are contextually specific (Shanks and Tilley 1987a). If this is accepted then a method of analysis is demanded which accounts for the day to day activities of social actors within the formulation of larger social systems. One way to accomplish this is to think of these social systems as systems of social interaction which are produced and reproduced by the outcomes of action which operates within a matrix of rules and resources. This matrix of rules and resources constitutes the structural properties of social systems which are at once both the medium and the outcome of action, drawn upon by actors or agents in social interaction and also reconstituted through this action (Giddens 1979). Further, this "constitution of society" takes place in specific contexts of time and space through the operation of power relations. It is "within and ...through...geographical configurations and... lived spaces that gender, class, and group relations are constituted [and] social structures come into being ... and are transformed (Pred 1990:10). Societies then, can be seen to be constituted by time-space specific practices, and the spaces and places where social interaction takes place are, like the social structure - socially constructed - both the medium and outcome of human agency.

With this in mind, we could say that during the Bronze Age the structuring principles of society were reproduced through interaction in settings or places of "high-presence availability" (Giddens 1981:182-183), such as the domestic complex and the places of burial or ritual. Further, it is in these constructed and structuring places and spaces that the control and dissemination of traditional knowledge or information took place through the operation of specific relations of authoritative power.

As Giddens (1984:219) has noted, every research investigation in the social sciences or history is

involved in relating action to structure by tracing the consequences of activity and how these affect the fate of individuals. This must be accomplished by direct study in contexts of interaction, which necessarily moves beyond the abstract, terms of social theory, from a "theorization of practice to the **practice of theory**" - the interpretation of concrete circumstances, actual agents and real relations (Pred 1990:30). In the sections that follow I should like to set the stage for such an investigation.

2.6 A practice of theory: death rituals and the structuration of social systems

Having arrived at an acceptable way of perceiving "the constitution of society" I would now like to move "beyond Giddens" (Pred 1990:30) and consider some specific ways in which human agency is involved in the reproduction of traditions of knowledge. While such reproduction takes place both in the sphere of everyday practice (as *habitus*) and in ritual, it is to the latter that I shall now turn.

The degree to which ritual, as opposed to everyday practice, is involved in the creation of meaning generally has been extensively examined (Barth 1975; Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Turner 1969). Ritual and everyday practice are structured in terms of the same conceptual categories and, as such, ritual is a potent force in the structuring of habit through its emphasis on fixity, and in its association with the sacred (Turner 1992). Unlike ordinary practice, ritual involves both performance and participation through which the principles of the social and symbolic world are deliberately highlighted and reinforced. The movement of people in space, and the manipulation of items of material culture constitute two important ways in which this is achieved. Meaning is understood through constant bodily experience in a real physical and social world (Lakoff 1987). This and other points will be elaborated below.

Transition rituals, such as mortuary practices and initiation ceremonies, which involve the passage of an individual from one stage of life to another, are most instructive in illuminating how the structuration of social systems is achieved.

Van Gennep's (1960) attention to ceremonies of human passage isolated three categories which

constituted these *rites de passage*: rites of separation from a previous world or state to the new one, rites of transition, or liminality, during which the subject was wavering between two worlds, or states of being, and finally, rites of incorporation, during which the subject becomes reintegrated into the community in his or her new status. At funerals, rites of separation might involve a removing of the corpse from its dwelling place and the burning of its possessions. Rites of transition could involve the public viewing of the corpse and social restrictions on the near kin, while rites of incorporation might involve feasting or secondary burial. Rites of transition and incorporation, he suggested, have the greatest duration and complexity in funerals.

Turner's (1967) elaboration of Van Gennep's notion of liminality primarily in the context of initiation ceremonies amongst the Ndembu of Zambia is particularly instructive for understanding just how ritual both reinforces and creates the classificatory schemes by which individuals make sense of their environment. Liminal rites are often highly charged events, where objects and people are at once no longer classified and not yet classified. Customary categories of evidence are confused and a situation of dangerous ambiguity prevails, for while there is obvious power in the recognised forms of society, there is "other" power in the inarticulate, marginal areas which lie beyond the recognised boundaries of meaning (Douglas 1966:98). As such, liminality is the source for all structure and represents a realm of pure possibility where novel configurations of objects and ideas can occur. This ambiguity of meaning which occurs within liminality sets up a situation in which participants of a ritual can be called upon to reflect upon the factors of culture. This is achieved by the withdrawing of elements, by ritual leaders, from their usual setting and combining them in new configurations, often accompanied by discolouration, exaggeration, or diminution of componential features of certain objects or beings. For example, the gross masked monstrosities in Ndembu initiation and funerary rituals are designed to startle participants and observers into thinking about objects, persons and relationships between them, which in the everyday world are often taken for granted (Turner 1967:103,105). For the Ndembu, the elements or units within a ritual are called *chijikijilu* which signifies both a hunter's blaze and a beacon, something which both marks a path from the unknown to the known, and stands for the structured and the ordered (Turner 1969:15).

Further, the juxtaposition of symbolic components within ritual involves references to sexuality and fertility, as powerful themes of death and growth are called up through symbolism involving the human body and the natural world (Huntington and Metcalf 1979; Turner 1967:99). In the same way, other, more abstract values of society, such as the importance of kinship, are also emphasized which allows ritual to "speak of worlds" beyond those of lived experience (Barrett 1994:80; Barth 1975).

Turner (1967:106) has suggested that there are limits to the realm of creative possibility opened up in ritual, which begs the question of exactly how much freedom the ritual specialist or participant has in transforming the factors of culture, and how exactly changes in this framework of knowledge can ensue. It is in this search for the events which create and shape the cosmological order that our understanding of the role of ritual in structuration must begin. Sahlins (1985:ix) has suggested that, in the context of ritual, the value of signs or symbolic referents is always "at risk", as operations of metaphor, analogy, substitution, interpretation and misunderstanding by experts, participants and onlookers alike are motivated by a variety of personal projects. Two ethnographic examples illustrate this and reveal the substantial degree to which the process of ritual functions to simultaneously remake and create the building blocks of cosmology.

Fifth step initiation rituals among the Mountain Ok groups of Inner New Guinea are performed by a ritual specialist only infrequently, and because they are veiled in secrecy, require storage in the mind of mainly one individual. The recreation of this ritual is said to be a task of mainly remembering, and as such involves a great deal of memory, but also **creativity** on the part of the ritual expert. His product, which in very many ways is an individual statement, is often further shaped and authorized by a very small group of peers. The final form of the ritual is occasionally augmented at various parts where memory has failed to serve, by traditions of neighbouring groups. For the Ok then, the integrity of the ritual, and indeed of the "world" which is shaped by such a ritual in turn, depends very much upon individual creativity and negotiation, though rites are generally held to be received ancestral tradition (Barth 1987). The aspects of creativity and reformulation through ritual of are especially clear in Drewal's (1992) study of the Yoruba in south-western Nigeria, where diviners, masked dancers, and drummers during a number of different ceremonies "play" rituals through intervention, elaboration and recontextualization in order to address

current social conditions or concerns as well as different points of view. In one ritual called "Knowing the Head", diviners "interpret" esoteric verse in the form of a parable, which is used to instruct parents on the appropriate upbringing for their children. The creation of the parable is an improvisation, based upon the diviners creative combination of the central elements of the verse with his personal reading of the parents and children. The traditional verses then, gain their meaning for the participants in the ritual through this process and moreover, become objectified through the development of the child under his/her parents' guidance.

With this understanding of how the reproduction and transformation of knowledge can be achieved through ritual, it is now time to consider the degree to which these strategies in the context of funerary rituals involve the material conditions of existence. If funerals are to be understood as rituals for the deployment of a particular range of symbolic resources, then we can perhaps say that particular cosmologies, or 'texts" were constructed during these ceremonies which involved funerary architecture, the corpse, items of material culture, and the mourners (Barrett 1994:113). Further, if funerals are all about transformation, then the material correlates of this transformation in the course of varied burial and ancestral rituals are likely to impact upon the funerary landscape as a sort of topography, in which particular rites of passage are more physically emphasized than others (Barrett 1988:32).

Tombs, and other funerary architecture, beside being containers for the dead, have long been considered more important for the living (Fleming 1973). They focus attention towards particular actions or individuals, structure the movement of persons and the deposition of things, and over the course of time act as repositories of power which can be called upon, changed and renewed. Their form alone can act as a powerful metaphor for both everyday items and abstract concepts. The form of a cemetery itself may be the result and the conformation of some spatial structuring principal present in the community which further, creates and reaffirms the order of kin relations and ancestral ties (Garwood 1991; Mizoguchi 1992; Parker Pearson 1992). The movements of persons in relation to these tombs, or their actions within them, emphasize important relations of dependence between people and the created world. The physicality of the corpse through its manipulation becomes both a metaphor and a focus for the meaningful placement of

funerary furniture (Barrett 1994:118). Grave goods and other items which figure in a funerary ritual possess symbolic referents which enables the forces called upon by those referents to be deliberately employed in the funeral ritual with beneficial ends, such as removing pollution, or restoring order to the community. They are also involved in the affirmation of the order of things. For example, the remains of the chiefly dead among the Taironas of highland Colombia were buried in pots, not for convenience but because the pot is the male equivalent of the woven bag which represents the womb-mother, the earth itself, and death for the Taironas is a returning to the womb (Ereira 1990).

While much of funerary ritual is archaeologically invisible, the emphasis upon one particular mortuary rite or part of a rite, such as cremation or secondary burial, establishes the importance of different places, or *locales* where ritual activity converges (Barrett 1988; Giddens 1984:123-124). At these *locales*, the stages or the passage of time which comprise the making of ancestors are materially and structurally commemorated. These commemorations may take the form of structural alterations to the form of a tomb, as among the Tandroy of south-eastern Madagascar where a stone cairn over the body is gradually enveloped in an impressive painted stone enclosure (Parker Pearson 1992:944). Further, among the Antanosy and the Antaimanambondro in southern Madagascar, the erection of markers or cenotaphs away from the place of burial to commemorate the corpse's passage from wet to dry bone, functions as the equivalent of secondary burial practiced among other groups (Mack 1986:84). Activities such as feasting at the tomb, gifts of food to the deceased, and trampling, clearing, or other activity at the tomb often mark the passage of specific numbers of days or units of time during a liminal or incorporative process (Hertz 1960; Hudson 1966). Finally, although diversity in the material correlates of funerary rites within communities generally indicates distinct practices related to specific rituals of passage as elaborated above, variability and diversity of action involving funerary architecture or goods within cemeteries can often mask ritual equivalences of practice. These may involve the form of the grave, the outer structure of the tomb, or the treatment of the corpse (Hudson 1966:366; Mack 1986:84; Metcalf 1981:567). For example, Metcalf has discussed the "ritual equivalence" of immediate burial and the elaborate *nulang* secondary burial for the Berawan of Borneo. Hudson reported that among the Ma'anyan of south-eastern Borneo, both the

simpler adult burial and the more structurally elaborate and ostentatious *ngiler* adult burial initiate an identical forty-nine day post-interment period, which is terminated by a two day feast. Finally, Hertz (1960:58) noted that over time one set of complex practices, such as the movement and manipulation of bones of the recent dead before secondary burial may come to be replaced by another set of simpler ones, such as the trimming of grass on a grave or remodelling of a mortuary structure.

The complexities of such varied schemes are numerous and are best addressed by a conception of ritual meaning and change which seeks to understand how the manipulation of material culture and the experiencing of space simultaneously reproduce and create meaningful structural totalities. It is to that which I now turn.

2.7 A practice of theory: appropriating the creation of meaning

In an important break with structural anthropology Bourdieu (1977: 114) wrote that understanding ritual practice is not a question of decoding the internal logic of a symbolic system but of restoring its "practical necessity" by relating it to the real conditions of its genesis. By looking at systems of meaning or cosmologies as **products of history** the emphasis necessarily moves away from the construction of ordered models towards a search for events which shape and reproduce ways of seeing the world (Barth 1987). The break with structuralism in this position comes with a belief first, that patterns in the use of material culture or space are not to be treated as the end products of an investigation but as tracks or results that are left behind. There is a shift then, from "the normative to the particular and historically situated" (Drewal 1992:10). Second, that practice has a logic, but not one that is logical, or necessarily coherent since it is formed by events and human decisions (Barth 1987:83; Bourdieu 1977:109).

The first statement is a methodological point, and echoes comments made in Section 2.5, concurrent with current trends in social anthropology, that the focus of any study concerned with cosmologies should be on interactional events as the processes which create them. An adequate account of

cultural "forms" then must view them as always under a process of reformulation in which material from the past is "elaborated, condensed, extended or expanded" through ritual praxis (Drewal 1992:102) Structures then, have "no existence apart from the... play of actors", but structure is "illuminated" in ritual (1992:10,28). This was particularly highlighted in the examples of structuration presented above.

With reference to the second point, we can start from Bourdieu's comment that ritual practice effects a fluid or "fuzzy" abstraction, bringing the same symbol into different relations through different aspects, or bringing different aspects of the same referent into the same relation of opposition (1977:112) as a move into a discussion of the creation of meaning. In such a situation, it is not unusual for there to be a great amount of discrepancies or contradictions between a number of meanings given to any one symbol. Ritual symbols, like other objects which are imbued with meaning, are inherently polysemous, each one having a "spectrum" of referents or associations which are linked by a simple mode of association based upon an arbitrary identification of some natural quality or form of the symbol (Turner 1967). For example, among the Ndembu, particular trees are identified with strength or fertility based upon the strength of their wood or the qualities of their fruit and therefore utilized in a particular healing ritual designed to restore strength and fertility to a individual (Turner 1969). The simplicity of the symbolic association allows for a wide variety of significations, some conflicting, to arise from one symbol (Turner 1967:50). An example may illustrate this. Several powerful yet contradictory associations of ash exist among the Endo of east Africa, and are called up in different interpretative circumstances. Ash is smeared upon female initiates in the circumcision house which serves to highlight the positive female power of sexuality and biological creativity. Alternatively, when a women is seen doing the female duty of removing hearth ash from the compound, the association of ash with the negative qualities of womanhood (uncontrollability, individualism, harmful to male interests) is implied. In the boys' circumcision house yet another disparate meaning of ash can be found. The ash in the fire of this house is **not** removed and through a series of linking principles is associated with the clan and therefore commonality and responsibility. In this example, different contexts of practice invoked particular and alternate sets of meanings from the surplus of meaning inherent in one particular object (Moore 1986:117-118).

We can also go further, and say that the active association or identification of symbols with particular principles in specific contexts of practice is an act both of interpretation (Moore 1986:119) and of creation, serving to both form and reproduce traditions of knowledge: the principles by which the world is comprehended.

2.7.1 Metaphor and the operation of symbols

The emphasis in the above discussion has been on the associational use of symbols, as opposed to their position as part of a pair of opposites in a system of contrasts. While symbols are often used contrastively (we may think here of the opposition between the upper brightly lit noble "male" portion of the Kabyle house and its lower, dark, nocturnal "female" counterpart from Bourdieu's (1973) work) the generation of their meaningful content appears to depend more upon similarity than upon difference. In the above discussion it is possible to say that the particular symbols were employed because of their **metaphorical** fitness. The operation of metaphor or analogy in the creation of symbols operates by drawing a similarity or likeness between things in a particular circumstance, when they would otherwise be entirely different. This is achieved in an interpretative context by transferring to one thing the sense of another.

The metaphorical operation then, is one of creation. Symbolic experience "calls for a work of meaning from metaphor" as the latter engenders an unlimited number of potential interpretations at a conceptual level (Ricoeur 1976:65).

To understand how it is that the metaphorical operation of symbols is utilized to create meaning, it is necessary to concentrate on the qualities of a symbol. Through the operation of metaphor/analogy symbols accomplish a number of functions relating to meaning. Firstly, they **condense**, that is, many different things may be represented in a single symbolic formation. Secondly, they **unify** disparate ideas or phenomena through the operation of analogy, allowing them to be bracketed together under a single

symbol, and thirdly, symbols frequently contain **two poles of meaning** through which natural, physiological phenomena and processes are juxtaposed with more ephemeral concepts like norms, values and principles of social organization (Turner 1967:28). Taking as an example the *nuhue*, or men's ceremonial house among the Kogi of Highland Colombia, the shape of the house's roof and the smoke inside it from the ritual fire mirror the distant mountain ridges, shrouded in mist. In Kogi creation myths, the mountains are said to be the original ceremonial houses. For the Kogi, the *nuhue* is identified with water, in its wood and in its similarity to the mountains, which the Kogi see as water bearing and life giving. Water, in the Tairona language refers to the water of creation - the primordial substance of life, and with The Mother. The *nuhue* is thus identified with the mountains, life and creation. Further, the physical structure and division of space within the *nuhue* echoes both the mythical structure of the universe (the ceremonial house sits between nine lower and upper worlds or realms of men and of the spirits) and serves to maintain a balance of forces (male-female, good-evil) in the world. As a male centre in the community, the ceremonial house is the locus for the passing down of tradition and laws, and is associated with the continuity of the group and its traditions. It should come as no surprise that the Kogi should call it the **world-house**. It is the **Heart of the World** and symbolizes what the Kogi are and their relationship to the universe (Ereira 1990:50-51, 176-179).

Turner has identified symbols as potentially consisting of objects, activities, spatial units, relationships, events, and gestures. In an archaeological context, we can perhaps narrow this list to objects, activities/events and spatial units. From the above discussion it should be clear that the meaning content which these things can be said to possess derives both from their use or operation and from their position in relation to other symbols (Barth 1975:190; Turner 1967:50). I would like to consider each of these three "archaeological" symbols in turn, in an anthropological context with an aim to identifying how such objects, activities/events and spatial units are invested with meaning.

The pandanus plant among the Baktaman of Highland New Guinea has a number of associations, mainly to male fertility and strength. It has a red, phallus-like fruit but its associations, and therefore meanings are created principally by its use in initiation rituals where its juice is mixed with melted pork fat

(which has a similar cluster of associations to maleness and fertility through its use in initiation rituals) and red berber bark. During initiation ceremonies senior males pour this mixture over red ochre and smear the novices with it, to the accompaniment of war cries and chants of "I paint you red!". The pandanus is thus associated with male strength, bonding and fertility (Barth 1975:172).

In the *Isoma* ritual of the Ndembu of Zambia, in order to restore fertility to a couple, the pair are made to pass repeatedly through a tunnel/burrow. At each end of the tunnel/burrow different objects and experiences await them which both have and are given a series of connotations through their beneficial effects during the ritual. One side of the burrow is generally associated with death, heat, blood, misfortune, and the other with life, fertility, coolness and water. As the man and woman move from life to death and back again, the curative aspects the ritual are believed to take place (Turner 1969). The oppositions between these concepts are created and recreated by the Ndembu through the motion of the patients through the tunnel and the sprinkling of medicines, water and blood upon them at the respective ends.

Finally, the treatment of guests visiting the familiar Berber House and the place where the washing of the dead is accomplished is significant in terms of the way in which space within the house is redefined by these actions and related to a wider series of homologous relationships involving the community and the relationships between men and women (Bourdieu 1973:99-100). The placing of a guest against the interior west wall of the house, facing east into and in the light, highlights that area as a place of honour. This is because the south and west portions of the house interior are associated with masculinity, honour and dryness. This space and these qualities are opposed in practice to the northern part of the house which is physically lower, used to house the animals, is the site for the washing of the dead and is generally associated with dampness, intimacy, and the feminine. Leaving the house at the break of day, a man moves from west towards the east and the source of light to attend to important matters.

It is an accepted premise here, that the attention towards particular interpretative strategies, and the creation of meaning through action found in the ethnographic examples above, must necessarily also form a large part of **archaeological** interpretation. While this has been accomplished to some extent in the writing

of earlier European prehistory (e.g. Hodder 1990; Richards 1990; 1996; Tilley 1991) the number of studies addressing meaningful traditions of knowledge within Bronze Age communities remains very small (Barrett 1994; Mizoguchi 1994). Elements of Chapter 5, and Chapter 6 below are intended to redress this balance somewhat. Before turning to the funerary data in detail however, some attempt must be made to locate this particular project within the history of barrow study in light of the theoretical and exemplary discourse contained in this chapter.

Chapter 3 A Critical History

3.1 Introduction

> For since we are the outcome of earlier generations, we are also the outcome of their aberrations, passions and errors, and indeed their crimes; it is not possible to wholly free oneself from this chain. If we condemn these aberrations and regard ourselves as free of them, this does not alter the fact that we originate in them. The best we can do is to confront our inherited and hereditary nature with our knowledge of it, and through a new, stern discipline combat our inborn heritage and implant in ourselves a new habit, a new instinct...(Nietzsche 1983:76).

In this quote from *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* Nietzsche speaks about a critical way of seeing the past, one which serves the present and the future through a judgement and dissolution of what went before. His emphasis on the practice of history in service of life (or the present) through a critical engagement with the past, is echoed in the writings of postmodern critical theorists, who have drawn upon the writings of Marx to argue for the development of a "new world through criticism of the old" (Leonard 1990:264) by "use[ing] the past in service of the present" (Tilley 1989). Such a position is useful for framing a new perspective on old material (in this case approaches to Bronze Age funerary practices) but must necessarily be accompanied by a consideration of the evaluation of knowledge claims and the demonstration of an alternative perspective.

A critical history should not attempt to substitute one truth for another (Bauman 1992). Nor

should it move in an evolutionary sense towards positions of ever increasing accuracy or value freedom. As suggested in the last chapter, the determination of truth will always emerge from a critical confrontation between and within worlds or traditions of discourse (Leonard 1990). In this conceptualization, theories are "falsified" based upon their particular social implications, and their productivity in an emancipatory sense (Saitta 1989). This process will always proceed from the point of view of an alternative set of values and conceptual structure (Tilley 1989). Advocates of the strong programme of the sociology of knowledge have suggested that knowledge should be explained and evaluated as a socially contingent construction, as action which proceeds from an ideology of the present (Barnes, Bloor and Henry 1996; Gibbon 1989; Gero 1989). They further argue that knowledge is developed through the deployment of metaphors which shape or redescribe reality in the form of both descriptions and models (Barnes 1974; Sarup 1988). Through the metaphorical properties of language, and the ability of metaphor to transcend difference, the object world of the past through its totality can be conceived in forms of likeness.

A critique of earlier approaches then, must make reference to the value system underlying the theories and models of past constructs, how modern constructs and concepts affect the description and analysis of artifacts and how the data which make the past meaningful are selected. Finally, the origin and persistence of particular perspectives on the past is of some interest for understanding how the production of particular pasts proceeds directly from present societal trends (Gero 1991; Gibbon 1989; Tilley 1989).

As I indicated above, such a critique does not proceed in a vacuum. The many and varied commentaries on the practice of critical theory in archaeology and elsewhere are all in agreement on the fact that any such analysis must understand and be explicit about its own perspective as a "historically and contextually contingent" one (Leonard 1990:263; Leone, Potter and Shackel 1987; Whylie 1985). The conception of human nature offered here as transformative and constituted in variable and contingent circumstances has been implicitly and overtly implied throughout this work. Such an ontology seems appropriate for a critique of past approaches that in many cases have consciously or unconsciously reproduced the contemporary social order.

What follows is a brief assessment of the modern history of British Bronze Age funerary studies in

light of the above discussion. It deals mainly on studies of barrows, and works in which barrow form a major part of some larger analysis concerned with Beaker and Bronze Age social structure and organization. Because of the general similarity of the data, and a common tradition of barrow analyses, some northern European barrow studies will be considered as well. In the last 20 years, the atheoretical antiquarian discourse of barrow study has been replaced by a philosophical and methodological concern for value-freedom, and an attention towards social and economic processes. In turn, this has been extended by an interest in societal contradictions and conflicts and the evolutionary progression of social development. All these concerns have arisen from the experience of modernity (Tilley 1990) and as such must be understood and critiqued with this in mind. This historical progression will serve as an adequate outline for discussion.

3.2 Culture History

I do not wish to provide a comprehensive critical overview on the practice of archaeology as culture history. This has been accomplished quite effectively elsewhere (Barrett 1990a; Binford 1972; Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 1987b). However the main criticism levelled at the practice and products of this discourse serve to provide an effective framework for barrow analyses which have taken place within this historical context. Archaeological analyses which take a culture history approach are commonly referred to in a pejorative sense as "traditional" and "antiquarian" because of their links with nineteenth and early twentieth century works in which the writing of the past was uncritically theorized and often employed explanations for phenomena which were influenced by theories of cultural evolution. The product of these studies consists mainly of descriptive detail of the archaeological record with narrative embellishment (Shanks and Tilley 1987a), influenced by analogies with classical society, classical ethnology and later literary sources.

Most round barrow studies written in the framework of culture history are syntheses or general

area overviews (such as Ashbee 1960; Grinsell 1953; Lynch 1980) and some deal with round barrows as part of a wider inquiry into the Bronze Age (Burgess 1980; Ashbee 1978). Also, many excavation reports follow this framework of presentation. In most of these works, the funerary record is encountered and displayed in uncritical descriptive categories. Barrows are presented in all their particularity through a "common-sense" (Shanks and Tilley 1987b:29) categorisation of evidence whose purpose is generally to provide descriptive detail about the funerary practices of a particular community, or a culture group. In *The Age of Stonehenge* for example, Burgess (1980) presents Bronze Age mortuary practices as descriptive data concerning mound construction and artifacts, in a similar fashion to his discussion of craft production and agricultural evidence. In many of these studies, the round barrow itself is divided up into what appear as obvious categories, and through the description of such things as artifacts, ditches, shape, size, and burials there is an expectation of transparency - that knowledge of the past is revealed behind the data (Barrett 1990a). For example, Ashbee, following Childe, suggested that "it should be possible to peer hesitantly beyond the barrows and their relics and glimpse the serried social institutions which [should lead]...to reliable and objective...interpretation..." of the Bronze Age (1960:170). This form of data presentation represents a sort of "naive empiricism' by creating an illusion of objectivity (Barrett 1990a). Knowledge of the Bronze Age within this scheme is achieved therefore through identification. Patterns and associations of artifactual material and barrow typology are sought in the mortuary data, and these are compared with other findings in other barrows for the purpose of identifying a cultural group, a significant grave assemblage, and their distribution and temporality. The associations between certain groups of ceramics, metal objects, constructional details and the treatment of the deceased within a tomb are seen to clearly reflect, or contribute towards the identification of formal cultures and their local or regional variants.

It is perhaps not so much the case, however, that the practioners of traditional archaeology failed to understand that the process of describing and presenting the past is itself a meaningful exercise. They only failed to formulate it (Barrett 1990a). Ashbee, for example took pains to stress that concepts of the past are based upon conclusions arrived at from the ordering in time and space of the monuments and relics

that are projections of the human mind. "There is a constant danger" he wrote, "of interjecting modern concepts into consideration of early society." (1978: 21). Having acknowledged this however, rather than stressing the **difference** of the Bronze Age mortuary record as a means towards appreciating and thus approaching its otherness, Ashbee was concerned with the elimination of "ambiguities" (ibid.21). The removal of ambiguity for Ashbee and others involved turning to historical sources as inspiration in writing a narrative **more true to historical reality**. "Modern Western European Society must be viewed against the perspective of its own Western European prehistoric past...(Ashbee 1978:11)." These historical sources however, also invoked a "familiar past" (Hill 1989) by appealing to the heroic myths of modern Western society formulated upon readings of classical sources. It is in this way that a common sense presentation of the material directly reveals not the past, but instead the value system which underlies the present. The identification of heroic society in the Bronze Age funerary record can be seen as reproducing pervasive nineteenth century values of progressive European society (Rowlands 1984). It is not so much that these analyses consciously reproduced the nineteenth century ideals of European Capitalist society. Rather, they unconsciously constructed a vision of the Bronze Age via the funerary record, which reproduced an idealized European past in line with western ethnocentric traditional history.

This familiar Bronze Age perpetuated in both antiquarian and culture history accounts is an idealized and romanticized version of the period. By producing a description of Bronze Age funerary practices drawn from recent historical sources (which are themselves embedded within the tradition outlined above) a vision of a linear continuity between the Bronze Age past and the present was created. This continuity has, for the most part reinforced evolutionary notions, popular both in the nineteenth century and more recently (Cunliffe 1987) that the Bronze Age contained within it the roots of a distinctive European society. The ideals and qualities of this society; individuality, freedom, and technological progress have become identified in a "heroic" Bronze Age society (Rowlands 1984). In barrow reports and general period syntheses, a Celtic/Heroic model forms the most common way of explaining Beaker and Bronze Age funerary remains (Morris 1988). This model has as its main element the dominance of society by a competitive elite.

> The self-sufficiency of neolithic economy was broken down
> by the advent of warlike invaders imbued with domineering habits
> and an appreciation of metal weapons and ornaments, which
> inspired them to impose sufficient political unity on
> their new domain for some economic unification to follow (Childe 1940:91).

Some of this position's more famous protagonists included Piggott (1938) and Childe who saw the society depicted in the Iliad and the Odyssey as typifying the European Bronze Age. For Childe "Heroic" society began with the appearance of the Beaker Folk. For him "all the vital elements of modern material culture are immediately rooted in the Bronze Age" (Morris 1989:70 compare Childe 1930:2-3). Ashbee, following this tradition wrote that "the formidable edifice which is our modern technology and scientific knowledge rests...upon the progressive skills of unnamed artificers in bronze who were active and inventive in the second millennium BC" (1960:11). For Ashbee it was in the Early Bronze Age funerary record that heroic society could first be seen (1978:27-28).

Recent critiques of Iron Age Studies (Chapman 1987; Hill 1989; Merriman 1987; Rowlands 1984) are most informative concerning the nature and history of this concept of "heroic" or "Celtic" society. Although no substantive links between Bronze Age data and Iron Age society have been demonstrated, it is frequently supposed that the origins of Celtic society existed at an earlier time (Ashbee 1978: 21-34). The Bronze Age was, of course, initially lumped together with the Iron Age as 'Celtic prehistory' by early antiquaries. After the acceptance of the Three Age System, no new models for the Bronze Age were proposed. Instead, the developing concept of 'Celtic society' was stretched back in time (Morris 1988). A review then of the history and genesis of Iron Age Celtic society explains why it has pervaded interpretation of the Bronze Age funerary record to such a great degree.

The idea of a 'Celtic' or 'heroic spirit' which united the people of later European prehistory is unfounded (Merriman 1987). The unity of Celtic society was originally nothing more than a classical perception or definition of the 'non-Mediterranean', or 'Barbarian peoples who surrounded the

Mediterranean world. During the Renaissance, ideas of primitivism and the 'noble savage' became part of the 'Celtic' repertoire. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the classical accounts of the Celts' barbarity, bellicosity, feasting etc. became romanticized, and the Celts as a people became imbued with the qualities of heroism, bravery, dynamism, and individualism, all qualities highly valued in this early modern society. This perception of the Celts was fully developed in the 1930s by which time late European prehistory was viewed as 'heroic' society which could be encapsulated within Homeric, Irish, Welsh and Anglo Saxon literature.

Drawing on this myth, Ashbee (1978:27-28) outlined three sources of historical knowledge to which he applied in his reconstruction of Bronze Age society from its funerary remains: first, the ancient culture of Heroic society, and the early vernacular literature of Britain and Ireland; second, the allusions to Celts, Gauls, and Galatians in historical sources; and third, the Indo-Europeans and their language. Ashbee's interpretations of Beaker and Wessex Culture burials show direct parallels with the Táin bó Cúalnge, and with the social organization of Gaulish tribes as reported the writings of Caesar, respectively. In his interpretation of the 'Wessex Culture' burials around Stonehenge, Ashbee identified an entire royal court, housed at the palace of Stonehenge, from his perceived dimensions of social rank and role revealed by varied Wessex grave furnishings. In the same vein, Grinsell assumed that non-central burials under round barrow were the slaves or retainers of centrally buried lords or chieftains who were killed at his death, in light of both colorful literary and ethnographic sources which reported similar practices (1953:35).

Finally, the interpretation of barrow features within many site reports also contains both subtle and explicit references to funerary episodes in both Homeric or classical literature. For one of the sites examined below in Chapters 5 and 6, the excavators offered a tentative interpretation of numerous ritual pits within several Devonian flint rings as involving the actions of mourners acting to appease the gods of the underworld by the pouring out of libations (Pollard and Russell 1969). Infant sacrifices and fertility rites also figure among explanations forwarded for token deposits of cranial fragments in stone circles or in cairns. The appearance in the burial record of chieftains, kings, princes, and their associated retainers, minors, women, slaves etc., has direct origins to this heroic picture of British prehistory.

For many culture-history studies of Bronze Age round barrows then, it is clear that the presentation of the Bronze Agepast in this way reflects and reproduces a deeply embedded perspective of the historical development and character of modern European society.

The myth of heroic society and the view of the Bronze Age past as a precursor of modern European society has been further reinforced by a data base which over the years has been shaped and molded by value judgements in line with this perspective. Perhaps nowhere else, apart from Iron Age studies (Hill 1989), has the writing of the Beaker and Bronze Age mortuary record been as dependent upon or influenced by traditional categories of analysis and definitions of its subject created in the past. Much current thought about round barrows and their respective grave groups still reflects both the opinions and prejudices of the nineteenth century barrow diggers. Much of this has to do with the fact that many studies of Early Bronze age data and consequently most knowledge of the Early Bronze Age depends upon over 1200 recorded excavations from the 19th century and earlier (Peterson 1977). The influence of 19th century work is most apparent in the pervasive concept of the central "single grave theory" which embodies a misleading concept of the nature of Bronze Age funerary practices (Peterson 1977). Although many modern recording techniques have revealed that multiple and partial inhumation and cremation graves, as well as multiple single phase burials are the norm rather than the exception throughout the Early and Middle Bronze Age, burial definitions such as "primary", "satellite" and "secondary" continued to be employed (Ashbee 1960,43; Grinsell 1953). These terms contain inherent value judgements both as to the nature of the individual's social status and consequently the configuration of Bronze Age social organization. One practical consequence of this traditional attention towards barrow centres and their contents meant that many modern excavations under time or budgetary constraints have been confined to the central areas of barrows rather than berms, ditches or surrounding areas which often contain the real interpretative payload. This, of course, reinforced the idea of a central, primary, important grave rather than dispelling it (Peterson 1972; 1977).

The reproduction of the central grave theory was aligned with a traditional emphasis on the identification of particular artifacts and grave groups with barrow types or other features within the barrow,

and a related search for repeated associations between certain classes of funerary material signifying the manifestation of a cultural group (Peterson 1977). This again only reinforced the particular definitional view of the Bronze Age which sought to identify the chieftain with his correct funerary accoutrements.

Finally, the continued interest in well-studied traditional barrow areas and periods which display the most visible and impressive monuments and the most exciting sets of material (like Beaker or early Bronze Age Wessex or Yorkshire) served to perpetuate the myths of heroic society outlined above. Modern work naturally tended to concentrate in these areas. Even in studies of other regions, barrow and funerary artifact typologies remained Wessex oriented, defined or described by their relative similarity or postulated relatedness to Wessex examples. In addition to the comparisons Lynch (1970:77-78) made between ring cairn and downland barrow associations, Grinsell's (1953) and Ashbee's (1960) barrow typologies (adopted by Burgess (1980)) were exclusively Wessex-based and consequently did not recognise or address the enormous variability which actually exists in round barrow morphology. It is not only, however, that barrows in other areas of Britain are classified, or their artifacts analysed, with reference to Wessex typologies. The tradition of Beaker and barrow study in the south exhibited such an enormous perceptual control over studies of the period that other areas of Britain exhibiting a visible and complex monument tradition were interpreted as representing Wessex style social organization, with possible links to this central place. Other distinct artifact and monumental classes were defined by reference to their similarity or difference from the early Bronze Age Wessex kingdoms. Deverel-Rimbury barrows for example were seen by Grinsell as having been **adopted** from the Wessex culture custom, having "clumsily" dug barrow ditches, and on the whole, representing a "degenerate survival" of Wessex barrow techniques.

Finally, perhaps most importantly from the perspective of this work, most barrow analyses produced under this mantle of culture history failed to provide adequate explanations and interpretations both of the variability and detail of the material culture patterning. For the producers of Bronze Age literature, there was a stress upon the limits of inference which necessitated, as I have illustrated, a retreat into literary elaboration as a source of analogous inspiration (Ashbee 1978; Shanks and Tilley 1987b). Lynch (1970) and Burgess (1980) for example, confined the questions of purpose behind different forms of

burial, to the realm of ambiguity and guess-work. "The problems of use and purpose", lamented Lynch about burial cairns "may defy even the most tenacious efforts at interpretation."(1970:79). In *The Age of Stonehenge* (Burgess 1980:61), the form and nature of the funerary ritual were unexplained, but believed to be conditioned by community or familial preference, which reflected Bronze Age ideology, an unexplored term. Burgess was only able to attribute "the bewildering variety of burial customs" throughout the third millenium BC, to "the complex structure of society during that time."

The formulation of archaeological knowledge as proceeding upwards on a ladder of inference, in which the difficulties in interpreting archaeological data increased as one progressed from technology to ideology is a conception firmly rooted in the historical materialism of the nineteenth century. Within such a rising categorical framework comprised of technology, economy, social and political organization and ideology, the Bronze Age mortuary record was viewed primarily as an ideological/religious manifestation of society, and thus at the outset, appeared a most difficult explanatory category of data to deal with. This perceived difficulty is enhanced by the fact that round barrows and their contents were seen as material representations of religious ideas and practices whose relationship with the rest of society was generally unformulated (Kristiansen 1984). In such a conception then, this unknown quality - the ritual aspect of the data, became domesticated by a search for attributes of the mortuary record which could inform about economy, technology, or social structure. These categories and concepts which made sense to everyone in the present were expected to yield valuable information concerning the society and economy of past societies. Climbing the latter of inference, Ashbee (1960:169) noted that "Technological and economic information can be recovered from a study of the articles of grave furniture, from ritual deposits and from the structure. From the barrow excavation," he continues "there is evidence for a number of actions which may well come into the religious category. Flint implements, sometimes broken, sherds, piled occupation earth and hearth sweepings in barrows must have some abstract significance." (1960:173).

In this view, the variability and contingency of the material culture record represented by constructional and locational details, and the appearance and placement of ritual items within barrows, becomes impossible to interpret.

3.3 Processual analyses

The atheoretical discourse described above was supplanted to a large extent by a number of analyses which followed the New Archaeology's attempts at making all realms of material culture accessible to explanation. A brief detour through the history of these attempts will better situate the assumptions upon which the barrow analyses addressed below rested.

Binford (1971; 1972), taking White's statement that culture is man's extrasomatic means of adaptation was able to theorize how an explanation of ritual or symbolic material culture could be attained through an understanding of how such items functioned together with more behavioural elements of a given cultural system. Formal diversity in the structural complexity of ideotechnic items was seen as directly related to changes in the structure of society. As a result, explanations for changes in burials practices were sought in the past local adaptive system (O'Shea 1984). This heralded a new optimism for prehistoric funerary studies and numerous attempts were made to explore the relationship between funerary practices and the organization of past societies Binford 1971; Chapman Kinnes and Randsbourg 1981; O'Shea 1984; Saxe 1970; Tainter 1978). There was a corresponding belief that a study of the range of mortuary variability in a society should allow archaeological inferences into the nature of the structural organization that produced it (O'Shea 1984). This resulted in various attempts to infer both the organizing principals of a society or social group, and the social positions of individuals within these groups from the mortuary remains. Binford's search for cross cultural regularities between the organization of living communities and differentiation in their mortuary treatment set the stage for many of these studies. He argued that there should be a direct correlation between the structural complexity of mortuary ritual and status systems within socio-cultural units. He also suggested that since the distinctions made in mortuary ritual are made on the basis on social personae (the composite of the social identities held in life) there should be a strong correspondence between "the nature of the dimensional characteristics of the population and the expected criteria employed for status differentiation" (1971:18-19). Saxe examined ethnographic accounts of three

groups in an attempt to test eight hypotheses concerning the linkage between the differentiation accorded an individual in death and in life (O'Shea 1984). The range of mortuary variability revealed, he felt, should provide a clue to inferring the nature of structural organization of the society. O'Shea (1984) identified four principles or hypotheses about mortuary behaviour and their correlates which specified certain types of social and practical constraints on mortuary variability. The most relevant of the latter of these in the context of this discussion was that the specific treatment accorded an individual in death would be consistent with that individual's position in life. O'Shea also held that the **nature of society** would pattern and circumscribe the practices for the disposal of the dead.

The identification between prehistoric social organization and the form and variability of mortuary practices was further amplified and extended in these analyses by linkages with evolutionary models of cultural complexity. For example, Binford's (1972) attention towards isolating the relation between status and the quantity, form, and structure of 'sociotechnic artifacts' had its origins in Fried's (1967) work on the relations between status grading and the evolution of social stratification. Arising out of this connection between cultural complexity and variability in mortuary practices, was a related search for the material correlates of idealized social types (Barrett 1990b, compare Peebles and Kus 1977). These studies drew heavily upon role theory, originally adopted from Goodenough by Saxe, who argued that, at the death of an individual, his or her most important social identity (defined as an individual's social position or status), would affect the nature and details of the deceased's mortuary treatment (O'Shea 1984).

A number of Beaker and Bronze Age works produced during the 1970s and 1980 s were influenced in one way or another by these studies (e.g. Ellison 1980, 1981; Levy 1977; Pierpoint 1980; Randsborg 1973, 1974 and Shennan 1982). The inabilities which these analyses had in coming to terms with the variability and contextuality of the mortuary record, resulted from their production of a view of the past which reproduced a series of familiar modern social models and metaphors. These were underpinned by processual beliefs that the structure (defined as a pattern of relationships and roles) of Bronze Age society was equivalent to observed patterned residues of material culture within the systemic spheres of past societies, such as the subsistence economy, ritual, trade, communication, environment, and so on. Further,

variability in the treatment of the deceased and funerary activity was believed to directly reflect prehistoric patterns of social organization, either in terms of an individual's role or status, or, in terms of the organization of individual communities, polities, tribes, and so forth. In these formulations, "the social", or the nature of society is already given (Hodder 1989). For example, an analysis of archaeological data within categories of trade, subsistence, ritual and economy which monitors the relationship between them with reference to the data creates boundaries which did not exist in prehistory (Shanks and Tilley 1987b). Funerary material was thus engaged only to the degree to which it provided support for an already constructed familiar Bronze Age. In Randsborg's (1974) exploration of social stratification in Denmark, burial data provide information on several major variables operating within the Bronze Age cultural system. The mortuary data are seen to provide straightforward information on population locations, social stratification, and wealth parameters in southern Scandinavia. The emphasis in Randsborg's study is on the monitoring of correlations between population size, the distribution of wealth (in graves), and land quality. The correlation between these "sub-systems" is monitored with the aim, and result, of making observational statements about the "social dimension" of the Early Bronze Age (ie. the relative social status of men vs. women based upon wealth in tombs, the social position of women in relation to population density and land quality, the relationship between social stratification and population density, and so forth). These statements are, however, not discoveries about the social organization of the period, or the construction of identities and power/gender relationships, but rather descriptions of perceived changes in an already constructed past. The productive context (in the sense of both the formation of these objects and their use in symbolically creative ritual acts by human actors) is entirely by-passed.

In studies where the social context in which a funerary drama is played out are already determined, a problem of circularity arose. It is often the case that the analysis of burial and settlement data served to reveal the form of the social system, while at the same time, the postulated social system (tribal society, individualising chiefdom) were used to explain the form of the burial and settlement data. The funerary record thus reproduced examples of pre-theorized social formations. This circularity of analysis is apparent in Ellison's (1980) study of the ceramics and bronzes within Middle Bronze Age burials, which contributed

to her tentative recognition of the distinctive associations of an earlier, fallen chiefdom society identified by Renfrew (1973) for the Early Bronze Age. Generally, she perceived that the results of her analysis of prestige items, and other classes of metalwork and ceramics revealed the material correlates of a "ranked society" as defined by Peebles and Kus (1977). Levy (1977) attempted to correlate the nature of social ranking within Period II Bronze Age graves in Denmark with definitive social characteristics of chiefdom and tribal societies, drawing upon Service and Fried's typologies of social stratification. The reliance on established social typologies, based as they were upon ethnographic work seeking definitive associations between social organization and production (Sahlins and Earle in Polynesia and Hawaii respectively) served only to reinforce an already constructed past. In this fashion, a model of Bronze Age chiefdom society was produced by filling in the details from the funerary record. By using the same assumption about how the past was constructed, first to build models of the past, and also to give meaning to their evidence in terms of the past, a situation arose in these studies in which the archaeological data supported a particular model of the Bronze Age (Barrett 1990a).

In a similar fashion to the studies considered in Section 3.2, the nature of society and the social formation in processual studies of the Bronze Age were posited as a-priori concepts which resulted in a particular material record. An alternative formulation would suggest that it is the nature of society, and the social which are constructed within the ritual sphere of funerary practice through the knowledgeable and discursive actions of individuals. This construction took place in a plurality of complex circumstances which must be discovered, interpreted, and compared in an encounter with the funerary material.

In addition to discovering pre-theorized social formations in these analyses, the manner in which Bronze Age funerary material was selected and analyzed served to reproduce a series of concepts comfortably rooted in capitalist society. In traditional societies, the relationship between people and material objects is all about self constitution and transformation. Human beings are inextricably meaningfully and morally linked with the products of their labour, and the relationship between people and things is best conceptualized contextually, and historically. This situation can be contrasted with a modern capitalist economic formulation in which material culture as commodity or product is cut off from its

producer and the circumstances of its production and reinvested with an autonomous life (Comaroff 1985; Miller 1987). In most systemic barrow studies this process of alienation was reproduced by the action of pulling funerary/ritual objects (like grave goods or related material culture) out of their meaningful contexts. These objects were then subjected to a series of rigourous spatial and quantitative analyses, which were designed to chart the operation of standard spheres of social activity in Bronze Age society like exchange, or subsistence (as in Ellison 1981). This process of first "materializing the social" and "socializing the material" (Comaroff 1985:129) (in the sense referred to above, as well as below) is a fundamental feature of our own culture which structured the production of the past in these works. In Shennan's (1982) study of the role of amber in the Early Bronze Age, amber in the barrows is pulled out of its meaningful context and subjected to a general patterning exercise in order to elucidate economic changes within Neolithic and Bronze Age society. In this formulation, barrows act as merely as "quarries" (Fleming 1973) for goods which provide the data for an enquiry into trade and circulation. Shennan's frame of reference operated at a general level, at the relation between 'trade' and 'society', and funerary material culture served only to highlight a number of social and economic changes in north-western Europe during the Bronze Age. Ellison (1981) made use of a large amount of barrow data in her construction of a systemic model for the Middle Bronze Age of southern England. Again, the funerary arena is valuable only as a storehouse of pottery and metalwork whose distributions, regardless of their ritual contextuality were only utilized in reflecting exchange networks, social organization, and population movements. The products of ritual acts of creation are thus materialized and then resocialized in these studies in the modelling of general socio-economic processes.

The removal of material objects from the contexts of their production and use has also involved "socializing the material" in the sense in which this material becomes invested with its own life or connotations. The way in which grave goods or funerary material culture are conceptualized in these studies would seem to be conditioned by modern values. The strength of beliefs about the associations between funerary "wealth" or energy expenditure and social roles/status is notable, and suggests a cultural cause for its pervasiveness among New Archaeologists (O'Shea 1984; Tainter 1978) and within the barrow

studies referred to above (Ellison 1981; Levy 1977). In these studies, the richness or distinctiveness of grave goods, and the extensive ritual treatment received by the deceased were seen as reflecting a high status or distinctive social position particular to this individual. This was supported by an assumption that rare or unusual items within a Bronze Age grave group held a value similar to that recognised in the present. Highly decorated and uncommon items such as jet, amber, and gold signify consumption, control, display and consumerism in a modern context, and in these studies, this signification appeared to have been transferred to the past. In a capitalist society, identity is "personified in things, and self-construction is pursued through the consumption of goods" as status symbols or otherwise (Comaroff 1985: 129). Given this cultural baggage, it is not surprising that the presence of an unusually "rich" or distinctive grave good package in the archaeological record should immediately signify a distinguished individual to everyone. These modern concepts of value and display were so easily read into the Bronze Age funerary arena, that Randsborg had no difficulty in "consider[ing] the differences in richness of grave goods as being reflectors of anything but the distribution of wealth. And, as wealth normally bolsters social status, the distinctions (between graves) are probably of this nature" (1974:51). For Randsbourg, social stratification was sought by studies of wealth grading within tombs based on modern associations between weight and price, a loaded assessment of value. In the same vein, Pierpoint's (1980) hypothesis-testing exercise attempted to discover whether some sort of social identity was being demonstrated through the juxtaposition of personal categories of the deceased and associated artifacts or sepulchre types. Such a hypothesis had much to do with familiar concepts of advertising and display.

In addition to reproducing modern constructs of subjectivity and individuality, conceptions of the Bronze Age past which reproduce the links between wealth and social status can be further critiqued by stepping back along the beaten path to Ucko's cautionary paper in which he argued that wealth inversions within a tomb may mask the identity or social importance of an individual of high status (1969). Bradley (1988:327) has also pointed out that "it is an article of faith" in mortuary analysis that many grave goods were used to mark differences of wealth and status among the deceased. He further observed that the value of objects appearing within graves are not always constant, and that our perceptions of the comparative

wealth of different objects takes no account of the symbolic associations of the objects. Without repeating the comments made in Chapter 2, the numerous instances of the presence and use of particular items in the grave assemblages as powerful metaphorical devices in ethnographic contexts can be seen to strongly support a critique of the wealth-social status correlation. Finally, what an investigator may perceive as wealth within a tomb may have had more to do with the ritual for establishing relations among the living, as a clarification of genealogical status, or as an object of power and supernatural influence, than as indicator of the deceased's social status (Barrett 1990b). Barrett (19989; 1990b) that mortuary practices do not reflect, but reproduce and transform the ideal order of societies by acting as an arena for the renegotiation of social relationships among the living and between the living and the community of the dead. The role of funerary material culture in this process is far too complicated to be subordinated to a simple one-to-one relationship with rank, role and status.

notes

3.4 Marxist analyses

The systemic approach to Beaker and Bronze Age material was augmented during the 1980s by a series of works which were influenced by the then-current structural marxist discourse in anthropology, most specifically Friedman (1973) and Friedman and Rowlands (1977). As Shennan (1986) has suggested, the reasons for the adoption of these ideas are varied, and have both personal and historical/epistemological roots. There is certainly some element of left-wing sympathy to be considered, but also the emphasis upon change, contradiction, power and ideology within the Marxist programme was undoubtedly attractive in an increasingly conservative economic milieu of Britain during the 1980s. To their credit, these studies accorded greater weight to the role of ideology and material culture in the study of political and social change than the systemic analysis considered above (e.g. Braithwaite 1984; Bradley 1984; Kristiansen 1984; 1989; Shennan 1982). The structural marxist discourse however, and the analyses it inspired, still remains a thoroughly modern one, rooted in familiar evolutionary and systemic concepts.

All of the studies, in one form or another adhere to a single model covering late Neolithic and Bronze Age society which postulates a gradual change from a system in which authority is accrued and fortified through ancestral/geneological claims, to one in which power is a function of the control and consumption of prestige items in a new political/economic climate based upon long distance trade relations (peer-polity interaction) and the control of goods production. The archaeological data examined in these studies: the henges, the barrows (with their chiefly or not so chiefly dead), and the metal deposits, were presented as evidence supporting this general model in what has been termed a "logic of necessity" - patterns found in the data directly relate to categories and concepts of the pre-theorized general model (Shanks and Tilley 1987b:55). In Braithwaite's work for example, "aspects of [Rowlands'] model capture well some of the changes that occur in the archaeological record in Wessex during the second millennium BC (1984:104)." For Kristiansen the presence of amber and battle axes in the Bronze Age mortuary record of northern Europe is built into a model of Bronze Age segmentary lineages "very much resembling... African pastoralists" (1984:84).

Despite the emphasis on the specific and often ideological/symbolic nature of the material culture, the archaeological record is still described and explained as a functionalist interplay of social/systemic processes in these studies. In the Single Grave Culture of Jutland (Kristiansen 1984) and in the individual burials of the Early Bronze Age of Wessex (Shennan 1982), mortuary practices are interpreted only as representative of an ideology which **functioned**, across the board, to legitimate the social order. There is a suggestion here that the origins of circular grave mounds are somehow explained merely by showing how, for example, they had a role in the legitimation of a nascent prestige goods power discourse (Braithwait 1984). Further, the introduction of the Bell Beaker assemblage to late Neolithic society in Wessex (Shennan 1986), and the introduction of bronze to the Neolithic cultures of Denmark (Kristiansen 1982; 1989) appear as prime movers or stimuli to these prevailing tribal systems.

Braithwaite (1984) rightly noted that in most studies, the relationships of symbolic and ritual practice to social and ideological change are left unexamined. However, this is still a problem in her study because, by initially seeking to establish a framework for understanding the significance of material culture

in the absence of a theorization of the reproduction of social formations in each instance, the result is a study in which **systems of prestige** or **discourses** appear as the agents of cultural change: "An alternative system of ritual and prestige... was to effectively challenge the legitimacy of the older discourse associated with the henge sites...(p.99)", and further:

> "In this we can see the failure of the traditional system of prestige not only to protect its own discourse and its symbols from use within other discourses, but also the general failure of the system of prestige to maintain its former position of authority (p.107)."

Despite an exhaustive discussion of sites and material culture the reader is still left wondering how exactly the new system of prestige based upon relations of dominance through the control of prestige goods replaced the older discourse of kinship and alliance. Who are the groups/individuals behind the old and new systems of prestige? How exactly did the new set of Beaker material culture fit in with existing social relations during the late Neolithic? Such a treatment subsumes the individual actors and thus makes it difficult to understand the variety of circumstances under which social change took place. Similarly, Shennan's (1982) explanation of the development of hierarchical societies in Central Europe focuses solely upon the potential of bronze and copper surplus generation and control.

The selection of data in the working through of these models is of some use in understanding their portrait of the past. At the basis of the general model outlined in these studies is the problematic (as noted above) correlation between grave goods and high status individuals, complemented by the view that metal items deposited in graves had some degree of desirable value. It is noticeable, particularly for the Bronze Age sites, that among the many items of material culture present in the funerary evidence, the patterning of stone and metal artifacts is used to support the models, at the expense of ceramics or flint debitage, which continue to appear in the record with as much frequency. Burial practices then, cannot but

clearly reflect a hierarchical society which is fortunate, since the entire model depends upon this assertion. If other categories of material culture were examined, or if these material items were placed in the graves for any other reason (some symbolic cosmological association having no direct relationship with prestige) the entire social infrastructural dynamic in these studies would need to be rethought.

In the working out of this general model through the archaeological evidence, temporal and spatial variability were somewhat ruefully sacrificed (Bradley 1984; Braithwaite 1984; Kristiansen 1984). One area in which this is particularly noticeable is in the relationship between inhumation and cremation. During the Bronze Age, cremation was seen to generally, over time replace inhumation, as the discourse represented by an increasingly coordinated prestige goods network either sought to deny the presence of high status individuals, or no longer had need of a lineage/genealogical form of status reinforcement. The replacement of rich inhumed individuals by multiple cremated bodies lacking many prestige items is thus required by the model. While a very general trend in this direction can be acknowledged from the beginning of the period to its end, it is more the case that both treatments occur simultaneously in many of the British barrows. Nor does the intra-barrow chronological sequence in all cases suggest such a replacement (Peterson 1972). Further, I have commented above (Chapter 2) on the degree to which one treatment of the deceased may easily be substituted for another for reasons having no bearing on the social standing of the individual. A closer look at the ethnographic and funerary record then suggests that the relationship between cremation and inhumation during the Bronze Age would appear to be conditioned by more than the social hierarchy of the past, which weakens the argument for tribal transformation in as much as it is based upon this element of the funerary material.

Finally, throughout these studies, the use of modern economic constructs in the analysis of artifact patterning and in the formulation of the relations of production during the Bronze Age served to create a prehistoric past modelled upon the present. For Shennan (1982) the presence of valuable prestige items in the Early to Middle Bronze Age funerary record is presented as the consumption of goods with intrinsic values. In Kristiansen's discussion of the changes in technology during the northern European Bronze Age (1989), the motor of social evolutionary change revolves around consumer demand for more complex forms

of bronze.

Some people would argue that we are still working through a Marxist paradigm in the writing of the past. Although terms like ideology, social relations, and prestige goods became conspicuous by their almost complete absence in the literature of British prehistory towards the end of the 1980s, notions of power and discourse remained. One further element of the Marxist programme, namely the emphasis on praxis and a notion of agency (absent for the most part from the Beaker/Bronze Age literature just reviewed for reasons to do with the adoption of an Althusserian tradition of neo-Marxism) has reappeared. Certainly, the social and political trends toward liberalism and pluralism in recent years have contributed to the continued paradigmatic success of a neo-Marxist programme focused on agency and empowerment. Whether we have really moved some way beyond the discourse constituted by Marxism because we have "gone beyond the circumstances which engendered it" (Spriggs 1984:6) has been a matter of unsettled debate in the discourse of the humanities ever since the coining of the term postmodernism (e.g. Kaplan 1988). The last decade, however, has witnessed the development of a plethora of radical and new perspectives for the writing of the past and about the writing of the past which have been a response to this cultural movement. Many of these (like the emphasis on difference, absence, and play) have little to do with a modernist structural marxist programme. It is worthwhile considering the development of an alternative view of Beaker/Bronze age funerary ritual in this light.

3.5 An alternative perspective

I have consistently stressed the inability of the conceptual tools employed in the above approaches to explain or address the variety and particularity of Bronze Age mortuary practices - or, "why particular things occurred in particular contexts" (Fine 1996: 236). As Barrett (1987b) and Gero (1989:97) have pointed out, the view of the past as a record within the robust scale of modernist archaeological explanation is inadequate to explore the "fine grained steps", actions and "events" that truly comprised the production

of prehistory (my emphasis). It is worthwhile here to briefly consider how an alternative postmodern perspective can redress this imbalance.

Some important concepts can be extrapolated from the critique of modernity which provide the structural components for a new writing of Bronze Age funerary practices. Despite concerns about its neo-conservative potential (e.g. Harvey 1990; Jameson 1988; Sarup 1988), the discourse of postmodernity offers a series of useful conceptual positions on the nature of societal reproduction, the nature and constitution of subjectivity, and an emphasis on the contingent situated practices of both subject and object. Postmodernist writers have suggested replacing the image of society as a coherent totality with the metaphor of a kaleidoscope (Bauman 1992:189). The totality of social life would then be seen as the product of "momentary and contingent outcomes of interaction" and such a view would involve dispensing with an analysis that has the elucidation of system or society as its primary explanatory objective (Lyotard 1984). Instead, the stress would be on the production of "relatively discrete local stories" which explored the appearance and transformation of various discursive practices through a focus on action (Fraser and Nicholson 1993:420). Further, a view of the social context as a determinate factor in explaining human action would be revised with a stress upon how it is only through action that structuring properties come to exist in time-space (Giddens 1979). Finally, the perspective that "the social" is already given would be replaced by disavowing "unitary notions" like chieftain or woman, in favour of a view of social identity as constructed in a plurality of conditional circumstances (Fraser and Nicholson 1993:429; Hodder 1989).

The consequences of adopting the above views on how social life is to be appropriated would appear to lead inexorably towards a "bottom up" writing of the past, which focuses primarily upon the contexts of human interaction within the reproduction of social systems. This is not to advocate a methodological individualism (Giddens 1984) in the study of the past, but it is to recognise the primacy of agency within contexts of co-presence in the process of structuration, and thus its analytical indispensability in all studies of the past. It further replaces the desire to create order and remove ambiguity with an exploration of difference and variability in the material culture record.

Work on Beaker and Bronze Age funerary practices influenced by postmodern trends in the social

sciences has already been produced (e.g. Barrett 1988; 1990b; 1994; Garwood 1991; Mizoguchi 1992; 1994; Thomas 1991). There is a notable absence of a totalizing perspective in these studies. Rather, the consistent emphasis has been on the active use of material culture, the body, and funerary geography in both the reproduction of social systems and meaningful structures. The strong commitment to agency and subjectification present in these studies follows the emergence of a postmodern/post-processual trend in British archaeology, which has adopted many of the techniques and critiques of late and "post" modernist, post-structuralist and post-positivist thought. It has been pointed out that the emergence of this relatively new paradigm in archaeology is tied to a unique historical Anglo-American academic power discourse (Criado 1995). The reasons for its emergence are complex, and obviously rooted in the cultural conditions of later modernity. More specifically, the adoption and success of this paradigm may owe something to a growing dissatisfaction among academics with Thatcherite Britain and its consumer capitalism modelled after the United States, which was also the origin of a strong modernist and imperialist 20-year-long programme of received wisdom about how the past should be written. The personalization and tone of some of the published discourse (e.g. Tilley 1990) seems, in part, to support such an assumption.

This project does not depart significantly from either the value commitment to human agency and possibility, or the attention to structuration present in the post-processual agenda. What it does attempt to do differently, is to address the issue of time/space interaction referred to in Chapters 1 and 2 as a means toward identifying interpretative communities, in whose funerary ceremonies the production and reproduction of meaningful traditions of knowledge within the Bronze Age social totality is explored. After a period during which human funerary action has been decontextualized and domesticated, this perspective perhaps offers a chance to "re-enchant" (Bauman 1992:x) the Bronze Age through an attention to the meaningful contexts in which material culture was produced and reproduced.

Chapter 4: A Context for Funerary Practice in South-West Britain

4.1 A regional character

My intention in this chapter is to provide a context for the construction and use of Bronze Age funerary monuments, in which the distinctiveness of the region, as well as the particular character of the monuments themselves, are highlighted to suggest a way forward towards a local funerary analysis situated within the dynamic social and ritual patterns observed throughout the region.

In a recent overview of south-west Britain, Todd (1987) observed that the overwhelming surround of the sea combined with the presence of dramatic topographic variation have given the area a unique geographical and social character. This distinct "identity" (Barnatt 1989:226) however, is not merely a function of geographical bias, since it manifests itself through the appearance of a series of distinctive forms of material expression and social organization from the Neolithic through to the historic period. The significance of this regional character of the South-West (albeit somewhat highlighted by recent theoretical trends) is notable, since it persists despite traditional trends in the discipline which have functioned to subsume the area under socio-economic models developed for south-central Britain. A brief review of a number of artifact and site analyses may illustrate this point.

In terms of material culture, the predominance of gabbroic inclusions in the pottery of the earlier Neolithic has led Peacock and others to suspect a concentrated production site on the Lizard peninsula in Cornwall and restricted trade in south-west Britain for Hembury Ware, and certainly the use of clays from the Lizard for general ceramic production (Fig 4.1; Peacock 1969; Quinnell 1987). For the earlier Neolithic also, distinctive regional styles of funerary monument appear in the South-West. These take the form of the Severn-Cotswold chambered long cairns in north-eastern Somerset, the chambered cairns on the fringes of south and east Dartmoor, at Broadsands in Devon, and sporadically across Cornwall, and finally,

the small chambered tombs and entrance graves of Cornwall. By comparison, earthen long or round barrow sites are rare. (Cunliffe 1993; Grinsell 1969; 1971; 1978; 1983; Mercer 1986; Minnit 1982; Todd 1987).

The petrological identification of stone axes and shaft-hole implements suggests that the later Neolithic material from Cornwall, Devon and Somerset is dominated by Groups I, III, IIIa, and IV which have probable factory origins in Cornwall. This distribution contrasts with the far fewer number of Welsh, Cumbrian, and continental axes found the region, though a small number of Group XII Welsh Borders battle axes and axe hammers have been found in eastern Somerset, coastal Devon and Cornwall (Fig 4.2; Cummins 1979; Evans, Smith and Wallis 1972; Mercer 1986).

Unlike the rest of southern Britain during the later Neolithic, Grooved Ware and Peterborough Ware sites are rare outside eastern Somerset (Bell 1990; Gibson 1982; Mercer 1986; Thomas 1988; Todd 1987). A number of what can be described as local styles appear in the assemblage instead, at the Knackyboy Cairn on St. Martins, Scilly, at Broadsands Tomb in Paignton, Devon, and in Layers 7 and 8 at Gwithian. These ceramics are characterized by barrel and bucket-shaped medium-sized urns, both plain and decorated by fingertipping, combing, cordage and grooving (Megaw 1976; O'Neil 1952; Parker Pearson pers. comm.; Radford 1958; Todd 1987:95).

The regionally restricted artifact and site characteristics observed for the Neolithic are complemented by the nature of the ceremonial sites in the region. Barnatt (1989) has noted that, during the later Neolithic, the uplands of the South-West with their moderate carrying capacity and topographic "buffers", contain a unique combination of ritual site types not found further to the east ("group-, inter-group and local foci"), where relatively dense populations used large, regularly spaced "regional foci". In the Mendip region, on the boundary between east and west, a distinct monument pattern represented by the Stanton Drew and Priddy complexes exists, suggesting a second, and different, form of social organization to that postulated for Wessex during this period.

The dominance of the ceramic record for the Early-Middle Bronze Age by Trevisker style ceramics suggests a strong regionalized ethnicity for the South-West which is supported to some degree by the analyses of Middle Bronze Age metal manufacture and distribution (Parker Pearson 1990; 1995). The

Trevisker ceramic series comprises the majority of the pottery finds from Devon and Cornwall, and appears to a lesser extent in Somerset, Wessex, and the Scilly Isles. It was utilized in funerary contexts from at least 1900 BC, and within domestic assemblages perhaps by 1500 BC, some proto-styles appearing earlier at Gwithian (Figure 4.3; ApSimon and Greenfield 1972; Parker Pearson pers. comm.). The majority of Trevisker vessels from Cornwall analysed by Parker Pearson contained gabbroic inclusions, and he has suggested that substantial quantities of raw clay, or, more likely the pots themselves, found their way as far as 80km from their source on the Lizard into disparate parts of Cornwall and Devon as gifts or bartered commodities. By contrast, Biconical Vessels, such as those used at the Shaugh Moor and Brean Down settlements are of local fabrics, or eastern imports, and occur only in Devon and Somerset, suggesting some sort of ceramic frontier zone in the Dartmoor area across which only the passage of a strongly regionalized Trevisker ceramic tradition eastward was possible (Fig.4.4; Parker Pearson 1990; Tomalin 1982; Williams 1980; Woodward 1990). The assemblage at Shaugh Moor however, pointed to a virtual exclusion of Trevisker style ceramics, suggesting that the use of one ceramic form or another is perhaps also related to the lifestyles of particular communities on the Moor and in east Devon (Tomalin 1982). The evidence for the existence of distinct distribution networks bordering on Dartmoor is further augmented by a consideration of earlier Middle Bronze Age palstave finds (Fig. 4.5; Pearce 1983). Further along these lines, the distribution of Taunton Phase later Middle Bronze Age metalwork has lead Rowlands to suggest that metal-working influences from the east affecting Somerset were absent from most of Devon and Cornwall (Fig. 4.6; Rowlands 1976:128).

Finally, Millett's (1990) analysis of settlement patterns and social organization in southern Britain during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age indicates that between 150 BC and the emergence of the Roman *Civitas*, a stable tribal identity and a distinctive social organization were present in Cornwall, Devon, and west Somerset. Artifact patterning, settlement types, and tribal affiliation in central and eastern Somerset during this period indicate closer ties regional ties to communities in central and southern Britain (Table 4.1; Millett 1990:13, 14, 16, 66-67).

My intent in this brief review is not to simplify an obviously complex palimpsest of trade and

kinship/community obligations operating both within the South-West, and between the peninsula and the rest of Britain and the continent during later prehistory. Rather, I have merely sought to introduce the idea that a distinct and persistent form of social organization complemented by strong kinship ties or tribal affiliation may have been in place for the majority of the region. I would now like to expand upon this somewhat, beginning with a portrait of environmental and economic conditions for the earlier part of the period.

4.2 Environment and settlement in the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age

Although the slim and geographically disparate data set somewhat impedes the development of conclusive statements regarding the importance of territoriality and land management during this period, the general character of the environmental evidence, in combination with the ritual monuments themselves, paint a fairly suggestive contextual picture within which to conceptualize the relationships between people, and between people and their landscape.

The environmental and economic context of the later Neolithic suggests that in the South-West, like other parts of southern Britain, less agriculturally intensive and more mobile and extensive forms of settlement and environmental exploitation existed than those practiced during the preceding centuries (Bradley and Hodder 1979). Moreover, as Thomas (1991a:19-25) and others have suggested for southern Britain at this time, populations were likely seasonally mobile within well defined areas. For the most part, the evidence from south-west Britain suppports such a portrait. In terms of land use, a shift in settlement patterns towards smaller, less permanently based activities on valley slopes, floors, and coastal lowlands of Devon and Cornwall is generally agreed to have taken place by the later Neolithic on the basis on flint scatters in these areas, in tandem with an abandonment of the larger upland early Neolithic enclosures such as Carn Brea and Hembury (Todd 1987:81). The environmental picture gleaned mainly from peat profiles on Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin Moor suggests that the upland environment of south-west Britain was

characterized by declining woodland cover, with some localized pastoral, and to a lesser extent, agricultural, clearance/regeneration sequences in a primarily hazel woodland. Some areas were dominated by pastoral habitats (Caseldine 1980; Keeley 1984; Simmons 1969). Pollen analyses of the buried soils at the base and beneath the bank of Priddy Circle I, on the Mendips, indicated the beginning of a podzilization process in an open grassland environment, with a woodland component on the Old Red Sandstone to the north of the site (Tratman 1967). At the nearby Charterhouse Warren Farm Swallet, land snail analysis gave no conclusive evidence for woodland, but clearances during the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age on the Mendips generally are not likely to have been extensive, and communities were obviously availing themselves of forest resources, based upon the presence of aurochs and red deer in the cave deposits (Levitan 1988). The picture from the Somerset levels during the later Neolithic, is of the appearance of raised bogs and later, clearances in regenerated woodland and the construction of the Abbot's Way after an intensive Neolithic period of woodland clearance, coppicing, and arable cultivation (Coles 1978). Botanical evidence from Brean Down during the Neolithic/Beaker occupation indicated a former tree cover which was impacted by clearance episodes and short-term phases of small-plot hoe cultivation (Bell 1990). In the South-West generally, valley slopes and bottoms were most likely still forested, though the shift to primarily grassland, along with acidification and the initiation of blanket peat had already begun on the high moorland plateaus (Balaam, Smith and Wainwright 1982; Crabtree and Maltby 1974; Merrifield and Moore 1974; Simmons 1969).

Very little change in this pattern appears to have taken place in the Early Bronze Age, where one can still envisage a series of seasonally mobile communities making use of a number of contrasting environments in which to collect wild foods, rear livestock, and cultivate. The evidence for environmental conditions and land use in south-west Britain during this time comes mainly from buried land surfaces below round barrows, and from undisturbed profiles below several settlement and reave sites (Balaam 1984; Balaam, Smith and Wainwright 1982; Bayley 1975; Bell et. al. 1990; Brisbane and Clews 1979; Dimbleby 1958; Dimbleby 1960; Dimbleby 1971; Evans and Jones 1973; Mercer and Dimbleby 1978; Fleming 1988; Smith et. al. 1981). The resulting picture of land use and environmental conditions is instructive, and

suggests a great deal of variable surface vegetation within small areas. As in the preceding period, the upland landscape was likely covered by a mixture of vegetation. Oak woodland was common in the valleys, while the higher ground was covered in open pasture or heathland with sections of predominantly hazel woodland, and limited cereal plots. By the latter part of the period, oak and alder continued to decline, while grassland, heathland, and blanket bog increased. This "patchwork" landscape is highlighted at Colliford Reservoir, Blackmoor, and Shaugh Moor where pollen analysis indicated small areas which contained a great deal of contemporary variation in ground cover, including woodland, grassland, and well developed heathland environments. The palaeobotanical record from land surfaces beneath the mortuary monuments considered below suggests that many ritual activities began primarily upon pastoral ground, but occasionally in clearings near hazel scrub woodland, with variable proportions of oak/alder or heather/bracken in the vicinity. There is a near absence of cereal pollen or associated weed taxa from the areas in which the funerary monuments were built. Only two Bronze Age funerary sites, Caerloggas I and Crig-a-Mennis in Cornwall, demonstrated any evidence of prior cultivation, both well before the commencement of activities, a situation parallelled at the Cholwichtown Stone Row, south Dartmoor (Bayley 1975; Dimbleby 1960; Simmons 1964).

The absence of cereals in the vicinity of the funerary sites for the early period is mimicked by the environmental evidence available from the earliest settlements from Devon and Cornwall. Layer IV, the earliest occupation horizon at Stannon Down, Bodmin Moor (dated artifactually to a period preceding 1500 BC), indicated a pastoral habitat with greater incidence of woodland than the later period of occupation. Pollen analysis of the later occupation horizons indicated that cereal production only began very late in the occupation of the Phase 2 settlement, itself likely to be contemporary with the Trevisker Level V occupation with dates of c.1500-1000 BC (Mercer and Dimbleby 1978). Further, no evidence of cultivation or cereal production was found at the Shaugh Moor settlement on Dartmoor until the mid-first millennium BC, though the appearance of a large number of quern stones in both structural and domestic contexts argues for the importance of cereals or at least the idea of cultivation or fertility before this time (Balaam, Smith and Wainwright 1982; Wainwright and Smith 1980). Fleming (1987; 1988) has

convincingly suggested that the uplands in both the Early and Middle Bronze Age would appear to have been dominated by stock rearing, with communities from lowland areas or present day moorland fringes making general use of what was probably a rich pastoral resource.

The settlement evidence from the early part of the period considered here is slim, and inferences are based mainly upon environmental data (noted above), settlement typology, surface collection, and some ephemeral traces of earlier occupations at Middle Bronze Age sites (Bell 1990; Fordham and Mould 1982; Fleming 1987; 1988; Megaw, Rowlands and Burgess 1976; Mercer 1968; Nowakowski 1991; Smith 1987; Wainwright and Smith 1980). All the evidence points to short-term, or perhaps seasonal habitation sites, with fluctuating and impermanent grazing, stock rearing, and agricultural pressure on the uplands. Gibson (1982) has pointed to the dearth of Beaker house plans in southern Britain generally in this early period, despite a fair amount of domestic scatters, small pits and hearths from a number of open, cave, or ritual sites in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. To his list we can add the occupation layers from Brean Down in Somerset, and Stannon Down, Gwithian, and Trethellan in Cornwall. The nature of the Beaker occupation at Brean Down, represented by a small number of sherds, some burning episodes and a cultivation episode, was small, episodic, and short-lived. Many early structures were probably of timber, as at Gwithian, and not structurally renewed. No structural traces from the earliest phase of settlement were found at Stannon Down, on Bodmin Moor, apart from the possible ruined remains of two field walls. Artifactually, both sites produced pre-Trevisker style storage and eating and drinking vessels and Style I stone axes. A broken quern stone and a copper awl were recovered from Gwithian, where residual Beaker pottery was also present. Flint scatters in the South Hams, Devon also suggest that earlier Bronze Age activity consisted of very little in the way of permanent settlement. Flint waste material and tools as well as a fair amount of Beaker and Trevisker ceramics from surface collection near Polcolverak on the Lizard Peninsula suggested the presence of settlement and possibly structures (Smith 1987). At Trethellan, on the north Cornish coast, evidence for a small Beaker occupation in the form of a platform, two pits, three Beaker sherds, and a reused hearth area lay on the scarp just behind the Middle Bronze Age settlement.

Perhaps somewhat chronologically later than these domestic sites, evidence from Dartmoor

suggested a shift toward more permanent occupation in the form of the earliest traces of settlement at Shaugh Moor by 1900-1730 BC. This evidence consisted of pits and hollows associated with scatters of charcoal, flints and early Biconical Urn sherds, as well as the construction of simple stone walled House 15 (Figure 4.7). At Brean Down, a small oval-walled building (Structure 57) overlay an earlier walled building and several thin anthropogenic soil lenses which were associated with a relatively small number of Biconical Urn sherds, briquetage and bone fragments, the traces of a hearth, and a number of flint leather-working tools. Dates for this occupation, which preceded a more substantial Middle Bronze Age settlement, may be as early as c.1800 BC. Less permanent land boundaries, such as the banks and hedges which formed the early phase of the Saddlesborough Reave (c. 2000-1700BC), some ovoid enclosures, irregular field systems and 'shieling' structures have also been documented for Dartmoor at this time. The construction of the Phase 2 Saddlesborough Reave may have taken place as early as 1750/1800 BC, suggesting the contemporaneity of this semi-permanent boundary with funerary activity in the Dartmoor uplands.

4.3 Contrasts, continuities, and communities from the Late Neolithic through the Middle Bronze Age

The Bronze Age has traditionally been made meaningful through schemes of interpretation which highlight its contrasts. The first of these contrasts is the perceived change from single, often central inhumation to multiple cremation in the funerary record from the Beaker period to the end of the Early Bronze Age. The second is the more obvious contrast between an archaeological record dominated by ritual/funerary sites in the Early Bronze Age, and the widespread appearance of settlement activity and a change in lifestyle after c.1500 BC. Like all general statements, however, these are not without their problems. It is far from clear for example, that the bulk of the south-western sites display the inhumation-cremation opposition (see Chapter 5 below), while the latter generalization does not account for gradual changes in landscape utilization and funerary activity and moreover, misleadingly compartmentalizes

ritual and domestic practices (Barrett 1989). There are, of course, undeniable changes in social organization and production which took during the Bronze Age which we have rightly assumed are being revealed in the archaeological record. Without attempting to ignore or challenge the changing character of the period in general, it might be useful to employ a somewhat different heuristic device which concentrates on the details and continuities of the period in order to generate a different interpretative scheme for considering the funerary monuments. While traces of Beaker and Early Bronze Age activity have been documented all across the South-West, the presence of these earlier, less permanent occupation traces below the later more permanent Middle Bronze Age sites, and the evidence of early upland boundaries and structures on Dartmoor, as noted above, need to be emphasized. Such consistent occupation choices, despite a changing environment, argue for a continuity of place and territory among the inhabitants of the region. This continuity is supported in part by the monumental evidence from the Later Neolithic through to the Middle Bronze Age, which suggests that a reappraisal of the funerary evidence in light of the social and political implications arising from these and other observations is in order.

4.3.1 Middle Bronze Age settlement evidence

It is clear, of course, that to some extent the relationship of people to the land underwent a change during the Middle Bronze Age. As noted above, at the later occupation horizons of Trevisker, Trethellan, and Gwithian, cultivation appeared to take up a somewhat greater portion of the settlements' time and land than in the preceding centuries. The cultivation of principally barley, some wheat and several other crops took place at the lowland settlement of Trethellan, Newquay between 1500 and 1200 BC (Nowakowski 1991). At Gwithian, evidence for crossploughing and crop fertilization took place at some time after the Layer V cremation pits, one of which yielded a radiocarbon assessment of 1530-1010 BC. Fleming's work on the field systems of Holne Moor, on Dartmoor turned up evidence of bean and barley cultivation which may have taken place in small plots adjacent to settlements occupied in the Middle Bronze Age (Maguire,

Ralph and Fleming 1983). Pollen and plant remains from Holne Moor, Dartmoor and Trethellan Farm, Newquay suggest that the spring cultivation of barley, oats, bean and flax took place. Simultaneously, a large number of wild plants, fruits and nuts were collected throughout the year including sloes, acorns, nettles, and dock (Maguire, Ralph and Fleming 1983; Nowakowski 1991).

Knowledge about the stock rearing practices in these homesteads is less certain due to the prevailing soil acidity throughout the majority of the South-West. Cattle hoof prints found on Shaugh Moor and spindle whorls for the weaving of wool found at Dean Moor and Stannon Down suggest that both cattle and sheep were present. The teeth of domestic cattle, sheep/goat, and pig have been recovered from the lowland site Trethellan (Maguire, Ralph and Fleming 1983; Nowakowski 1991). At Brean Down, the bones of sheep, cattle, pig, and several species of bird, and fish were recovered from deposits associated with Houses 59 and 95 in Unit 5b (Levitan 1990).

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to exaggerate the amount of cultivation and surplus production taking place at these sites. Settlements like Trethellan, Trevisker, and Brean Down were topographically placed to benefit from both coastal and woodland resources, and nearby upland pastures, and did so. At Brean Down, it is evident that although the cultivation of barley, emmer, and celtic bean took place in the Middle Bronze Age Unit 5b settlement, the low densities of pollen and plant macrofossils, and the presence of a range of wild plants suggests that agricultural production never amounted to more than a "minor aspect of the economy" (Bell 1990:261). In the upland communities, it is likely that pastoral concerns were of primary importance, with the coaxial land divisions on the moorland fringes acting as a sophisticated means to control the movement of stock, and to a lesser degree as enclosed agricultural plots (Fleming 1988).

Based on the radiocarbon dates and the stratigraphic evidence for a series of ever more permanent and extensive land boundaries in the uplands, Fleming has described a situation in which the communities which made use of the moorland fringes of Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor, and to a lesser extent Exmoor in the Early Bronze Age, began to exert more overt spatial control over these upland grazing territories which had perhaps earlier been under only intermittent economic pressure. This was accomplished through the construction of adjoining systems of permanent land boundaries which incorporated (though not exclusively)

a number of settlement clusters on the moorland fringes (Brisbane and Clews 1979; Fleming 1983; 1987:123; 1988; Smith 1982). It is debatable whether the lowland areas of Devon and Cornwall made significant use of a system of land division comparable to the upland reave systems. Both small isolated homesteads, and larger planned settlements have been excavated and traces of planned field systems also exist across the region (ApSimon and Greenfield 1972; Bell 1990; Grimes 1960; Nowakowski 1991). The general length of settlement occupation for these sites is almost uniform, with upland sites like Holne Moor, Dean Moor, Shaugh Moor, and Stannon Down, and lowland sites like Trethellan occupied for perhaps several hundred years, undergoing various structural modifications and additions during their lifetime. It is not entirely clear though, to what extent the evidence represents continuous occupations of these settlements, particularly in the uplands and at Brean Down for example, where both radiocarbon dates and structural\stratigraphic evidence point to episodic construction, and other activities (ApSimon and Greenfield 1972; Bell 1990; Fleming 1988; pers. comm.; Fox 1957; Mercer 1970; Wainwright and Smith 1980).

4.3.2 Continuity of upland land use

As noted above, it would be wrong to describe the contrast between the Early and Middle Bronze Age in terms of a punctuated equilibrium, in which settlements and land boundaries of the Middle Bronze Age suddenly manifest themselves where none existed before. In favour of a better paradigm for conceptualizing the period in general, I have cited evidence both for the continuity of settlement between the early and later periods, and the construction and maintenance of land boundaries and associated settlement horizons concurrent with funerary activities in the uplands. To this can be added the evidence of territorial and social continuity from the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age to the Middle Bronze Age which is indicated by the parallels between Barnatt's (1989) and Fleming's (1979; 1983; 1988) analyses of upland communities on Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor.

A look at the cluttered prehistoric landscapes of upland Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor naturally begs the question of what significance the early monuments and their builders had in the lives of the later communities. Initially a glance at the distribution of ceremonial monuments relative to the field systems in several places on Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor appears to highlight the inability of the earlier monuments to immediately make sense in the later scheme of things (Fig. 4.8 a,b). In his study of North and East Dartmoor, Fleming (1983) noted no obvious patterning in the slighting, incorporation, or avoidance of reave systems to earlier ceremonial monuments. The degree to which a particular monument was 'ritually alive' by its spatial significance in the later system of land division appeared to vary from one site to another. Looking at the issue from another angle, Smith (1982) suggested that, to some extent, the more permanent colonizers of the Plym Valley on South Dartmoor acted upon a pre-existing spatial recognition of the Plym watershed (Figure 4.8 c). This perspective was extended by Barnatt (1989), who demonstrated that on both Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor, a number of community territories ranging from 1.9-7 km in size could be extrapolated on the basis of the spacing and topographic locations of western irregular stone circles and stone row complexes. That these territories were both meaningful and significant to their inhabitants is suggested by the fact that the smaller Dartmoor circles, as well as a number on Bodmin Moor appear purposefully sited in view or alignment with dominant features in the landscape (Barnatt 1982; Tilley 1996; Todd 1987:100). Turner's (1990) study showed that many of the larger south Dartmoor circles are sited in saddles or passes between valley heads at right angles to major topographic features. The existence of smaller, more numerous "local foci" within these watershed territories is indicated by the stone rows, which also appear purposefully cited.

Barnatt (1989) further argued that the prevailing topographical conditions in the South-West fostered stability in population patterns and hence, socio-political boundaries. The particular communities who made use of these sites for timed ritual gatherings which reinforced and symbolized their bonds were then likely stable, and continued to enact their seasonal rituals in what was a familiar and meaningful landscape. The composite nature of many of the monuments supports a long history of use. It is evident from the orientation and placement of individual stones within both single and complex rows that their

present appearance is the result of several phases of construction, and it is far from certain that the cairns or cairn circles which occupy the upland terminus of some rows were envisaged as part of the original construction. Multiple stone circles too, are likely to be composite monuments, and their original use and development, as well as their relationship to later overlying cairns in some cases, suggests a complexity of development over repeated usage (Emmit 1979). Moreover, the extent to which these communities continued as distinct entities is revealed by the clear parallels between the earlier watershed territories, represented by the western irregular circles and row complexes operating as "group foci", and Fleming's later reave systems. Fleming's model of the reave territories and the general upland system of land management is well known and will not be rehearsed in detail here. In Fleming's formulation, land was managed through traditional arrangements between neighbouring communities living in open clusters of houses that were dotted within the larger reave systems. These reave systems were laid out by the communities during a relatively short period, in some cases replacing less permanent antecedents and incorporating older clusters of fields immediately surrounding the houses. The upland pasture above the reave systems most likely functioned as intercommoning land during this period (Fleming 1979; 1983; 1988). The large blocks of land claimed by these communities (for example the Dartmeet system is 6 km wide) argues for the existence of long established kinship/community relationships with specific links to the landscape. The nature of these relationships is of some importance for understanding the role the intervening funerary monuments played in the lives of these communities.

4.3.3 Social hierarchy and political centralization?

The issue of political authority and societal centralization within these territorial systems has been considered by both Barnatt and Fleming. As noted above, Barnatt (1989:220) has suggested that "significant social differences" may have existed between communities of the South-West and of Wessex. The existence, patterning and locations of the group-foci stone circles and the small numbers of regional

foci monuments appear to suggest that more community autonomy and political flexibility was present in the South-West than in areas further east. The inter-group foci (represented by the fewer "symmetrical circles") occupy distinct positions in the landscape, posing more questions than they answer concerning their chronological position and the social roles they played in the lives of the upland communities. Their intermediate size between the smaller circles and the larger circle/henge sites, as well as their positions within the landscape led Barnatt to suggest they indicate a different, though not less autonomous scale of social organization. From another angle entirely, the deliberate construction of these sites at the **origins of streams and rivers**, suggests that they may be more relevant for understanding the symbolic role of these water features in an upland landscape than as indicators of community centralization. It is interesting to note that these sites cluster together where multiple stream heads converge, such as at Grey Weathers, on Dartmoor, and at the Hurlers, on Bodmin Moor.

A thesis which argues for the absence of a centralized authority structure during the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age is further reinforced both by the comparative lack of funerary "wealth" in both early and later Bronze Age graves in Cornwall, Devon and western Somerset, and a dearth of evidence supporting large scale surplus food production and full time craft specialization in the region in both the Early and Middle Bronze Age. A glance at the distribution of personal (as opposed to "community" - following Needham 1988) wealth in the form of gold items, and beads and other decorative/functional artifacts of exotic materials found in barrows throughout the region indicates a pronounced scarcity of finds when compared with the distribution of such items in Wessex (Figure 4.9). Even the addition of the lunulae finds does little to alter this imbalance. It is perhaps not so much the case that these objects were unavailable in South-West Britain, because they clearly were, but rather that the way in which they were used and valued within these communities may have depended less upon an ability to confer prestige on particular individuals and lines of descent during funerary ceremonies.

The economic evidence from both the early and later part of the period, summarized above, indicates that the settlements in which these people lived are best described as primarily subsistence-oriented, and, in the lowlands at least, quite small-scale, though forming local and regional kinship-

directed exchange systems (ApSimon and Greenfield 1972; Bell 1990; Megaw, Rowlands and Burgess 1976; Nowakowski 1991; Smith and Harris 1982; Thomas 1960).

The available evidence for the production and trade of metalwork and ceramics on the peninsula illustrates both the local character of production and the regional nature of contacts.

The granite uplands of the South-West and their associated alluvial deposits are both copper and tin rich, which has encouraged inquiry into the earliest exploitation of these resources for local use and/or export, and the social and economic implications such exploitation might have. Unfortunately, the archaeological record from Devon and Cornwall has not produced any evidence for extensive mining, smelting or smithing for the Early Bronze Age. In many areas of course, later copper and tin extraction may have destroyed evidence for early exploitation (Timberlake 1992). Based upon a lack of evidence for mining and smelting, and similarities of design in flat axes found in the South-West to examples in Ireland and north-west Germany, it has been generally agreed that Central European tin and copper deposits were being exploited before extensive metal mining or smelting began in the South-West, and further, that metal coming from north-west France, Germany, Ireland, and further north in Britain provided the raw material for the production of early daggers and flat axes (or the artifacts themselves) recovered from the South-West (Needham 1978; Northover 1982; Pearce 1983; Shell 1978). The principal finds in tin streams in the South-West have been mainly Later Bronze Age in origin (Pearce 1983).

Copper was mined in County Cork, Ireland, in Anglesey, and in upland Wales at various times between 1900-1700 BC, based upon extensive finds of underground workings and a number of pebble and antler tools (Budd et. al 1992; Timberlake 1992). Use wear patterns and a high proportion of discarded serviceable tools from several assemblages suggest that the early exploitation of metal sources was small scale, and intermittent involving both the collection of stream tin and small community mining operations which may have produced no more than one or two baskets of hand-picked copper ore per day, suggesting local self-sufficiency of supply and technological innovation. To what degree this calls into question the presence of an Early Bronze Age local metal industry in the South-West has been debated. It has been pointed out that copper carbonates and gossan observable on the surface and through the discolouration of

streams were probably well known, and at the very least desirable for body pigments (Shell 1978; Timberlake 1992). Tin ore in the form of cassiterite pebbles was obtainable in eluvial and alluvial gravel deposits of the granite uplands and in the lower valleys towards the sea in the south-west peninsula and Budd et. al. (1992) have argued that secondary copper minerals, such as those available in the South-West could have been easily smelted to produce alloys present in Early Bronze Age artifacts. In terms of discoveries, a flat axe mould was discovered at Altarnum, on Bodmin Moor near later tin workings, and evidence for the early, though undated tin prospecting was recovered in the tin rich Carnon Valley in West Cornwall (Pearce 1983; Shell 1978).

Metalwork of the Early Bronze Age though, including early axes and awls is found sporadically throughout the peninsula (Fig 4.10; Pearce 1983; Todd 1987). The more common flat and low-flanged axes, such as those buried at Trenovissik and St. Erth in Cornwall are likely imported from north-west Germany or are British copies of similar imports. Early daggers of Pearce's Harlyn Bay Phase and Wessex I Phase are very uncommon. Goldwork from this period is best represented by the two lunulae from Harlyn Bay, Cornwall which have clear stylistic parallels with 'Provincial'/non-Irish goldwork, specifically from Brittany. The physical similarities between the Cornish Rillaton gold cup and a Food Vessel in Perthshire have been commented upon, and it is likely that Ireland was the source for much of the gold of this period found in Cornwall (Taylor 1978).

The majority of the evidence for the production of bronze in the South-West comes from later in the period, with finds of cassiterite pebbles in both phases of the Trevisker settlement in central Cornwall, and in Hut 58 at the Dean Moor Dartmoor settlement (ApSimon and Greenfield 1972; Fox 1957). Tin slag, or smelted tin was also recovered at Dean Moor, and from a later phase of activity at Caerloggas Downs 1, on the St. Austell granite (Miles 1975). At Tredarvah in West Penwith, waste bronze and a lump of iron ore were also discovered (Pearce and Padley 1977). All these finds appear after 1500 BC, which is about the time that the production of palstaves and rapiers began in the South-West, suggesting that all the main tin deposits and presumably the copper deposits were being exploited in Devon and Cornwall by this time (Pearce 1983).

By 1500 BC and later, a larger number of metal finds were entering the archaeological record, many still from continental sources, such as the flanged axes and daggers found in the Plymstock Hoard in south Devon. Camerton-Snowshill daggers were placed with the dead in a number of graves like Upton Pyne and East Putford in Devon (Pearce 1983; Rowlands 1976; Todd 1987). It has been suggested that a number of local weapon producing industries were in place in East Devon and perhaps in Cornwall on the basis of the Talton and Crediton hoards containing palstaves and rapiers. Additionally, there is a general distribution of metal finds and stone moulds throughout the peninsula as well as the presence of tin slag and cassiterite pebbles noted above on both funerary/ritual sites such as Caerloggas I and domestic sites like Trevisker (Fig. 4.11; Pearce 1983; Rowlands 1976). A great number of the Middle Bronze Age metal finds from Cornwall were however, imported from Ireland or further east in Devon, based upon the tin content and typology of pieces from the Tredarvah site, and other finds near Truro (Douch 1964; Pearce and Padley 1977; Rowlands 1976).

Based upon regional variety in typology and manufacture among the later finds, Rowlands (1976) has indicated that the indigenously produced Middle Bronze Age metalwork of the South-West was also the result of small, local production. The bronze smiths of the South-West were likely specialists who also primarily participated in subsistence activities within their communities. Although occasionally assumed in general assessments of the Bronze Age, it is difficult, based upon the data, to substantiate a thesis which suggests that the mining of metals and the production of tools, weapons and ornaments was the primary activity of a particular community, or the primary motivation for the location of settlement in certain areas. Rather, extensive trading networks involving down-the-line exchange, and contact between neighbouring communities/kin groups of the South-West are most likely responsible for the regional distributions and stylistic/technical similarities of various metal objects during this period. A similar argument can be made for ceramic production, particularly towards the middle of the period, where a larger-scale ceramic trading network based on pots produced from the Lizard clays developed along side the traditional household industries.

For the earliest part of the period, Parker Pearson (1990) demonstrated that most Beaker

production was dispersed and confined to local use (Figure 4.12). The producers of Food Vessels, whose pots have been more associated with Beaker funerary contexts throughout the peninsula (see Chapter 5 below), relied to a somewhat larger extent on vessels produced from the gabbroic clays of the Lizard peninsula, though most of these ceramics still continued to be produced locally. Collared Urn production throughout Cornwall appears somewhat more centralized in comparison, with more vessels coming from the Lizard peninsula, though the sample is rather small. The few Biconical Urns recovered from the South-West were probably locally produced (Figures 4.13, 4.14; Parker Pearson 1990; 1995; Williams 1988). The production of a large number of Trevisker vessels on the Lizard has already been mentioned, but to this picture we can add the fact that a number of non-gabbroic Trevisker style ceramics found in Devon were also manufactured from locally available greenstone clays, while several other non-gabbroic local production areas in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset are likely, based both upon decorative variation within specific Trevisker style types, and upon the distribution of greenstone, greenstone and quartz, granite, and grog inclusions in various vessels (Figures 4.15, 4.16; Parker Pearson 1990; Woodward 1990). Several of these areas of local manufacture in Cornwall (West Penwith, the Lizard, Camel Watershed, and Tintagel) appear constant throughout the Bronze Age, and the dispersed pattern of gabbroic find sites for the region as a whole is perhaps understood, as Parker Pearson (1995) has suggested, in terms of kin/community affiliation.

Finally, Fleming's (1984; 1988:66) analysis of the settlement patterns within the Middle Bronze Age upland reave systems makes a strong case that the social articulation indicated both by the "neighbourhood" groups which occupied the larger field systems, and all the groups within a reave system, is better understood as a factor of the direct relationship between these units "rather than upon their convergence into a single centre". In such a system, decisions and general productive activities taking place within and between neighbourhood groups result from agreement as opposed to coercion or political control, and authority figures within such arrangements are more likely to have age and ritual rank, rather like Fleming's "organizer king" (1988:121). In other traditional societies, similar economic and social arrangements are found both in local groups which are only partly based upon descent, and in the lowest

lineage groupings within a segmentary system. In the former, the ties between lineages in a village (or field system), for example, are community ties, which "transcend in everyday affairs the [wider] ties which link dispersed descent groups in different systems" (Keesing 1975:41). In the latter, the lowest levels of a nested lineage group occupy single or contiguous strongly corporate local territories, and decisions are take within an extended familial authority structure.

4.3.4 Bronze Age communities and local knowledge

If social relations during the Bronze Age are to be conceptualized without direct appeals to political hierarchies and controlling elites, the focus of attention turns towards the social mechanisms through which these communities reproduced themselves. One aspect of this reproduction has been considered in some detail through analyses of the way in which the structuring of space in the cemetery and the focus on the grave pit during the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age contributed to the maintenance of authority and the objectification of genealogical relations over time (Barrett 1988; 1990b; Garwood 1991). The link in these studies, in part, is between power and knowledge, as authority is conceptualized as a function of the control over descent reckoning and in the creation and active rememberance of history. There is another sense too, in which it is possble to explore this link between power and knowledge. Returning for a moment to some comments made above in Chapter 2 concerning meaning and the "constitution of society", it was acknowledged that during the Bronze Age, material culture production played an important part in the fixing of meaning by individuals and groups in particular settings where traditional classificatory schemes and cosmological associations must have been highlighted, reproduced and changed. The ability to fix meaning in such contexts is also an aspect of power (Hodder 1989). Returning now to the Bronze Age communities of the South-West, if, as argued, kin based groups were associated with distinct areas from the later Neolithic through to the Middle Bronze Age as the monument and artifactual evidence appear to suggest, then Fleming's (1988:118) observation that [the natural features of these territories] "acquired a

rich emotional content, which formed a central core of local traditional knowledge" becomes a very important one (my emphasis). More than anything else in these communities perhaps, this "**traditional knowledge** would have played [an]...important role in the perpetuation of the social structure...and [t]he importance of maintaining such knowledge would have been considerable" (my emphasis). The degree to which the funerary monuments, like the circles and rows before them and the settlements which eventually replaced them, were deliberately made a part of this transfer and reproduction of local knowledge should be considered.

4.4 The funerary monuments: new directions

As intermediary monuments between the later Neolithic circle/henge tradition and the houses and land boundaries of the Middle Bronze Age, round barrows, cairns, and related sites were the most permanent and visible humanly constructed features in the everyday lives of most people for at least 500 years. As such they eventually replaced the earlier sites as the focus of attention for distinct communities and family groups at significant daily and seasonal times. While this is true, the degree to which this replacement should require us to consider the funerary sites in an entirely different light from the earlier monuments is debatable. In terms of their circular physical form, structural and ritual features such as ditches, causeways, post circles, small pits, and deposits of bone and charcoal, and their occassional lack of distinctive mortuary deposits, the funerary monuments retain many of the characteristics found at the earlier stone circle and henge sites, and one may reasonably talk about some sort of "continuity of ideas" stretching from the Neolithic through the Bronze Age (Barnatt 1989; Clare 1987:473). Further, in both form and topographic position, the funerary monuments of the Bronze Age South-West bear far more resemblance to ritual sites of the later Neolithic than they do to the funerary monuments of the preceding millenium. The south-western earlier Neolithic funerary structures (as noted by Thomas 1991a and others for the southern British sites in general) were constructed in such a way that activities would have been visible only at

particular areas of the monument (chamber entrances), while dark passages hid many activities from public view. Further, these sites in the South-West were built at moorland edges, near drainages, on the coast, or off the highest plateaus (Fleming 1988; Grinsell 1971; 1978; 1987; Mercer 1986). By contrast, the monuments of the Bronze Age, like the later Neolithic circles and henges, were built as public monuments - much of the activity that took place at the sites would have been visible to many observers standing in a circle around a central cleared, raised or otherwise demarcated area. In the uplands of the South-West, where preservation is acknowledgeably the best, the Bronze Age monument groups occupy high ground demarcated by drainages, in analogous positions to Barnatt's symmetrical circles, and claim excellent views of the landscape (Figure 4.17). In light of such observations, one wonders whether the construction of later round barrows on or within earlier circles and henge sites should perhaps be construed not as the usurping actions of a newly risen elite, but as the transferral of certain traditional community rituals to another medium, that of the funerary monument.

This is not to argue that a study of the later funerary monuments should be unconcerned with the burial of individuals, but the extent to which these monuments functioned solely in that capacity has long been exaggerated. It is accepted here that burial in the later Neolithic and Bronze Age is a practice distinct from the ancestor rituals which dominated earlier Neolithic life, but I suggest that a focus on this observation (Garwood 1991:18; Thomas 1991b:34) has inadvertently downplayed the role of the funerary monument itself in the active reproduction of traditions of knowledge. As noted above (Chapter 3) and detailed below (Chapter 5) the particular mortuary/ritual nature of these sites is a matter more for elucidation than revelation, and the lately acknowledged regional and local variability observed in the sites of the southern Britain (Barrett 1988; 1990b; Garwood 1991) requires detailed examination before general statements can be made concerning funerary practices of particular communities.

A complementary alternative to viewing the Bronze Age funerary monument evidence in the light of its emphasis upon individual burial might consider both the character and duration of settlement evidence for the period as well as the particular topographic and constructional character of the monuments themselves. The Bronze Age in the South-West can be conceptualized as a time during which communities

and local groups who lacked the meaningful security of domestic spaces, viewed their particular varied landscapes as their worlds. The construction of permanent monuments in that landscape surely had a role in representing and explaining that world to the various people who gathered together to celebrate rituals of passage. Specific and presumably quite meaningful components of that physical landscape were used in deliberate ways to construct these monuments, and to fashion the objects found within them, so that in the absence of long lived domestic structures, it was at the funerary monuments, deliberately constructed in relation to the landscape and to one another, where knowledge which conveyed order and meaning to the world was reproduced and objectified. It is this aspect of the Bronze Age funerary practice which I would like to both set the stage for and address in the following two chapters. Bradley (1991) has referred to a process taking place during the later Neolithic whereby places were translated into monuments through the construction and use of standing stones, stone rows, rock art, and cairns. I would suggest that the landscape by the Early Bronze Age was familiar, and not dangerous to the degree that Bradley has suggested for the Neolithic but still no less meaningful or evocative for its inhabitants, who came to terms with in in a similar fashion through the construction of funerary monuments.

4.5 Funerary to domestic

Before moving on from the contexts of funerary practices, to those practices themselves, a brief comment about later Bronze Age rituals is in order, in anticipation of further attention to this subject below. Clare (1987:472) has observed the difficulties in "disentangl[ing] the secular from the religious" while studying the architecture of later British prehistory, and his remarks on the mutual transferral of ideas between the ritual and domestic in this context is particularly significant in light of my above suggestions about knowledge, landscape and worlds in the earlier Bronze Age. As the communities of the Bronze Age began to exert more visible control over their landscapes, and settled into routines closely bound to house and field, the "rituals of everyday life" (Barrett 1989) came to play the central role in structuring their

activities. These rituals, as Barrett (1989; 1994) has pointed out, involved activities which revolved around the occupation of house and compound. Questions then, about the extent and manner in which this spatial locale **replaced** the barrow, as the location where knowledge about the world was transmitted and objectified, naturally follow on from the above discussion. Initial observations of Middle Bronze Age sites in the South-West indicate that houses were constructed, lived in, and abandoned in ways analogous to earlier Bronze Age barrow forms and related activities. The significance and details of this ritual homology and continuity will be addressed in the following two chapters.

Chapter 5 Monumental Histories and the Development of Funerary Practices

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I addressed Hodder's (1986) discussion of the establishment of temporal and spatial contexts relevant to the meaningful understanding of material culture, and it is to this which I would like to briefly return. Hodder has observed that many spatial (and I would add temporal) techniques used for making the past meaningful involve the imposition of externally derived hypotheses without adequate consideration of context (p.130). I further suggested in Chapter 3 that for the Bronze Age, such impositions have involved the compartmentalization of data into rigid traditional categories of temporal, cultural, and socio-economic affinity (e.g. Burgess 1980; Childe 1940; Ellison 1980), and further argued that such studies serve to blur differences in the material culture, whose recognition might yield a different, or at least richer understanding of Bronze Age cultural variability and reproduction. This is not to say that one can approach the material without being informed by some sort of heuristic device. One's success in defining the relevant temporal and spatial contexts for making relevant observations on material culture lies in the ability to identify significant similarities and differences within the data base (Hodder 1986). Such identified patterns of similarity and difference are by nature theory bound - informed by existing typologies, social theory, politics, and so forth. Hodder argues that, as a result, there is no right scale of analysis, or at any rate, the relevant scale of analysis will depend upon the investigator's choice of attributes to study. This is theoretically obvious but as I stated in Chapter 2, if one is trying to understand meaningful action, one cannot ignore the fact that structuring principles, the backbone of all such action, clearly exhibit some specificity in space and time, and that it is the elucidation of a society's time-space paths which allow some "scale" of analysis to be viewed as more or less appropriate than another. Therefore, in the analysis below, and in the following chapter, I have tried to concentrate on the elucidation of meaningful patterns of

practice resulting from knowledgeable agency within the everyday time-space locales of the period under study, by taking into account such things as artifact distributions (which rely on the movement of, and relationships between people) and significant dimensions of variation within particular categories of material culture or ritual practice. By addressing material culture and practice in the contexts within which it was produced and reproduced, the interpretative endeavor of addressing ritual structuration stands to be both enriched and forwarded. Patterns can be revealed at all levels of analysis, as Hodder (1986; 1991) has suggested, so to avoid what might be perceived as an omission by entirely privledging the particular at the expense of the general, I have concluded this chapter by addressing the "historical development of the [Bronze Age] social totality" (Giddens 1984:65) by considering how the recursive practives observed in local funerary/ritual ceremonies over time resulted in cultural changes during the Bronze Age more easily identified by a long-term perspective.

5.2 Data overview: chronology

Generally, the activities represented by the funerary/ritual sites examined below fall into the chronological categories traditionally referred to as the Beaker period, and Early and Middle Bronze Age. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, and in Chapter 2, since my study is primarily concerned with funerary action, and in particular, that action as directed towards the construction of funerary architecture and related ritual activities, I arbitrarily defined a starting point for my analysis in the later third millennium BC, traditionally perceived to be a time when these monuments and a distinctive class of material culture began to play a part in the structuring of the social world. Correspondingly, my analysis terminates in the latter part of the second millenium BC, when the particular set of practices involving interment in a barrow is gradually replaced by other strategies of disposal. To a great extent these boundaries have been fixed more by the temporal range of activities at the particular sites I have chosen to include for analysis, than by an arbitrary delineation of what constitutes a "barrow building phase", though

it is clear (as noted in Chapter 1) that the practice of Bronze Age round barrow construction as a whole can also, like the sites below, be temporally defined as occurring from the latter part of the Neolithic through the Middle Bronze Age. Within this period, I have attempted to compare and contrast sites whose absolute or relative dates are broadly contemporaneous, working on the assumption that as in space, activities relatively coterminous in time are likely to have more significant relationships, and thus reveal more meaningful patterns of material culture.

The issue of chronological contemporaneity between sites needs to be qualified. In all cases where radiocarbon determinations were available, I have expressed them in the text and in the various figures/tables in calibrated form, at either or both the 68.3% (1-sigma) and 95.4% (2-sigma) confidence intervals, using the probability distribution method of the Seattle CALIB and DISPLAY programs (Stuiver and Reimer 1987). In the site radiocarbon date list (Appendix 2) the determinations are expressed in uncalibrated form. In the individual site histories found in Appendix 3, radiocarbon determinations are expressed in calibrated form at the 2-sigma confidence level. The use of both 1- and 2-sigma confidence levels throughout the following text and in the figures was intended to allow for a high degree of precision in the timing of activities at individual sites and between sites, especially in combination with the stratigraphic evidence. For instance, I have attempted to address the complicated issue of site elaboration and revisiting by occassionally using both the 1-sigma radiocarbon date ranges and periods of vegetation regrowth on stripped sites, organic decay, or erosional and depositional sequences such as natural or assisted ditch infilling. To a large extent of course, this has been an interpretative process, but I have felt that aggressive attention to such detail has been positive and enabling for addressing the detailed actions of the builders and actors at these sites.

5.2.1 Data quality and sources

As discussed in Chapter 2, every inquiry sets parameters which determine the relevance of

particular pieces of information for addressing certain concerns. It can perhaps be considered unusual to plead for the relevance of a great and varied number of sites to a study principally concerned with funerary practices, whilst appearing to ignore or, at the very least, devalue a great many sites which demonstrate direct relevance to the subject at hand, namely certain funerary sites themselves. The contextual approach, however, is not so much concerned with the presence of the data but rather that it is abundant and richly networked (Hodder 1986). It is partly for this reason that, at the outset of this study, I mainly restricted myself to funerary monuments excavated since Ashbee's synthesis in 1960, in the hope that the abundance of radiocarbon dates in combination with advanced excavation methodologies would yield a complex body of detailed data exhibiting spatial and temporal integrity, crucial to my anticipated concerns. Similar demands have been made of the data for the same reasons. Peterson's (1977) effort to pin down the relationships between structural details of Bronze Age barrows and burial attributes, considered only data excavated after 1920. Notwithstanding his critical contribution to Bronze Age funerary studies, the potential of his study was severely hampered by poor data quality (Peterson 1977:346).

I acknowledge that my omission or devaluation of certain sites, and the inclusion of others excavated since 1960 is the product of a non-random sampling procedure, with a definitive bias toward well excavated and reported sites, necessary to my research interests as outlined in Chapters 3 and 4. The re-excavation in recent decades of Bronze Age barrows which received antiquarian attention has cast serious doubt on the contextual value of their results for modern inquiry. Numerous examples exist in which the site locations, content of graves, and artifact relational details reported by early excavators can be called into question. Further, excavation techniques designed to remove central burials in barrows, or valuable deposits in other classes of monument alone have led to a flawed perspective of Bronze Age funerary practices, making conclusions regarding ritual action drawn from such sites highly suspect (Peterson 1977). Additionally, records have been destroyed or lost for certain older excavations due to wartime activities or other circumstances. Other site records often contain uncertainties concerning particular constructional or skeletal details. For instance, in Christie's (1985) compilations of C.K. Croft-Andrew's wartime excavations on the north Cornish coast, despite his generally good excavation and recording, she

encountered considerable difficulties in her attempts to correlate feature numbers, burials, and ceramic vessels with their respective monuments. The absence of adequate original maps in several cases also presented difficulties for her determinations of site structural histories and the existence and provenience of associated artifacts.

As a result of some of these problems in the available funerary record, I have for the most part, ruled out a number of excavations in which the primary, or central areas of the cairns, barrows, or circles have been removed by antiquarian investigation or other means (ie. looting or agricultural disturbance). However, if the early records are good, and the excavator has been able to reasonably reconstruct the contexts of the finds, I have included the site. Further, I have deemed it necessary to exclude certain sites excavated between 1960 and the present for similar reasons. On some sites, sufficient detail was not recorded for various classes of data (burials, pit fillings, sequencing, context and association information for certain features, to name but a few). The presence of this detail was crucial for undertaking the type of detailed analysis below. In some cases, the excavators have kindly supplied me with the necessary information not included in the published reports, but in others, the excavators themselves and/or the information, were unavailable. Also, many sites excavated before and after 1960 fail to exhibit total site recovery. In part, this is due to preconceived and flawed notions of burial and ritual deposition which still reflect the opinions and prejudices of antiquarian excavators as noted above (Peterson 1977). Additionally, constraints imposed upon data recovery due to rescue situations or financial limitation often resulted in the excavation of only small percentages of particular sites. In general, I have concentrated on sites which demonstrate a 70% excavation coverage or better, aiming for both as rich and "unscreened" a body of data as can be obtained. Further, I have preferred to use sites whose sequences of activities and overall chronology have been firmly settled by radiocarbon determinations. This was a crucial factor for determining the scales at which to place and interpret meaningful patterns between sites and different classes of site. Many sites have been dated with much assurance on the bases of artifactual (typically ceramic, or metalwork) or constructional/structural typologies. I have not ruled out these sites from the corpus, but have instead allowed for these typologies to be called into question during the sourse of my examination,

allowing for the curation of certain items, and the possibility that the choice of certain artifacts and techniques of construction are not time-bound, but rather subject to strategies of local monument builders. Recent reassessment of both typological (Parker Pearson 1990) and chronological (Kinnes 1991) frameworks for Trevisker and Beaker pottery respectively, required that I treat sites narrowly dated by artifact typology with some scepticism. Where it has been necessary to rely solely upon artifact typologies I used the widest parameters possible, and sought out similar artifactual material with associated radiocarbon dates at nearby sites for further support. The observations of excavators proved most helpful in this regard.

In addition to these qualifications, I have chosen to exclude or devalue certain sites on the basis of their relative states of destruction. In general, sites which suffered extensive weathering, robbing, looting, or plough damage precluding their ability to reveal constructional sequences and relational information, dates, and so on were regretfully omitted from the study.

Having said all this, it would of course, be contrary to my interests to exclude data which potentially support or question observations made within the analysis. Therefore, I have included a number of sites which for some reason do not meet the original qualifications. Some of these sites have figured in the analysis as additional examples for support of, or exception to, noted dimensions of variation, or as valuable examples of similar or contrary cemetery funerary traditions. As such, these sites provided helpful "fill-in" data for certain areas (especially in Somerset where there is a general lacuna in the recently excavated funerary site record for southern Britain), and are thus equally important to my analysis. As a rule, the artifactual content, material cultural arrangement, structural details, and geographical location of these sites figured largely in my estimation of their relevance to the study.

Such a bias in site selection is bound, of course, to affect the inferences I have made concerning funerary ritual and symbolism to at least some extent. I feel, however, that with such a disparity at the outset between even a 100% sample (all excavated Beaker and Bronze Age barrows from the study area) and the total population in terms of representiveness, any attempt at non-random statements would be naive, theoretically misdirected, and counter to my interest in contextual interpretation.

In terms of the sources for the material examined below, I restricted myself to dealing only with

fully published material. However, in some cases I contacted excavators of published interim reports and was supplied with additional unpublished details which made the inclusion of certain of these sites possible. I was also supplied with some information about recently excavated, unpublished sites via inquiry at county SMRs, trusts, societies, record offices, planning departments and council offices. Unfortunately, many of my follow up inquiries were unsuccessful due to the incomplete nature of the analysis at the time of my inquiry, or problems with the sites meeting my qualifications, or the reluctance of the excavators to respond or cooperate with my requests for information. Some of these sites I was able to include. Others, due to incomplete reporting, are alluded to throughout the text as additional examples.

5.2.2 Monument typology

Recent archaeological analyses of particular bodies of material have been strengthened by broadening the scope of interest to include related sites or artifacts in contextual relationships with one another. It has been argued that determining the significance of a particular piece of material culture or site typology within the totality of symbolic relationships, requires an understanding of structuring principals which run through all aspects of social life. This thereby necessitates an inquiry into a variety of depositional contexts (Hodder 1982 1985; Leach 1977; Miller 1985; Moore 1982; Parker Pearson 1982). It follows then, that the significance of death, and the dead, in the past cannot be evaluated without a consideration of the wider social context as represented by all forms of material remains (Parker Pearson 1982), especially since those remains appear in a variety of mortuary and non-mortuary ritual and domestic contexts as part of the creation of meaningful interpretative schemes. It can be demonstrated that a variety of Bronze Age ritual sites in the South-West like round barrows/cairns, ring cairns, ring ditches, embanked circles and variants thereof, and standing stones, traditionally separated by typological boundaries, contain a number of artifactual, constructional, and contextual similarities. Further, the number of instances in which a particular site began its use life in one form (such as a cairn ring enclosing a small earthen mound) and

ended it in another (large cairn) is great, and suggests that initial analytical typologies are perhaps best left until after an understanding of the full range and history of constructional and ritual practices within particular Bronze Age communities is achieved. The continued analytical separation of these sites has created problems of analysis and interpretation, which have railroaded attempts to address the totality and complexity of Bronze Age funerary ritual at all levels. At the local level, many of these sites were visited by communities generation after generation as part of the seasonal round of ritual activities involving social relationships, economic management and funerary or ancestral matters. The elucidation of these visits and what they suggest about community life over time during this period is an important first step for this analysis. I have sought to achieve this by avoiding a site compartmentalization and by attempting to incorporate material and observations from what I and others have perceived to be a related body of sites which bear a number of common structural features. This said, my analysis does, of course, revolve around mortuary behaviour, hence the site imbalance in this regard. Similarly, my attention to the relationships between the earlier funerary/ritual monuments and the Middle Bronze Age domestic sites in the South-West found in Chapter 6 is an extension of my desire to understand the ways in which society was constituted in funerary ritual through the use of symbolic media/principals which also structured other spheres of social life.

5.2.3 The funerary/ritual sites

In order to provide some spatial reference to the following overview, Figure 5.1 presents the distribution, relative to physiographic features, of the funerary/ritual material examined in this study, as well as other funerary/ritual and domestic sites referred to throughout the text. Additionally, Appendix 3 contains a brief site description for each of the funerary/ritual sites considered below. The inclusion of these summaries, which should be read along with the following site analyses, is intended to provide the reader with important constructional and rituals details which could not be reasonably included in the main text of

this chapter, but whose presence is necessary for following the analyses below.

Considering the Cornish material first, the sites from Cornwall which I have chosen to examine below number 41. The group incorporates a number of barrows and cairns of varied construction as well as two standing stones with associated cairns or funerary/ritual material (Try, The Longstone). Included also are sites exhibiting similar form, content or construction to these funerary monuments, but with an absence of human skeletal material (Caerloggas I-III, Colliford Reservoir IVA, Poldowrain 1, Trenance Downs, Davidstow Moor II,IIA, IX, VII, V, Stannon Downs I), which relates either to its absence for the site originally, or its dissappearance due to the prevailing, but variable, acid soil conditions of the region. On the whole, the position of these sites in the wider Cornish landscape conforms to the general distribution for earlier Bronze Age activity noted by Johnson (1980), being located in West Penwith, The Lizard peninsula, the north Cornish coast, the St. Austell granite, Bodmin Moor, and the Devonian slate and culm measures just off Bodmin Moor. The quality requirements of my study (described above) as well as the preservation and excavation record in Cornwall, for the most part determined the areas in which I concentrated my attention. Because of these factors, certain areas or topographical features are more poorly represented than others, both for this study, and for Cornwall generally during this period (Johnson 1980). Generally, the funerary activity represented here is concentrated upon high moorland or dramatic coastal plateaus, at the expense of the sheltered lowlands of south-central Cornwall and the Camel watershed. The distribution of these funerary/ritual sites is somewhat at variance with Cornish excavated settlement material (with the exception of the Stannon Downs sites), which occurs on more sheltered inland and coastal lowlands.

The majority of the Cornish sites included here were excavated in the path of development (generally china clay workings and roads). While this in many respects has led to an unsystematic collection of sites, a number of complete or near complete cemeteries or "area studies" (The St. Austell granite area, Caerloggas Downs, Davidstow Moor, Treligga Cemetery, and Colliford Reservoir) excavated under rescue conditions have enabled an analysis of community funerary practices over several hundred years. The St. Austell Granite (Blackmoor) sites, which include the Caerloggas Downs trio were all excavated as part of a rescue project which included environmental and radiocarbon sampling, revealing

both similarities and differences in ritual and funerary practice in a fairly well defined area for at least two centuries.

The funerary and ritual activity represented by the Cornish sites included here took place over the course of at least seven hundred years, from the deposit of cremated bones within a central cairn at Davidstow Moor III to the placement of a small Style 6 Trevisker vessel into the nearly silted up ditch at Trelen 2 (Figure 5.3), and represents a wide variety of community practices both within and between cemetery groups. Little overlap exists between the radiocarbon dates for the settlement and funerary/ritual sites in Cornwall (Figure 5.2), although stratified Beaker material suggests that the early phases of settlement at Gwithian and Stannon Down may have been contemporary with nearby Early Bronze Age funerary activity. Further, at the time the Middle Bronze Age Poldowrian house site on the Lizard was probably occupied, the final activities at Trelen 2 were taking place.

The funerary/ritual sites from Devon included in the analysis below total 17. Like the Cornish material, owing to the rescue nature of many of these site/cemetery excavations due to china clay or tourist and farming destruction, as well as scholarly interest in particular monuments, the higher uplands are overly represented among the sites considered below, though the funerary sites around Exeter and the Broad Down area redress this balance somewhat. The funerary/ritual sites form a representative sample from the larger concentrations of these monuments outlined by Grinsell (1970; 1973; 1978) which include mound groups on Dartmoor, the uplands of the coastal Broad Down area, the Upton Pyne area, Exmoor, and north Devon. The Broad Down/Farway Hill group, like the sites from the Shaugh Moor cemetery, provided an opportunity to investigate cemetery development over the course of number of years. The majority of the excavated settlements and field boundaries in Devon are also from upland locations. The radiocarbon date ranges for the Devon material considered here span a period of at most 1000 years, between the commencement of activities at the Shaugh Moor Cemetery, to the urn burial at Rose Ash (Figure 5.4). The undated Beaker material from the Broad Down/Farway complex may well be earlier. As noted in the last chapter, there is a great deal more chronological overlap between the settlement and funerary evidence in Devon than in that of Cornwall, owing mainly to the later funerary sites and early boundary construction

and open domestic activity on Dartmoor (Figure 5.2).

The funerary/ritual site corpus from Somerset is regrettably small, numbering only 14 sites. All the sites lie in north-eastern Somerset, principally in the Mendip region and at the southern edge of the Cotswolds north of Bath, though Court Hill Cairn lies on a costal ridge overlooking the mouth of the Severn River west of Bristol. Although the generally larger number of sites examined in this part of Somerset does reflect the overwhelming historical interest in this region, all of the sites below were excavated as part of rescue efforts in advance of development, or Ministry of Defence operations. Under the auspices of the latter, two cemetery groups, that of Charmy Down and the sites on Chewton Plain were excavated and reported nearly in their entirety. Although only one of the Somerset sites, Court Hill, has radiocarbon dates, the general Beaker/Bronze Age dates for the all the funerary sites overlap quite well with the range of dates observed for domestic activities at sites like Gorsey Bigbury, Brean Down, and Charterhouse Warren Farm Swallet (Figures 4.7 and 5.2).

5.3 From typology to activity

Although a theoretical justification has been forwarded in support of the methodology employed below for examining the sites, several practical constraints to working with the funerary material must necessarily be outlined here, as they reveal how the present approach also developed through an encounter with the character of the record itself.

Traditionally, assessments of Bronze Age mortuary practices have been chiefly constructed on the basis of typological information concerning funerary ritual, monument form, artifact typology and where available, radiocarbon chronology. An early attempt to come to terms with the South-Western material involved an effort to correlate the available absolute dates with artifact categories and general funerary practices, with the eventual intention of establishing clear horizons within which site typology and the symbolic manipulation of material culture could be examined. A closer look at both the dates and the

artifact typologies however, suggested that both conceptual and practical difficulties would arise with any study in the South-West interested in local practice relying on these perameters alone. Ceramics are the most prolific and well documented of the funerary artifacts in the South-West, and as such are perhaps the most useful for illustrating this point, as the early metal finds are rare in the South-West and lack even a basic relationship with radiocarbon chronology. Although it can be demonstrated that in the South-West, Beakers broadly succeed Grooved Ware, and that they are contemporaneous with, and followed by Food Vessels, the latter contemporaneous with and followed by the larger group of Food Urns, Deverel-Rimbury ceramics and Trevisker vessels, with the latter two forms persisting in the record into the later Bronze Age (Figure 5.5 ; Burgess 1980; 1982; Parker Pearson 1990; 1995; Tomalin 1988), attempting to exclusively work with such a broad vessel chronology, even accompanied by radiocarbon dates available for the South-West is not feasible. Beginning with the Beaker funerary material, a regrettable lack of absolute dates exists among the South-Western material. The only Beaker dates available from Cornwall are from Poldowrain 1, a stratified mound on the Lizard with dubious funerary credentials, which contained the remains of five different vessels of Clark's WMR and AOC styles (Harris 1979). Dates from pits below the mound and charcoal within it have a maximum range of 2910 to 1497 BC. Dates for the Beaker domestic (or possibly ritual) activity at the Gorsey Bigbury henge in Somerset (which post-date the inhumation burial) ranged roughly between 2205 and 1760 BC (ApSimon et. al. 1976; Kinnes et. al. 1991). These dates, as well as those from the activities at Charterhouse Warren Farm Swallet nearby, extend well into the Early Bronze Age, which do not entirely rule out contemporaneousness in vessel use between Beakers and Trevisker Wares in funerary contexts such as those at the Treligga 2 and Davidstow XXIV burial mounds in north-east Cornwall (Figure 4.7; Christie 1985; 1988). Trevisker Urns absolutely or comparatively dated from the sites examined below exhibit assays ranging at most from an unlikely 2580 BC (Urn P3 at Chysauster, West Penwith) or 1980 BC (charcoal at Davidstow XXIV, Bodmin Moor, which preceeded a cremation accompanied by Style 1 Trevisker sherd), to 1047 BC at the Rose Ash pit burial in north Devon. A large portion of this range also overlaps with definitive dates for Beaker funerary usage in Wessex (Kinnes et. al. 1991), where similar difficulties in relating specific material culture typologies to

discrete chronological horizons have been documented (Garwood 1991).

The chronological overlap of various ceramic styles may be usefully considered alongside the contextual relationships observed at several domestic and funerary sites. Some evidence of a temporal developement of vessel use is present at Brean Down, Somerset (where Beaker and Grooved ware sherds are stratigraphically succeeded by Biconical Urns, later followed by the Level 4 Trevisker occupation) and Gwithian, Stannon Down, and Trethellan in both upland and lowland Cornwall, where Trevisker settlements overlay the remains of Beaker using communities (Bell 1990; Megaw, Rowlands and Burgess 1976; Mercer 1968; Nowakowski 1991; Thomas 1958). There is also some evidence for chronological development within the Trevisker series, as yet unexplored (Parker Pearson 1990; 1995; pers. comm.; Tomalin 1996). At many South-Western funerary sites, Beakers and Food Vessels occur together in the absence of other ceramic types, and at west Cornish funerary sites like Try and Carvinak, Trevisker funerary deposits appeared secondary to primary Beaker burials (Dudley 1964; Russell and Pool 1964). While this contextual information clearly augments the radiocarbon chronology, the use of the vessels in funerary and domestic settings is clearly a matter of some contextual specificity, and is better treated as a subject of investigation rather than as a baseline from which to make definitive statements about the funerary past.

The issue is further complicated by the absence of a consistent "familiar" burial rite during the period, through which definitive observations about funerary action could immediately be made. While something of the classic Beaker inhumation rite is visible in, for example, the Charmy Down 1 site in north-east Somerset, and some indication of a "Wessex I" style inhumation burial could be postulated for the burial under the East Putford I mound in north Devon, and a number of inurned cremations exist in the site corpus, their numbers are insufficient to stand as the **basis** for a definitive analysis of practice, especially when one considers the variability at any given time in the record as outlined in Appendix 3. Further, as noted in the introduction to this work, the acid soil conditions and relatively "poor" burials in much of the penninsula provide a very real impediment to the "recognition" of burial attributes to base initial inferences upon.

This is not to say that a search for definitive practices in the record is necessarily futile, though the utility of observations made on the results of such a search during the course of this reaearch became questionable. For example, an initial analysis of the Cornish material alone resulted in the identification of several ritual and constructional similarities among sites of broadly similar date. These were later observed to be confined to the Cornish material when considered within the entire site corpus.

As noted above, no absolute dates exist for the Beaker mortuary material in the corpus, and no evidence of a consistent Beaker funerary ritual was present for the peninsula. However, certain structural and ritual similarities appeared to exist among several early sites. The first of these is exemplified by a trio of sites which includes Try, in West Penwith, the earliest ditched phase at Caerloggas Downs I and The Longstone, both on the St. Austell granite. Both Try and the Longstone consist of single menhirs (or in the case of the Longstone, a historical series of posts replaced by menhirs) with probable inhumation graves at their bases on the east side, which were disturbed by intrusive pits containing white quartz water-worn pebbles (Miles and Miles 1971; Miles 1975; Russell and Pool 1964). At Try, the graves and pits contained a partial unburnt long bone and some cremated remains of one individual, both associated with an Clarke's Style S4 handled beaker and sherds of another Beaker, as well as charcoal. Both episodes of burial and intrusion were followed by the erection of small stone platforms or mounds. Caerloggas I also shares with Try and The Longstone the same association of grave-like pit (with a high phosphate determination possibly indicating a temporary burial) which was followed by successive intrusive pits containing white quartz pebbles, associated with and to the east of a large granite moorstone. Try and The Longstone belong to the general class of monuments known as standing stones, which have received considerable general and regional treatment in recent years (Williams 1988; Wilson 1983), and Caerloggas I, though focused upon an existing tor, may be considered similarly. That this type of site is widely recognised to have Late Neolithic parallels and origins is generally accepted, as well as its common association, where ceramics are present, with Beaker material and Beaker style D-shaped cairns and cists (Lewis 1974; Vyner 1977). These early associations are not exclusive but in terms of the specific nature of activities at the above sites, it is clear that they belong to this observed phenomena of late Neolithic/Beaker funerary practice. The replacement of

wood with stone uprights at the Longstone undoubtedly derives from later Neolithic practice and is paralleled at the Sanctuary and Croft Moraig, Perthshire, both having third millennium BC dates (Miles and Miles 1971). Isolated posts marking burials also occur during the Earlier Neolithic (Williams 1988:50). Further, the general distribution of these sites is decidedly Neolithic in places like Anglesy, and Wales generally, where it copies chambered tombs, and opposes the distribution of later Bronze Age sites (Roese 1980a; 1980b; Wilson 1983:366). While no finds accompany the excavated examples of standing stones in Devon, the monumental form is also recognisably early on Dartmoor, having parallels among cairns associated with the stone rows on Holne Moor and elsewhere (Barnatt 1989; Fleming 1988:95,98).

More general similarities appeared to exist between a second group of sites (Tregulland, Carvinak, Cocksbarrow, and the Beaker features at Davidstow XXVI) having Beaker and/or Food Vessel associations which can be assumed to date to an Early Bronze Age context after 2100 BC on the basis of radiocarbon determinations for similar vessels or other articacts elsewhere (Ashbee 1958; Christie 1988; Dudley 1964; Miles 1975; Miles and Miles 1971). Although a number of Bronze Age sites in Cornwall exhibit some form of enclosure, ranging from the late initial stone rings at two of the Colliford Reservoir cairns, to the comparitively early ditch and bank at Davidstow III, this particular group of sites features ring cairns constructed after, and in combination with single or double post rings or stone holes. Both Tregulland and Cocksbarrow, with its Beaker style cremation accompanied by an ox horn ladle, contained double stake circles followed by ring cairns. At Davidstow XXVI, the ring of stones or posts was respected by the addition of a ring cairn at its outer boundary. Carvinak's quartz Beaker platform was surrounded by a ring of granite and quartz blocks held in place by two stake circles. Another site exhibiting broadly similar dates to the others, Watch Hill, on the St. Austell granite, contained a ring cairn whose place in the history of the monument preceeded the deposition of some Enlarged Food Vessel sherds on a stabilized ditch silt.

A third group of sites dispersed throughout Cornwall exhibit closely overlapping radiocarbon dates ranging maximally from c. 2050-2100 BC to 1600-1650 BC, and minimally, from c.1900/1950BC to 1750BC (Figures 4.7 and 5.3). The primary activities at these sites (Crig-a-Mennis, Cataclews, Davidstow V, Davidstow I, and Colliford Reservoir IVA) are aceramic, but nevertheless all exhibit homogeneity in

terms of the use and placement of ritual and constructional items and features, notably charcoal, small cairns, stones, and charcoal pits. One of the primary features at Crig-a-Mennis was a central stone heap of slate covering a large quantity of charcoal on the old ground surface. A spur of stone from the main heap which was covered in charcoal, and a small quantity of cremated bone covering an oval pit with oak charcoal and organic matter lay nearby. To the north-west of the stone heap an arc of 9 stones had been erected, as well as a patch of charcoal near the stone heap. These features were followed by the erection of three mounds, the last of which was a flat topped turf stack (Christie 1960). At Cataclews, roughly 18 miles up the coast, primary features at the site consisted of a small fire on the old ground surface which was associated with a large amount of oak charcoal (yielding the radiocarbon date) and a small amount of cremated bone. To the south east of this central deposit was a small cist containing a fairly complete cremation and some oak charcoal, all surrounded by a ring of stones, and covered by a stone and earth cairn of unknown profile (Christie 1985). At Davidstow I on north Bodmin Moor, at the centre of a stake ring lay a hollow filled with quartz, oak charcoal and clay, covered by a very small mound of clay and turf. Just to the north of this mound lay a spread of charcoal and a fire (yielding the radiocarbon date) containing 5 fragments of cremated human bone. To the west of the small mound was a patch of charcoal, a small pit associated with some stakeholes and a number of oak objects thrust into the old land surface. Further fires and charcoal deposits lay within the circle. These were all covered by a flat topped turf stack. Similar activities would appear to have begun somewhat earlier at nearby Davidstow V (whose construction probably took place 50 to 100 years earlier than Site I based upon the radiocarbon results). Following the construction of a flat-topped turf stack, seven stones set in an arc were erected on the mound in the north-west, and just beyond the mound in the south-east a deposit of charcoal (yielding the radiocarbon date) was placed on the old ground surface and covered with a very low cairn of quartz and slate. The cairn also covered a small pit filled with charcoal, and just at its edge and to its south-east were two oak timber posts, one burnt in situ. A small grog tempered Longworth Style 1 Collared vessel associated with charcoal and containing wood resin and a fatty substance lay in a pit to the north-east (Christie 1988). Finally, roughly 8.5 miles to the south of the Davidstow Cemetery at Colliford Reservoir, primary activity

at Site IVA included the scattering of oak charcoal over the ground surface (yielding the date) which was then covered by a small cairn of granite and turf. Five metres to the north-west mourners had built a gentle arc of several orthostats and a number of posts. Both orthostats and the central activities were primary to a cairn ring demarcating a turf stack (Griffith 1984).

Other general similitaries can also be teased out of the record. For example, at 8 of the sites considered below, a focus on the east side of large earthfast boulders for pit excavation occurrs throughout the period in Cornwall (at Try, the Longstone, Caerloggas Downs I and Colliford Reservoir II), and at the Shaugh Moor Cemetery on Dartmoor (Griffith 1984; Miles 1975; Miles and Miles 1971; Wainwright, Fleming and Smith 1979). In a slightly different vein, at a number of sites, including Chysauster, Trelen 2, and St. Neot on Bodmin Moor funerary participants deliberately sprinkled the interior of a funerary enclosure with charcoal (Smith 1984; Smith 1996; Wainwright 1965). A number of other similar activities and features have been identified by various excavators.

The similarities outlined above for these sites could perhaps be construed as evidence for some sort of cross-regional typology of practice. An earlier attempt to work through the material from this perspective failed however, because an attention to similarities at the outset, however bewitching, precluded a real understanding of situated practice. Why this is the case is revealed by considering the data corpus as a whole. Beyond these affinities of practice, the bulk of the recorded action at the sites appears not unlike Foucault's "profusion of entangled events" - profound, motley and totally meaningful (Foucault 1984:89). A look at the historical events at a series of broadly contemporary sites across the peninsula reveals that a range of practices appears to have taken place at any given time in terms of treatment of the corpse, mound construction, and related activities such as the excavation of pits, the lighting of fires, and the deposition of funerary or ritual offerings. Further, no standard process of site elaboration can be identified. Many actions and construction episodes cover a vast range of practices from the explicitly funerary to the puzzlingly "ritual", and each site has its own unique history. The question then, is how to come to terms with this recognised difference whilst acknowledging that some sense of constructional and ritual **familiarity** persists between the sites. One way of accomplishing this is to consider the sites as examples

of different strategies aimed at accomplishing the similar goal of effecting a ritual transition or mediation from life to death and a subsequent return to order through the use of a finite number of general **themes** or **principles**. These themes were selectively used by the builders of each site to create meaning through the use of a basic, though slightly varied, set of material culture which was connected, through the operation of metaphor, to wider principals within local cosmology.

For instance, after a consideration of the construction of, and activities at the monuments, four basic themes emerge. The first is one of enclosure/boundedness/separation. The second is the principle of stratigraphy. The third concerns color and texture, and the fourth involves time. The theme of enclosure/boundedness/separation is evidenced by the creation and subsequent destruction of circular features like ditches, banks, stone or wooden circles, and occassionally artifact deposition. By creating enclosure and separation, sacred space can be defined, contrasts between inside and outside, and concentric space can be created, and movement between spaces can be meaningfully controlled. The theme of stratigraphy appears in the creation of deliberately stratified deposits in pits, and to some extent, in the deliberate creation of stratified mound sites through a combination of various materials (though this is more likely to relate to the theme of time, below). The creation of stratigraphy can either operate to acknowledge, or alter natural relationships between things. The theme of color and texture can be seen in the use of varied and deliberate construction materials at specific stages and locations during monument construction. These materials have the potential to be symbolically related to specific features of the local landscape (both visible and buried), so that the broader cosmological relations linking local place with important themes in the life and death of the community are recreated during the course of the funerary ritual. Finally, a theme of time is evidenced by the manner in which the experience of both the passage of time, and event at the sites is controlled through movement and astronomical allignment, metaphors upon natural processes of decay and weathering, a metaphor of the site itself as created through the timely addition of construction materials, and metaphors involving beginnings, endings and transformations created through the destruction/creation of artifacts and the lighting of fires.

Approaching the sites in this fashion I believe, enables us to begin to understand how over time,

and between and within particular localities, the potential for the creation of the variability in construction and meaning inherent in the monuments is actualised within the broader set of common themes and symbolic resources. The built-in flexibility of such a system was, in each instance, acted upon by builders and funerary specialists who wove a more general ritual tradition into the contingency of community life. Over time, this process of **ritual structuration** can be viewed as producing the broader historical patterns we identify in the material record. Considering the funerary action in this way, instead of searching for particular instances of ritual types, allows each mortuary construction and performance to be unique, and further, for each site to represent the product of a complex and potentially open history of practice set within a matrix of tradition.

As a further note relative to the analysis below, while attempting to isolate ritual traditions and the structuration of funerary practice for the sites, I have also considered the nature of structural elaboration at each site, concurring with Barrett (1989) and Mizoguchi (1992) that the history of a particular monument is likely to have been a complex and lengthy one, involving different sorts of actions by various groups whose projects varied greatly. The notion of monumental elaboration has been summarised by Bradley (1993), who considered cases in which repair, re-enactment, and changes of form and structural materials occurred during the development of particular Neolithic monuments. Similar processes occur at Bronze Age funerary monuments, and therefore elucidating their development, or history of elaboration is of some importance both in a local and long-term sense. While immediately linked to issues of funerary tradition and ritual structuration, charting the occurrences and types of monumental elaboration is likely to be important in framing the historical development of the barrow tradition throughout the Bronze Age, and its relationship to the structuring of social life.

5.4 Funerals in context

Having acknowledged that ritual structuration takes place within particular meaningful contexts,

some attention must be focused on the method by which the identification of those contexts is achieved. In order to establish a broader analytical framework for studying local funerary action, some attention was given to the observed "redundancy" of material cultural patterning combined with a marked homogeneity of ritual practice within potentially distinctive areas/communities. Such features were considered in combination with differences in ritual practice between these areas/communities. "Subjectively significant" criteria of this nature in combination with some attention to geography have been shown to be useful in the definition of ethnic and kin groups elsewhere (Emmerling 1997: 299,318).

Certain of the features referred to above at the sites (e.g. astronomical allignments, soil texture and colour) combine to form temporally and spatially characteristic constructional and ritual practices. These practices, in combination with information on economic and social reproduction, and patterns of material culture for the region as a whole, provided a general analytical framework for studying action in context at the funerary/ritual monuments. As I have noted above, such a framework could operate at a number of scales, concurrent with the level at which patterns are observed in the record. For example, at the largest of scales, one could point to the distribution of Trevisker ceramics, the prevalence of "Late" style Beakers in the funerary record in south-western sites, the relative poverty of south-western burials and the presence of Late Neolithic inter-group ritual foci in Devon and Cornwall to argue for bracketing all the south-western funerary sites together for analysis. At a slightly smaller scale, one could concentrate on the distribution of Trevisker gabbroic pottery, the geographical extent of Biconical Urns, the nearly exclusive palstave style-zones in the South-West, and the observed similarities of ritual practice initially identified above for the Cornish funerary sites to bracket the Cornish sites separately from those in Devon and Somerset. As noted in Chapter 4, such general patterns and practices are perhaps more indicative of the presence of ethnic entities structuring production, trade, social organization, and more generally, ritual practices in the region as a whole.

As one would perhaps expect however, it is at the lowest and most local scale of analysis where the redundancy of the material culture record is most apparent, as significant characteristic ritual and constructional features of site groups overlap to some extent with each other, and with distinctive patterns

in artifact use and circulation, and the community based level of social organization and reproduction postulated for the period. Such similarities occur conjointly with differences in ritual and structural characteristics between these individual sites or site groups. Such consistencies in ritual tradition and artifact distributions throughout the period investigated here occur in Cornwall in West Penwith, on the St. Austell granite, on Davidstow Moor, and to some extent within the north Cornish sites at the fringes on Bodmin Moor. In Devon, The Shaugh Moor and Broad Down/Farway groups both present distinctive constructional and ritual features which can be combined with other artifactual and social evidence to support their analytical grouping. In Somerset, the Chewton Plain sites and the Cotswolds sites both form distinctive ritual groups. The other sites not included in the above groups will be considered separately.

5.4.1 The St. Austell granite group

The sites on the St. Austell granite have for some time been recognised as a distinctive ritual group, mainly on the basis of their geographical isolation, topographical positions, and presence of yellow clay mound caps (Figure 5.6; Johns 1993; Miles 1975). To this list of features, a number of observations can be added.

Five of the seven sites considered here make use of granite orthostats which, if not naturally present in the barrow area, are deliberately erected. This contrasts with many other site groups, in which an orthostat or moorstone grounder may provide the focus for perhaps only one site. Next, the use of yellow clay in barrow construction is by no means unique to this group of sites. Some type of yellow clay forms a component of the subsoil in the Upper and Lower Devonian Slate formations throughout the South-West, on the Serpentine of the Lizard penninsula, on the Bodmin Moor Granite of Cornwall, and on the Upper Greensand of east Devon. Among the sites considered below from these areas, a total of 17 contain yellow clay as a mound, pit, or platform component. For the St. Austell sites, the importance of the yellow clay capping lies not in its presence, but in its nature. The actual substance utalized by the builders

was yellow kaolinized granite, or kaolin which, rather than being a component of the subsoil and easily obtained on site, was procured, often at some distance, from stream beds, where it lies at depths of 3 to 30 feet below the ground surface (Miles 1975). The procurement and use of this material suggests that a special and distinctive link was being created between colour and a specific feature of the local landscape/geology by the St. Austell builders. The deliberate use of the yellow color however, also reflects the place of the St. Austell symbolic constructions within the wider south-western tradition of barrow construction involving this material. Another feature linking a number of the St. Austell sites is the common use of a black gritty soil in a final capping ritual. The specific nature and circumstances surrounding the use of this material varies slightly throughout the ritual history of the granite and will be considered in some detail below.

In terms of artifactual evidence, the Food Vessel and Collared Urns recovered from the Watch Hill and Little Gaverigan (some 1.5 miles north-west of the granite) sites respectively, were manufactured from local clays, indicating a local ceramic production tradition within the wider trade links being developed during this period (Nowakowski 1993; Parker Pearson 1990).

Based upon the pollen profiles for the buried soils under the St. Austell granite sites, a tentative building order was suggested (Bayley 1975) which appears to be supported by the nature of construction and ritual practice among the sites. The activity documented by these sites spans a period from the Late Neolithic (perhaps represented by the primary activities at the Longstone) through the Middle Bronze Age (represented by the final activities at Caerloggas I, and the Trenance Downs site), and is anchored medially by the Watch Hill radiocarbon assays which ranged maximally between 1973 and 1522 BC (minimally from 1886-1683 BC) (Table 5.1). The commencement of activities at the Caerloggas Downs sites are likely to be broadly contemporary with these dates, while the building of Cocksbarrow preceeded their construction.

At the Longstone, as noted earlier, a number of activities took place which involved the form of the monument and the nature of deposits to its east (Figure 5.7; Miles and Miles 1971). The actions at the Longstone share similar features with other standing stone sites both in and out of this study. These include, among other things, the existence of a sequence of activities involving a series of graves or pits,

the erection of a stone, stone paving above or near these pits, and/or the replacement of various early markers on the sites by a final stone (Lewis 1965; Lynch 1980; Vyner 1977; Williams 1988). This early attention to the site can be contrasted with activities of a truly secondary nature involving much later burials or structural modifications such as those observed at Try, in West Penwith and at Welsh sites like Bedd Branwen and Ystrad Hynnod (ApSimon 1973; Lynch 1971; Williams 1988:51,115-116). Like Try and other Beaker standing stone burial/ritual sites in the region, The Longstone, with its distinctive features may represent an alternative form of burial practice to that observed in the early barrows, in that a series of graves or pits may represent the temporary resting place for the body of a deceased individual, or the final resting place for a token deposit of bone or artifacts (Williams 1988). The presence of the white quartz pebbles echos similar practices at Caerloggas I, and at Try, where the pits to the east of the stones contained evidence of partial or, possibly, temporary corpses, generally tied into rituals elsewhere concerned with the body of the deceased. The characteristic kaolinized granite component, present on Cocksbarrow nearby, as well as the black masking layer found at some of the later sites were not used by the ritual participants at the Longstone.

Cocksbarrow is probably the earliest of the other sites, and a complicated and lengthy series of events is likely to have taken place at the mound location (and elsewhere) culminating in the partial burial of an single cremated individual (Appendix 3; Figure 5.8; Miles and Miles 1971). The particular nature of the burial with its ox horn ladle has few parallels but the excavator does note a Bell Beaker and a horn ladle from a cist in Broomend of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, and a horn dagger hilts from a Beaker inhumation in Rousay, Orkney (Miles and Miles 1971). The site is unique among the group, as it is apparent the builders performed an elaborate pre-burial ritual involving the post circle and later cairn rings (Figure 5.8.1). Several things are apparent about the early enclosures. The earliest stakes of the circle (shaded) flank the post-circle entrance and are opposed to the west/north-west by another group of early stakes and Pit Z, which falls at the point of the midsummer sunset.[1] This suggests that the passage of time from the sunrise of the autumnal equinox to the midwinter sunrise and/or from the sunset at the spring equinox to midsummer sunset, was initially marked at the site, perhaps during a period of initial funerary ceremonies.

The end of this first period of transition came with the construction of the surrounding outer cairn circle. The narrow opening of the cairn circle symbolically ended the transition period by fixing the event of access to the outer cairn circle to the time of midwinter sunrise. The burial may have been placed at the centre of the enclosure at this time, but based upon the entrance to the inner cairn circle, it is more likely that yet another delay occurred, during which time the mourners marked the lengthening of the days until, at midsummer sunset, on the longest day of the year, the cremation was interred through the inner cairn circle opening which marked this event. The arrangement of stones between the two rings appears to suggest that movement within the monument replicated this transition as mourners followed a clockwise course with the remains from the midwinter sunrise to midsummer sunset (Figure 5.8.1). It can perhaps be suggested at this point that both the timing of the final burial rites and the construction of the monument were drawing upon/creating a powerful metaphor for the life of the deceased, which will be explored in the following chapter. That the monument was planned to follow what was probably an 8-9 month period of transition (during which the corpse of the deceased was cremeted and a special selection of bones were prepared for burial) seems clear from the deliberate position of Pit Z, which marked from the beginning what was to be the end of a rite of passage. The site was completed by the blocking of the outer circle and the construction of the barrow.

No further activities appear to have taken place after the yellow embellishment to the mound, and it is interesting that the builders of Cocksbarrow did not "finish" the barrow by with a final black capping common to the other sites on the St. Austell granite considered here. I will return to this point below.

Turning now to Caerloggas Down I, which was probably built some time after the burial at Cocksbarrow, structural and artifactual evidence suggest a long history of monumental elaboration and activity between the Early though to the Middle Bronze Age (Appendix 3; Figures 5.9; 5.10). The latter chronological boundary for the site is supported by the form and composition of the ogival dagger fragment, tin slag fragments, and other finds (Pearce 1983:116; Miles 1975:38), while the length of site activity is evidenced by its constructional history (see below). Caerloggas Downs I is different in both constructional and ritual character than both its near neighbors (Caerloggas Downs II and III),

Cocksbarrow, and Watch Hill, representing, instead of a barrow mound, a long term ritual enclosure focused upon a tor remnant. Although a high phosphate reading in the large pit east of the tor suggested the possibility of a temporary (or entirely dissolved) inhumation early in the history of the site, the general nature of the activities indicates the site functioned less as a burial enclosure, and more as focus for ancestral or ritual offerings. This has been observed elsewhere (Bradley 1991; 1993). A close examination of the nature of the artifactual evidence also points towards such an interpretation, as the artifacts placed into the initial pits, and later deposited among or above the basal levelling turves consisted of items which occur in contexts which can be confidently construed in other, funerary sites to represent **offerings** to the deceased, as opposed to personal grave goods (Figure 5.11). The position of the ring entrance is of some significance in this context. While the entrances (or other significant features) to sites like Watch Hill, Trenance Downs and the inner enclosure of Cocksbarrow can all be argued to focus to some extent on summer astronomical allignments (see discussion of these sites below and above), Caerloggas I is unusual among the group in having its primary orientation towards the midwinter sunset, indicating that despite the length of its use by generations of people, the importance of midwinter within the yearly round of obligations to the dead, or to the ancestors, was maintained. The tradition of winter offerings to the dead in the somewhat different context of the Watch Hill site can also be suggested (below).

In terms of the monumental elaboration at the site, what is immediately apparent is that the site began rather simply as a tor and associated pit complex, both of which were flanked by rather shallow ditches which received no further attention in the later history of the monument (Figure 5.10.1). As the deposits around the stone continued through the years and the basal levelling turves were laid, the site took on an increasingly monumental (and timely) appearance, as, (perhaps with each visit to the site) the builders highlighted the importance and meaning of their actions with a visible structural addition (and threshold ritual) to the monument. This process culminated in a final act of closure/completion marked by the jumbled interior turves and the deliberate use of gritty black soil. It is interesting to note that the construction order for the various deposits of the bank mimics that used in the barrow sites, (yellow kaolinized granite followed by turves and stone followed by a yellow cap and more soil followed by another

complicated capping phase finalized by the black gritty soil) as though, despite the difference in activities between Caerloggas I and the other sites, the structuring principals guiding the construction of the funerary monuments (and their related symbolic referents) were deliberately created and maintained at Caerloggas I in order to link the activities taking place there with the rites of passage marked at the burial sites by similar construction techniques. Although it is difficult to be precise about the particular timing, the change of entrance/access orientation from the initial ditches and the first ring bank, as well as the blocking of the early and later ditch and bank entrances with orthostats and posts respectively, the rotting in place of the early stakes, and the deliberate removal of the later ones, all echo the closure rites observed at many south-western funerary sites. This lends support to the idea that each visit to the monument was carefully timed not only in its midwinter occurrence (as noted above) but in its frequency, which in turn was tied, writ large, into the shorter burial ritual cycles for the communities on the granite. The excavator postulated that a minimum of thirty years may have taken place between monumental enhancements (based upon the stakes rotting), and the development of a soil on the Phase 1 bank could extend this gap considerably further. The processes of rotting and of turf and soil development is common on many barrow sites where, as I have argued below, they serve to demarcate periodic visits to the tomb for various puroses. The ancestral rituals which took place at Caerloggas I, however infrequent were then consciously linked to both the shorter cycles of individual burial on the granite, and the longer timeless cycle of obligations to the dead through the mediation of timely actions and symbolic monumental construction.

The other two Caerloggas sites are thought to be broadly contemporary with Caerlogas Downs I, and share a number of constructional features with the above site, though can be argued to fulfill slightly different roles as they differ in constructional appearance and artifact use. Caerloggas Downs II was considerably smaller than the other two sites and the extent of damage and lack of finds rather precludes any definitive assessment as to the intentions of the builders. Its role as a burial site is certainly possible, and if this is the case, it seems clear that its builders also made use of the yellow clay capping found at the other burial sites on the granite. Caerloggas Downs III is a more interesting site (Figure 5.12). The flat-topped turf stack at this site was constructed soon after the erection of an orthostat and the placing of

two branch on the old ground surface, and no element of early enclosure was utalized by the builders (Figure 5.12.1). It is difficult to say whether or not these activities may also have involved a burial of which no trace remained. The focus, after the initial activities were completed, was on the construction of the mound. The parallels with Cocksbarrow are immediately apparent in both the position of the two major initial features and the use of yellow clay in an annular depression in the monument, and yet the differences are significant enough to suggest that what we are seeing at Caerloggas III is a reinterpretation of traditional ritual requirements for the burial of the dead and for tomb construction among specialist and builders in a later and slightly distant community. While the same structural and ritual elements are present at both sites, at the Caerloggas site, their use has been slightly altered. The granite ring no longer forms an enclosure, but is rather part of the body of the mound. The positions of midwinter sunrise and midsummer sunset are rather generally (as opposed to temporally) defined at the later site through the symbolic use of branchs and a standing stone, while the path from the rising of the midwinter sun to the setting of the midsummer sun is now commemorated by the yellow/red clay which was placed into the depression at the surface of the site roughly between the these two points (Figure 5.12).

In light of the above observations, the structural elaborations or additions to the body of the mound at Caerloggas Downs III may be explained as a function of a developing focus on the funerary mound at the St. Austell granite (see Caerloggas I above and also Watch Hill below). It appears that the funerary rite of passage at Caerloggas Downs III was mainly memorialized and made meaningful by structural changes and activities to/on the mound itself as opposed to the pre-burial rites at Cocksbarrow. These include the pause during mound construction, the yellow/red clay adornment with its southern mound surface access gap, and finally, the black masking layer (present at the later sites only) which marked the termination of the rite of passage involving the deceased. The presence of the latter would appear to have been relatively unimportant, and if present, required neither cist or grave pit.

Watch Hill (Figure 5.13) is thought to be contemporary with the Caerloggas Downs sites, placing the time frame for the ritual activities at the sites firmly within the Early Bronze Age, and contemporary with other Cornish sites like Crig-A-Mennis and Davidstow I. At first glance, the site itself appears quite

physically complicated, with a number of ritual allignments being highlighted through a series of devices. Considered within the ritual context of the St. Austell group as a whole, however, the actions of the builders and/or mourners appear to have operated within the same general set of themes and symbolic associations observed at some of the other sites. The ways in which the themes were played out is however, unique to the site and instructive in terms of the character of the monument in the history of the St. Austell granite. As with Caerloggas Downs III, parallels can be made with the earlier site of Cocksbarrow. The builders of Watch Hill made use of two cairn circles in some type of pre-burial activity. Here, however, the transition appears to be between the **rising** and setting of the sun on midsummer day, marked by the early pit and the ditch as well as the outer cairn wall and standing stone (Figure 5.13.1). One of the earliest activities at the site (the excavation of the ditch) focused attention (perhaps by the standing presence of several individuals on the two ledges) towards the midsummer sunrise and the midwinter sunset, where (and at the time which) the earliest and latest activities on the site would be performed (the excavation and filling of the early pit, and the fruit/ white pebble deposits into the upper ditch silt). Although we see a new focus on the midsummer sunrise, the use of an early pit, the erection of a standing stone, the construction of a cairn ring, and the termination of the cycle at midsummer sunset reveal that builders/funerary specialists incorporated a number of traditional and common funerary elements into a new ceremony/barrow of their own devising, perhaps better suited for the particular circumstances of this community and its deaths. The later structural alterations made to the site also bear a striking similarity to the sites considered above (soil, yellow caps, final black masking layer), though their particular combinations at Watch Hill make it clear it is clear that the builders were both respecting, and reinventing the symbolic associations and cosmological order referenced by these materials.

In terms of the elaborative sequence at the site, two main breaks appear to take place in the sequence of activities (Figure 5.13.1). The first is the weathering of the ring cairn (and presumably also the silting of the ditch and later soil formation). It is after this time that the burials may have taken place. The deposition of sherds into the ditch and their locations are significant in this context. Food Vessels, like other ceramics in the south-western sites are found as receptacles for cremated remains, or as vessels

accompanying/associated with a burial. They are less commonly used as generalized offerings (Figure 5.11). The Enlarged Form 3 Food Urn at Watch Hill, perhaps associated with the dead individuals' household was broken and carefully scattered at particular places around the circumference of the ditch, between midsummer sunrise and midsummer sunset, with special attention being paid to the midwinter sunrise, the south, and the midsummer sunset, recalling and re-enhancing what were traditional symbolic associations between a persons life and the cyclical solar year observed at the other sites. It is also useful to note that their distribution both opposes and complements the outer cairn circle, still visible at this point, which I have suggested functioned similarly. The deposition of the sherds then, like the construction of the outer cairn circle, were actions which focused attention on the life paths of the deceased individuals, in a similar fashion to that observed at earlier at Cocksbarrow, and across the granite at Caerloggas Downs III.

The second phase of activity at Watch Hill can now be considered (Figure 5.13.1). The second main break in activities at the site would appears to be between the two turf stacks, some time after the burial. Although the excavator could find no evidence of a turf structure in the dark soil which overlay the early turf stack, the nature of the different soils in each, and the possibility that the dark soil could be the result of trampling, suggests that at least some time elapsed at the site before the mourners returned to complete the monument. The second turf stack was embellished, and a number of activities took place on the mound, followed by the infilling and deposition of a number of items into the ditches. The character and location of these items is significant when considered both within the general context of activities, and in opposition to the earlier ditch deposits. The lack of attention towards the midsummer sunset (asociated perhaps, with the time of burial) is notible, and complemented by a new focus for the deposits at the midwinter sunset and in the north. The items (flakes and broken blades, pebbles, fruit and wood) are not personal but rather, appear to represent generalize offerings to the deceased - now turned ancestor, which were perhaps made at particular times in the solar year (concurrent with various structural embellishments). The end of this transition was marked at the site by the final mound coverings and the ditch infill, which removed the boundary between the living and the dead. The fall/winter fruits, and the offerings at (and likely on) the midwinter sunset allignment and in the north (outside the path of the sun) contrast with the

timing and character of the earlier personal offerings and indicate that the major structural additions to the site invloved actions of an incorporative nature. At Watch Hill then, both the personal life cycles of the dead individuals, and the more generalized obligations to the dead were carefully and meaningfully tied into a yearly ecomomic calendar by timely actions involving particular items of material culture.

Trenance Downs (Figure 5.14) is considered to be the latest site in the group, perhaps being built during the Middle Bronze Age (Miles 1975). Even without this knowledge however, Trenance Downs appears as a distinctly different form of site, in which features present in the early funerary/ancestral site appear different in form and intensity, while the black gritty masking soil takes on a far greater role. The site appears most like Caerloggas Downs I in terms of the character of the deliberate central and entrance offferings, and though while it is similar in diameter, it was not utalized as a long term focus of activity necessitating colorful and complex vertical structural elaborations and entrance/exit rituals. Although no burial was recovered (the cavity near the entrance however, is reminiscent of later Early Bronze Age burial cists with its slab cover), the site bears some resemblance to the early funerary sites on the granite. The builders/ritual participants carefully controlled access to the site (or activity within it) to what may have been the midsummer sunrise through the entrance. Through the entrance alligned upon this orientation, a long path lay which ended at a wall smeared with white kaolinized granite. At this point, after an abrupt turn to the right, the orthostat (which significally marked the point of the midsummer sunset at Watch Hill and Caerloggas III) now was set up at the north end of the enclosure, which is moreover, now pinched and irregular. After the central activities were complete, the builders hastily filled the interior (tossing in offerings), stopping only once to lay a row of stone, and then covered the site, ending activities there. Although it is clear that the builders made use of kaolinized granite, the characteriatic yellow hue does not appear significant here, and moreover, it was used under and inside the cairn ring, as opposed to above and outside it. As noted above, the builders made frequent use of the black gritty soil at all times from the construction of the ring, to its infill, and lastly to cover the site at its completion, almost as if, by the time this site was built and used, the earlier ritual burial elements (the seasonal circular path of the sun through the sky, and of mourners, and the cycle of timely obligations to the dead) were less important to the

builders, who constructed a pinched irregular site which effected a swift rite of passage for the deceased and for the mourners.

Considered as a group, several summary comments can be made about the St. Austell sites. The first is the development of the use of the gritty black soil from the earliest sites where it played no strucutral role at all (mourners did fill the pits and some early postholes at Cocksbarrow with a fine black soil), to Trenance Downs where it was used as a principal material throughout the history of the site, with special emphasis upon the final activities. Some change, perhaps, in the nature of the burial/ancestral rite involved the timing and length of certain constructional activities was taking place during the course of the Early Bronze Age on the granite. Along these lines, it at first appears tempting to suggest that the elaborate constructional additions at Watch Hill, versus their comparative absence at Cocksbarrow, were somehow related to the treatment of the deceased individuals (a relatively straight inhumation perhaps requiring more "incorporative" rituals than a cremation, whose transformation from wet to dry bone was effected in the pyre and during the early funerary ritual at the site). What counters this explanation for the difference between the sites is the fact that, among the entire site corpus considered here, no consistent correspondance can be demonstrated between burial rite and the latter treatment a site receives. Considered in light of my prior comments concerning the increasing use of the black masking layer, the changing emphasis or labour investment upon various pre- and post-burial actions on the granite might be more profitably considered in terms of the general development of burial tradition. This point will be addressed and elaborated below.

5.4.2 West Penwith

Several features in the artifactual and monumental record of West Penwith mark it out as a distinctive regional entity throughout the period considered here. In terms of monuments, stone circle diameters throughout the region have been observed to display restricted diameters and, somewhat earlier,

the chambered tombs of West Penwith have been seen as a distinctive class of monument most common to this area (Mercer 1986; Preston-Jones 1993; Todd 1987). Further, throughout the Bronze Age, a strong tradition of local ceramic production and circulation is evidenced by locally produced Beakers, Food Vessels, Collared Urns and Trevisker vessels (Parker Pearson 1990; 1995). Two sites from West Penwith, Try and Chysauster are considered here (Russell and Pool 1964; Smith 1996). Although some general contemporaneousness can be postulated between the secondary Trevisker cremation burials at Try and the Chysauster site, the majority of the activity at Try very likely preceded the construction of Chysauster by a significant number of years. Given the time frame, and the small number of sites examined here, it is perhaps more constructive to look at the sites from the point of view of their contrasting features (as opposed to what they reveal about a local funerary tradition). This ought to be understood as a function of the alteration of burial ritual/requirements over what could be considered to represent a significant passage of time.

At Try (Figure 5.15), the character of the earlier burial deposits suggests the reopening of an original, or primary inhumation grave containing a corpse and accompanying Beaker in order to insert some cremated bone, Beaker fragments, and charcoal, during which time the original inhumation may have been tampered with (though this is by no means clear due to the poor preservation record). What is clear is that following the filling of the grave with additional funerary material and soil, the mourners dug a small pit into which they placed further material of a similar, possibly identical, character to the second deposit, which they covered with a capstone, like another burial. They ended this period of activity on the site with a small circular mound, effectively defining the purpose of the menhir to grave, or cemetery marker, in a fashion similar to that observed at other menhir sites, as noted above. By contrast, the latter burial deposit (intrusive to the cairn) is far more in character with the inurned cremations accompanied by Trevisker vessels throughout the penninsula which occur in both primary and secondary contexts. As noted above, Beaker and Trevisker ceramics do not occur in the same domestic or ritual contexts, suggesting that Try became the focus of a later burial deposit some time after its original creation. The focus on the east side of the menhir for the original deposits (the side facing the rising equinoctial sun) is surely significant.

Chysauster represents a rather different sort of site, both in the nature of its burial deposits and artifact deposition (Figure 5.16; Smith 1996). For all the burials, it appears as though a small portion of each individual's cremated remains were scooped up from the pyre, and with the addition of one or two token items, were placed into bags or urns and buried at the cairn. The site could be reasonably described as a cemetery barrow, and of a similar nature to Treligga 1 and 2, or to Upton Pyne (below), whose activities are noticibly contemporary. The age of the majority of the burials suggests that some age ranking principal was being stressed by the burial of so many youthful individuals in one location over time, (also noted at Upton Pyne - prehaps from a single community or extended family unit). As the excavator noted, although an element of enclosure is present, the site has an outer face. Moreover, the original burials are slightly marked, which, in addition to the unblocked entrance and western gaps in the ring, suggests that a principal of orientation was being set up for further burial and ritual activity not involving re-entry into the enclosure (prevented by the infilling of the kerb cairn).

The radiocarbon determinations and the ceramic typology suggest the original inurned cremation deposits in the centre of the enclosure (and the Urn P3 cremation) were made sometime between 1926 and 1528 BC (minimally between 1880 and 1686 BC), and were followed (based upon a reading of the 1-sigma probabilities) within the next 100 years, probably less, by the remaining burials (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3; Appendix 2). Before the ceremonies involving the original burials were completed by the cairn infill, the position and character of the artifacts found under the cairn suggest that mourners stood at the southern entrance and tossed in certain offerings to the deceased. The site was not significantly elaborated afterward apart from the additional burials and related artifactual offerings on and around the cairn. Considering the later burials now, as suggested above, some principal appeared to guide the position of the pits. The excavator convincingly suggested that a pairing of inurned and bagged cremations on opposite sites of the cairn may have taken place. It is noticible, however, that the northern side of the cairn (opposite the door) was avoided, both for further cremation, and also for offerings (Figure 5.16.1). If the two original burials were set up on some principal of allignment (and I agree with the excavator that this is likely based upon the position of the Urns P3 and P5 burials), that principal may have been intended to guide (though not

entirely direct) the placement of further burials. In short, the original burials roughly line up on the equinoctial sunrise/sunsets, while the remaining burials and offerings occur in positions around the circle between the midsummer sunrise and sunsets (Figure 5.16). The nearness of the locations of the slight gaps in the cairn wall to the equinoctial sunset and midsummer sunset allignemnts may also have been intended to structure the deposition of later burials and offerings at the site. Some of the later mourners also appear to have stood at the original southern entrance to the ring and tossed in special offerings to the deceased (Figure 5.16.1). It is clear from these observations that the builders of Chysayuster clearly sought to structure later activity at the site through particular construction features, designed to create and further maintain particular relationships between the funerary ritual (and perhaps the timing of it: Pits 502, 538/542, 527) and the solar calendar.

Both Try and Chysauster are small sites, but the emphasis upon later activity (though not to the extent observed at the large Early Bronze Age structurally elaborated sites on the St. Austell granite) at Chysayster, and the simple burial deposits there is notible. What this may signify about the development of burial traditions on the penninusla must await further contextual observations.

5.4.3 Davidstow Moor

The Davidstow Moor sites (Christie 1988) occupy a distinct upland landform at the edge of Bodmin Moor, and to that extent can be perceived as forming a regional cemetery (Figure 5.17). Many of the sites share both artifactual and ritual/constructional features. The most common of these is an impressive yellow subsoil bank or enclosure which appears at Sites III, II, IV, VII, V and I. The builders of the Davidstow Moor cemetery also displayed a ritual tradition involving the abundant use and deposition of cupmarked stones **and** slate discs during barrow construction and funerary rituals. In these actions they are united with the builders of nearby sites and cemeteries of Treligga and Tregulland. The Davidstow Moor and nearby costal sites lie at the edge of the Cornish Trevisker Ware gabbroic ceramic distribution,

and other ceramic evidence suggests that a number of funerary vessels were locally produced throughout the period (Figures 4.12, 4.13, 4.16; Parker Pearson 1990; 1995).

Based upon radiocarbon chronology and the ceramic evidence, Site XXVI was probably the earliest site to be constructed. The construction of Site III followed, after which Sites V, I and XXIV were built in sequential order (Table 5.1; Figure 5.4; Appendix 2). This of course, does not take into account the remainder of the undated sites. To some extent the spatial arrangement of the cemetery may be be useful in this regard, when considered in combination with the individual site features. Sites IV, IVa and VI form a linear cluster towards the centre of the cemetery, while Site VII is located nearby. Sites II and III lay closly together to the north, while Site I lies a little further away at the edge of the main complex. Site V lies in a similar position at the opposite end of the main group, and Site IX lies to the north of the Site IV group. Site XXVI is isolated to the north, while Site XIX is similarly isolated to the south-west. Finally, Sites XXIV and XXV lie alone between Sites I and XXVI. The entire cemetery then, consists of site clusters with nearby outliers and isolated sites. The sites/clusters are spaced sufficiently apart to suggest that they may represent little groups, separated from the others by temporal and/or social mechanisms. A tentative cemetery development can be forwarded (see Appendix 3 for individual site and cemetery details) which sees that after the construction of Site XXVI (and perhaps XIX) took place, the central portion of the cemetery was developed gradually by a number of distinctive enclosures, some for the purpose of burial (Davidstow III and perhaps II), others not (Davidstow IV and perhaps VII). These were followed by outer mound sites whose builders selectively referenced the enclosure principal from their neighboring earlier sites and drew upon earlier burial ritual traditions present at Site XXVI (Sites V and I). Site XXVI may have been elaborated at a later time concurrent with funerary activity elsewhere in the cemetery. Sites IVa and VI are likely related to Site IV as suggested by the excavator (Appendix III), while Site IX could presumably have been built at any time during the history of the Davidstow complex. Sites XXIV and XXV represent an alternative burial tradition to that observed at contemporary Site I.

At Davidstow XXVI (Figures 5.18, 5.18.1; Christie 1988), it is likely that the main, second phase of activity on the site (post Grooved Ware, pre-mound) may have been of some duration, during which time

a fire was lit and at least two pits were excavated and carefully refilled with stratified fills and cremation deposits. There is some evidence that the cremation deposit in the first pit may have been tampered with before the excavation of the second pit to its south-east during this time (Christie 1988:129; Figure 5.18.1). Further, the entrance gap in the post/stone circle between holes 32 and 35 (and a possible gate-post 34; Christie 1988: 129), suggests that the timing of entry to the enclosure for the burial or re-excavation of cremated remains may have been restricted to the hours immediately preceding the equinoctial sunset (Figure 5.18). Some reference to the midwinter sunrise also appears to have been created by the lighting of a fire, and the orientation of the features towards this allignment. The orientation of the pits and the fire on the midwinter sunrise and the timing of the burials at the western sunset calls to mind a similar reference to sunrises and sunsets among the builders of the St. Austell sites, who may have been creating/reinforcing a powerful metaphor for the passage of a human life. I will return to this point in Chapter 6. Pits F1 and F2 were subsequently covered by a small cairn, perhaps when the enclosure was enlarged by the construction of the cairn ring (Figure 5.18.1). Although this construction was partially truncated by later disturbance, records indicate that this construction covered and blocked the south-eastern sunrise features (the fire site and Pit F6) but maintained the western entrance gap. It was at this time (cairn construction) that mourners deposited a number of holed stone offerings within the body of the cairn. The "replacement" of the post/stone circle (whose original posts or stones were perhaps symbolically withdrawn or rotted in situ while the cairn was built) with the stone ring cairn was clearly originally envisiged, as both its contextual relationship to the early circle, and the holed stone and slate offerings to the deceased within its makeup suggest. Like Cocksbarrow, it appears that the builders of the Davidstow XXVI and the funerary specialists who controlled the creation and timing of deposits within it, deliberately and consistently sought to link portions of the funerary ritual with events in the solar calendar. Further, they also created a metaphor linking the funerary rite of passage to a theme of dissolution, change or rupture by the physical act of replacement and removal or rotting of the stones/posts. In this way perhaps, the construction and activities at the site enabled the mourners to reflect upon the lives and deaths of individuals within the community, and the relationship between these events and processes and a broader timeless seasonal cycle.

In terms of site elaboration, Davidstow XXVI is unlike the other sites both in the fact that it has a very early, Grooved Ware component, and also in that it exhibits a long history of pre-barrow ritual/funerary activity. The excavator postulated three major phases of site use (Grooved Ware, Beaker pit enclosure and ring cairn enclosure/mound) and, based upon the dates for the Grooved Ware charcoal pit (2896-2570 BC) and the later third millennium dates for Beaker funerary sites in the region (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3; Bell 1991; Kinnes et.al.), a site history of at least several hundred years can be envisaged at Davidstow XXVI. A spatial association between Beaker funerary sites and Grooved Ware activity is not unusual, and is parallelled by a similar sequence of activity at Barrow Hills, Radley (Lambrick 1990). The site was completed, in a manner similar to Tregulland (below) by the final addition of some sort of low turf mound and ditch, presumably ending activity at the location, since the holed stone offerings to the deceased took place earlier. Alternatively, the platform mound could also be a somewhat later feature on the site, covering what stood for some time as a small Beaker cairn within a ring cairn (like Davidstow III), as has been suggested for other Beaker sites in southern Britain (Barrett 1989 and below). It is significant I believe, that for this early, Beaker site the important structural and ritual activity at the monument occurred during its early phase, during a period of enclosure when both access to the monument, and perhaps complicated burial rituals were carefully controlled and referenced to concepts of cyclical time. On this point, some comparison with Davidstow XIX and III can be made.

Davidstow XIX is a difficult site to interpret, both because of the absense of radiocarbon dates and artifacts, and also because it suffered extensive disturbance before excavation. The slab lined pit is remenisicant of Pit 2 at Davidstow XXVI, which may also have been line or contained a cist. The careful selection of bone to include in the burial pit calls to mind the head, longbones and feet of the deceased individual at Davidstow III which were also carefully bagged up for burial (below). Christie (1988:91) notes in her summary that a number of large stones were drawn on the original plan in the vicinity of the pit, which may represent some sort of internal structure (separate from the cairn overlying the pit) but, which equally might also be related to a hedge boundary which cut through the site. The lack of evidence, such as it is, for an elaborated mound construction sequence following the cairn and turf mound is

paralleled at Davidstow XXVI and III, and contrasts with the later sites like Davidstow V, I and XXIV. These points may lend some weight to an interpretation which sees Davidstow XIX as the product of early burial activity on the Moor.

Davidstow III (Figure 5.19) is one of the four sites in the cemetery incorporating a distinctive yellow subsoil bank with a turf core, or base. The later third millennium date for charcoal from the old ground surface provides a reasonable *terminus post quem* for the construction and ritual activities on the site (Figure 5.19; Table 5.1; Christie 1988). For some time it would seem, the site consisted only of a distinctive yellow bank, further highlighted by the surrounding ditch. Reflecting for a moment on the history of activies at the site, the silting of the ditch appears to have marked a hiatus in construction, effectively separating the rituals on and off the site taking place when the enclosure had a large eastern opening, from the activities which involved the passage of the cremation and mourners through the narrow south-eastern opening created by the construction of the blocking bank. Considered alongside the bagged and carefully selected cremation deposit and the uncluttered central area of the monument, the heavy traffic into and out of the enclosure at the newly restricted entrance indicates that the mourners placed the burial into the enclosure during the latter part of the site's history. This is supported by the fact that the mound was constructed directly after the deposit and no alterations to its structure were observed. The deliberately designed south-eastern position of the entrance passage through which the mourners carried the remains of the deceased to his/her final resting place suggests that the actors sought to create a symbolic relationship between the midwinter sunrise and the passage of the deceased from one state to another. I have elaborated on the significance of this in Chapter 6 below. Further, the intentional timing of the ritual to this occurrence is possible, since the narrow deliberate south-eastern passage contrasts so greatly with the more open enclosure represented by the bank and ditch. Some question might arise as to whether the site was originally designed to be a funerary monument. The partial silting of the ditch and the development of a turf line may have taken some months or years. It is clear, though, that some length of time also elapsed during which the deceased died, his/her body was cremated and bones were carefully selected and mixed with other bones derived from funerary feasts or rituals. This interim period could have been strung out

over the course of many months as tradition or ritual economy dictated. The site was not further elaborated after the burial by the addition of a final covering mound, and the few artifacts found within the enclosure and on the mound could reasonably be construed as offerings which were made to the deceased at the time of burial.

Three other similar turf/yellow subsoil enclosures occur at Davidstow. The nearest and most similar of these to Site III is Site II (Figure 5.20). Although no trace of a burial was recovered at Davidstow II, the builders of this site appear to have incorporated a number of constructional and ritual features present at Site III into the design history of their monument. The inner bank of Site II, for example also contains a turf core (or base), and the central deposit at the site involved a cairn or platform which was subsequently covered by a turf mound. Further, mourners at Site II tossed a number of stone and wooden offerings into the ditch at Site II in a spread approximating the location of the first bank entrance at Site III. Unfortunately, the chronological relationship between the two sites is unknown due to a lack of dates or definitive artifacts from Site II. Further, the order of activity at Site II is difficult to pin down, apart from the the fact that the mourners deposited their eastern offerings into the ditch after the site had weathered, indicating a passage of time between the original enclosure and the central deposit or alternatively, between this deposit and the return of the participants after some defined amount of time to toss their offerings into the ditch at the prescribed location. If the latter interpretation is correct, the mourners then completed their rite of funerary passage by the symbolic infilling of the ditch or by a final mound which later weathered into the ditch.

Despite the interpretative difficulties presented by the poor record at Site II however, what is clear is that there was some attempt by its builders and ritual designers to reproduce the meaningful structuring principals employed at Site III. What is also clear is that these principals were employed, and presumably read in a somewhat different fashion at Site II, due to the unique nature, order, and timing of activities there. The addition of a second, yellow outer ring, the absence of a defined entrance to the site interior, the ditch offerings, and the amount and nature of attention given to the ditch in the latter stages of Davidstow II's history indicate a difference in the character of the rituals at both sites. The absence of a

clear burial deposit at Site II may be significant in this respect. The result of these small changes in practice, especially if considered cumulatively, likely affected the ritual tradition in such a way that its meanings and particular relevance in the daily lives of its participants were profoundly affected.

This point is also of some relevance when considering the two other Davidstow subsoil enclosure banks, Sites IV and VII, which lay over 900 m to the south-east. The basic common feature of all the sites (the turf and yellow subsoil bank) was set off, or combined with other features at the sites in a variety of ways. At Davidstow III, it was set off by an outer ditch, and lay open for some time in a particular direction. At Davidstow II, it was enclosed by a second yellow bank, and perhaps eventually covered. At Davidstow IV, it completely enclosed a low turf platform, and at Davidstow VII, it enclosed a yellow stripped depression containing a possible burial, or ritual pit. At each of these sites, the yellow bank may have taken on a new meaning as it was drawn into particular relationships with other features, and actions were performed in reference to it.

The Davidstow yellow bank also appears in two other sites in the cemetery (Davidstow V and I), albeit in altered form. On the basis on the radiocarbon determinations, Davidstow V is the earlier of the two sites (Figure 5.21; Table 5.1, Figure 5.3), and both could perhaps be seen as later (though not contemporary) mounds in the overall development of the cemetery. In terms of its structural history (Figure 5.21.1), it is not unreasonable to suggest that the south-eastern activities (the pits, burning posts and urn deposit) took place with reference to an existing kerbed mound, which was further elaborated by stones set into its crest (perhaps forming part of an upper cairn), and finally completed by the final yellow turf and subsoil revetment ring.

As for many of the south-western sites, it is difficult to be certain about whether Davidstow V was a funerary monument. The charcoal and white clay in Pit F1 have parallels in the varied pits and cremation deposits of Site I, and could perhaps represent a burial. In a sense though, concern over the presence/absence of a burial deposit rather distracts attention from the more important fact about the site, which is that the mound itself and the related activities to the south-east were designed to be the main focus of attention on the site, rather than a burial. The central activities (and the absence of a central deposit is

perhaps significant here) appear minor when compared to the later features. Several points about the features deserve mention. First, the south-eastern rituals at the mound periphery included the filling of a charcoal pit, a charcoal deposit, erection of some wooden posts, the burning of another, and the deposition of a Collared Urn into a pit (Appendix 3). All of these features, in one form or another involved or referenced some element of transition, as trees were cut down, wood was burned (and buried under a cairn like a cremation, or placed into a pit ringed with a yellow ring, like the Davidstow enclosures), and clay was formed, fired and also buried. These features contrast with the more permanent and unalterable quartz and slate features at the opposite, north-eastern side of the mound, in a similar fashion to that observed at Caerloggas III. Further attention will be paid to this opposition in Chapter 6, but for the purposes of this discussion, what is significant about the site is that the individuals directing the rituals used both the circular form of the mound, and particular items of material culture in activities designed to reinforce the links between mundane properties and transitions, and timeless sacred principals invoked by solar orientations. They further may have sought to locate the life passage of the deceased (whose death perhaps necessitated the monument) within this wider cosmological construction, in a manner alluded to above.

Second, the builders of Davidstow V also made use of the tradional yellow clay and turf bank, but the contexts in which it now appears (around a pit and as a final revetment) at the site suggests that the builders reinvented its meaning or significance in this later site, in line with their own symbolic agendas. This act of **creative remembering** (mentioned in Chapter 2) can also be seen in the rituals surrounding the construction of Davidstow I (Appendix 3; Figure 5.22), in which funerary specialists incorporated several earlier features from nearby sites into their own funerary rituals.

Based upon the radiocarbon evidence, the construction of Davidstow I took place sometime between 2112 and 1645 BC (minimally 1925-1746 BC; Table 5.1; Figure 5.3). This may well have have been some years after the burial at Davidstow III. Interestingly, one of the first acts the builders of Davidstow I completed was the stripping of the turf from a circular ring (Figure 5.22.1). By exposing the yellow subsoil in this fashion and simutaneously creating a central turf platform, the builders created, in effect, a copy of the nearby Davidstow III site, both in size and general appearance. Although Davidstow I

was subsequently altered in appearance, it is clear that the builders of what was probably a later site sought to ground their own ceremonies in the traditional past of the cemetery by invoking a memory of past practices and older sites. Other traditional themes appear in the early actions of the funerary participants. The stake ring has several unusual features (large gap and extra posts at various points), but the most interesting of these I believe, is the small rectangular enclosure at the south-eastern edge of the ring circumference which surrounded fire 8. This fire feature was created when funerary participants lit a large wooden post, which burned in situ. The position of this fire is significant, alligned as it is with a point some 10 degrees before the midwinter sunrise allignment (Figure 5.22). If the rectalinear arrangement of posts on three sides of the fire supported an enclosure, the rising midwinter sun would appear just at its southern edge, almost as if the burning of the post was designed to anticipate this event. The extra stakes in the ring are around the midwinter and midsummer sunset allignments, which, perhaps significantly are on the opposite side of the enclosure from the fires and charcoal deposits, suggesting that an opposition was being set up between the sunrise orientation (marked by fire) and the sunset allignments. The position of Fire 8 in nearly the same location as the F14 fire at Davidstow XXVI, as well as the general location of the south-eastern "transition" fire features at Davidstow V, indicates that an important metaphor linking this astronomical event with funerary ceremonies was being reproduced throughout the history of the Davidstow cemetery.

In addition to orientation and time, the ritual participants also made use of some principal of stratigraphy as they juxtaposed alternatively coloured materials in both pits and in the central mound (turf/white clay, charcoal/white clay, turf/charcoal/white clay, and black soil/turf/subsoil) (Appendix 3; Figure 5.22.1). From what I have suggested is a long history of deliberate soil selection at the Davidstow cemetery indicated by the subsoil rings, it is more than likely that these familiar materials were imbued with particular meaningful properties which the participants at Davidstow I selectively drew upon to bring meaning and perhaps power to these early funerary rituals.

Although I have sought to draw several parallels between this site and some features at earlier nearby mounds, in the point of human remains, Davidstow I appears more like Site V, in that the burial

component is restricted to the fragmentary cremated bones which were deposited, perhaps with their pyre material just north of the centre of the mound. Several other early deposits may also have come from the pyre. The absence of carefully sorted cremated remains is notible and calls to mind the similar deposits at the contemporary site at Crig-A-Mennis, with its mound sequence and Trevisker ceramics (see below). Further, while the early portion of the Davidstow I's history was clearly important, the later activities of the mourners (mound construction, possibly ritual feasting upon it, and the construction of a final capping mound) suggest that both activities surrounding the interment of the remains of the deceased, and incorporative community rituals took place at the site, and were of equal importance. This contrasts somewhat with sites like Davidstow XXVI and III, in which the majority of the activities on the site took place during the portion of the rituals surrounding the corpse. In this sense, Davidstow V is similar to Davidstow I.

Finally, the activities at the last two sites (XXIV and XXV) may be briefly considered (Appendix 3). Their contemporaneousness, despite their proximity, cannot be assumed and the activities at Davidstow XXV are difficult to place into any context without dates or definitive artifactual associations. Davidstow XXIV however, was probably constructed between 1980 and 1520 BC (minimally 1890-1680 BC), based upon the date for the central fire (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3, 5.23). Activities at Site XXIV may be compared with other Trevisker activity at Site I. Despite the disturbance, the significance of the site as a burial monument (perhaps revisited for the later Trevisker cremation burial) seems clear, and perhaps explains its lack of elaborate early enclosure, or later mound features found at the other sites. The large fire may well represent of remains of an in-situ cremation, perhaps buried in the pit, and the associated pit appears grave-like. The site is remarkable among those considered here from the Moor in lacking these traits. An answer to the question of whether we are seeing an alternative burial practice, the traditions of a separate social group, or alternatively, the effects of some long term temporal mechanism, may well benefit from additional exmples from across the penninsula.

5.4.4 Tregulland and the north Cornish coastal sites

Considered in this group are Tregulland, the Treligga Cemetery and Lousy barrow. Topographically, all the sites might be seen as occupying high plateaus or rises at the edges of the Bodmin Moor landform. As noted above, the creators of Tregulland and two of the Treligga sites, like the Davidstow builders, also incorporated cupmarked slate slabs and pieces into their mounds/cairns or cists/pits. Many of the sites in the group also display a selective use of locally available slate and white quartz in cairn construction and related rituals.

Tregulland (Figure 5.24) is probably a relatively early site within the corpus based upon the Food Vessel and the Early Bronze Age flint tools in the graves. Like Cocksbarrow, Tregulland has both an initial ritual enclosure and final mound component. The erection of the three stake circles was probably one of the first activities the mourners completed at the site (Figure 5.24.1). The subsequent destruction of the outer circle and the absence of a significant gap in the remaining circles regrettably precludes any discussion of possible entrances. The pre-barrow arrangement of several circles is more commonly found below barrows of south-central Britain and so is worthy of some comment here. Above, I considered the particular structural features of several post or stone circle enclosures in terms of the way in which a number of different references were made to cardinal/cosmological directions from a central point or dominant axis. As Wilson (1995) has suggested, and others (Bradley 1997; Thomas 1991a) have illustrated, the circle has a polysemous nature in that not only does it permit the establishment of multiple directionality from a central point, it also enables an ordering of concentric space around a centre. This second nature of the ritual circle is worth considering here. Although the disturbance of the central burial limits a detailed interpretation of the intentions of the mourners, the arrangement of features within the central and outer zones of the enclosure suggests that they made use of the three concentric post circles to structure the deposition/burial of possibly three contemporary cremations or cremations/inhumation and a ritual (possibly cremation) pit (Appendix 3; Figure 5.24). By doing so they may have created a particular reading of the relationship between the deceased individuals so that some principal of age or

gencalogical/familial ranking was reinforced by the spatial relationship between the remains. This may have been especially significant since in other visible points, both burials were otherwise similar. Each grave contained lithic tools, was capped by, or contained cupmarked slabs, and had an east-west orientation. The deliberate concealment of the outer pits by careful turf replacment may also have been important in distinguishing them from the inner burial deposits.

Turning now to the revetted ring cairn, its significance at a general level lay in its role as permanent replacement for the earlier, impermanent wooden enclosure, in a manner similar to that observed for several other Beaker/Food Vessel sites across Cornwall, where timbers form an early ritual component. The cairn/butress mound component of the site is rather interesting. The construction process involved a selection of alternative materials from the ditch (turf, dark loam, clay and slate fragments, ochreous clay) which were placed in particular relationships to one another or to the monument as a whole (Figure 5.24.1). The forming of the cairn/butress preceeded the mound, so that for a short time, the site appeared as a soil ring. The cairn's upper/inner buttress was entirely constructed of turf, while the majority of its outer butresses was comprised of secondary lower materials from the ditch, and in particular, the ochreous clay, which must have been placed at the mound edge, since it weathered first into the ditch. This recalls the nearby Davidstow Moor yellow rings sites. One wonders whether the concentric principal begun in the early phases of the mound, was somehow replicated and reinforced through the use of a range of different symbolic materials in the cairn ring/butress. If this sort of significance was atttached to the mound, it may be worth considering whether the image/representation of concentric circles created **both below** and in the mound itself had a cosmological reference, so that the spatial structuring of actions and features at Tregulland referred to their perceived relative positions within the ordering of the everyday and sacred worlds. At Tregulland then, there is some suggestion that the ritual participants used space, artifacts and skeletal material, and the body of the mound to reinforce/reproduce the structuring principals which codified peoples relationships to one another, and perhaps to broader cosmological principals embodied in sacred forms and natural materials. A further discussion of these observations which incorporates the material from other sites will follow below, and in Chapter 6.

Ashbee's (1958) interpretation of the history of events at Tregulland seems reasonable, based upon the construction of the cairn/butress and the appearance of the stake impression in the ditch. Two main phases of activity probably occurred (5.24.1). The first was undoubtedly some ritual involving the three stake circles, which framed the central burials and the outer cremation grave and ritual pit. This phase was abruptly brought to a close when the mourners deliberately dismantled the outer (and perhaps part of the inner) stake circle, tossing some stakes into the ditch, and constructed the cairn circle/butress and mound, completing activities on the site. It is worth considering what sorts of activities are represented, or indicated at the site, in light of similar actions which took place at other Beaker/Food Vessel sites. It is noticible that a careful selection of bones (ox tooth and metapodials) and artifacts (flint knife and arrowheads, cupmarked stones) for inclusion in the pits took place, indicating some time was taken in the preparation and deposition of these deposits. Moreover, the termination of the portion of the funeral ceremony concerned with the corpses was dramatically highlighted by the smashing of the Food Vessel and the removal of the post circle(s). A number of ethnographic examples exist which detail how the breaking of pots signals the end of particular portions of a funerary ritual, and how the destruction of ceramics in a funerary context is tied into notions of temporal rupture and an end to the natural order of things (Barley 1994:92,112; Mandelbaum 1959:194). At Tregulland these actions perhaps reinforced the significance of this segment of the passage rite through symbolic references to rupture, or destruction. By contrast, the construction of the mound probably proceeded rather rapidly, and once built, received no further attention and was allowed to naturally weather. The objects found in the ditch for example, are likely to have eroded from the mound, where other similar objects were incorporated. This is not to say that the mound itself was not significant, since it surely was, but only that its construction was not part of extended funerary ceremonies at the site. In terms of site elaboration then, Tregulland appears to conform to the general practices observed at other Beaker/Food Vessel sites already considered.

The Treligga Cemetery as reported by Christie (1985) consisted of four cairns/barrows (the details of sites 8 and 9 are unknown). Three of these (Treligga 1,2,5) lay in an open linear arrangement, and were separated from Treligga 7 by some 450 metres. Based upon the Food Vessel in a primary context at

Treligga 7, the radiocarbon determination for Treligga 2, the bronze awl from Site 2 (similar to those recovered at the Gwithian settlement), and the Trevisker vessels at sites 1, 2 and 5, it is likely that at some time after Treligga 7 was built, the remainder of the cemetery was developed slightly north of an earlier barrow. The similarity of Sites 1 and 2 was noted by the excavator (Christie 1985:74) and, on the basis of the radiocarbon date of 1887-1495 BC for Site 2 (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3) and the Trevisker Vessels, the northern sites may have been built during the later Early Bronze Age. Given this, the cemetery can be examined both for its elements of ritual continuity, and for the contrasts between the Trevisker Series sites and the earlier monument.

Treligga 7 (Figure 5.25) is distinguished from the later sites by its internal features and mound construction. The lack of cremated remains is not significant considering the prevailing acid soil conditions, and the presence of the two cists and Food Vessel. It is therefore likely that at least two burials were made before the first mound was built. Unlike the later sites, the builders of Treligga 7 created a circular enclosure, carefully built of quartz and slate in which the rituals surrounding the two orthostats and the burials took place (Figure 5.25.1). They then constructed first a pink mound, which they subsequently enlarged with yellow subsoil from the ditch creating a striking funerary monument. What stands out, despite the incomplete nature of the record and excavations, is the care and attention which was given both to the creation of the initial stone enclosure, the central features, and the later subsoil mounds. At the later sites we see a slightly diferent emphasis (Figures 5.26, 5.27). At Treligga 1, 2 and 5, many of the burials were quickly interred while still hot from the pyre, or, in one case at Treligga 2, perhaps re-cremated in the pit (Appendix 3). They were moreover, placed into pits or tucked into alcoves rather than being placed into specially built cists. The mounds at Treligga 1 and 5 are single phase and appear designed to cover, with a minimum of effort, the underlying burials. The mounds at Sites 1 and 2 are also small in comparison to the earlier Site 7. Some change in the character of the funerary ritual during the history of the Treligga cemetery seems clear, which influenced both the requirements of monumental form and corpse treatment.

Considered alongside these changes are some points of similitarity between Treligga 7 and the

other sites in terms of burial and mound construction. At Treligga 5 for example, the central cremation had been placed into a Style 5 Trevisker Vessel, which at some point had contained some fatty substance. This recalls the cist burial at Treligga 7 in which the burial was accompanied by an "eating and drinking vessel" (Parker Pearson 1990:10) of an earlier form which also contained a fatty substance. The builders of Site 5 apparently also chose to construct a large earthen monument over two burials, similar in form to the earlier site, which by the time Site 5 was constructed, may not have revealed its original hue. At Site 1, although the slate capped quartz ring at Treligga 7 was not visible to the builders of this site at the time of its construction, a replication of the relationship between the slate and quartz is present at the later site, indicating that some traditional meaningful relationship bewtween the two materials (or at least an emphasis of the significance of white quartz) was maintained over the life of the cemetery. A similar argument can be made for the incorporation of cupmarked stones into the kerb at Treligga 2, where it echoes their use in the enclosure wall at Treligga 7. The persistence of these features of practice and construction must be considered alongside the perceived changes in general practice noted above. It is important to stress that the aim of this discussion of similarities is not intended to illustrate the operation of some unbroken funerary tradition operating in this cemetery. Indeed, it would be strange and highly unlikey to find a copy of Treligga 7 among the later mounments. Instead, the aim has been to reveal how traditional ritual practices and symbolic associations were simultaneously maintained and yet reinvented by the Treligga community, whose funerary specialists selected certain features and themes from a traditional ritual repertoir in the enactment of new ceremonies and in the construction of new burial monuments. By so doing, the meanings of the material culture (cup marked slates, vessels, quartz/slate) associations were downplayed, or changed in some way, as they became more or less visible at certain times, embodied in new forms, and in new sets of circumstances through their manipulation and appearance in later, different funerary rituals.

Lousey Barrow (Figure 5.28; Christie 1985) is a truly monumental site, which had a diameter of nearly 25 meters and a height perhaps over 3 meters when completed. The significance of the site for the purposes of this discussion involves the appearance of two features: the first cairn, and a cupped pebble which was tossed into the ditch after the completion of the site. Following the burials and related activities

at the site (unfortunately unclear due to the site record and manner of excavation) the builders constructed a large cairn of slate slabs into which they incorporated a large white quartz block, which they positioned to lie directly over the cremation burial (Appendix 3). This cairn construction at Lousey seems familiar when considered alongside the Treligga sites, in which white quartz was simutaneously paired with and distinguished from gray slate in cairn or cairn ring construction. Naturally, slate and quartz are found together in the vicinity of the sites, as quartz veins occur within both the slate of the Upper Devonian formation and the sandstones of the nearby Culm Measures (Christie 1985:57,61). The rounded cupped pebble which the mourners tossed into the ditch at Lousey can now be considered. Unlike many cupped pebbles found on barrow sites, this particular example was of medium gray sandstone which contained a number of white quartz bands. There is then, some suggestion that a particular feature (quartz banding in gray slate or sandstone) of the local lithology was well known, and moreover, significant to the builders of the above sites, who incorporated both rocks into their constructions and rituals in such a way that indicates some meaningful significance was attached to their particular relationship. In part this probably relates to the ritual properties of the quartz itself from the Bronze Age through the nineteenth century (Rees 1935; and also Carvinak, Treligga Cemetery, St. Austell granite sites, Nancekuke, Chysauster, Lousey Barrow, and Try in this study), but some account must be taken of its natural physical context, which undoubtedly contributed to the source of its meanings. Further comments on the ways in which signifying properties of quart/slate had their origins in, and drew meaning from their particular mound contexts will be found in Chapter 6, and elsewhere in the present chapter.

In terms of the elaborative actions at Lousey Barrow (Appendix 3; Figure 5.28.1), it is not clear from the original excavation report whether the building of the first cairn was immediately followed by the construction of the turf mound, or how quickly the upper cairn was built after that. Some pause during the construction of the turf mound evidently took place during which time a fire was lit and some trampling of the site occurred. Christie (1985:59) considered the upper cairn to have been a slightly later feature over a platform mound, based upon the appearance of what look like access steps to the turf mound surface (Figure 5.28, left side). If this is the case, then what we could be seeing at Lousey is a post-burial ritual in

which the body of the mound was elaborated by specific and distinctive structural additions and actions in line with the progress and ending of the general rite of pasage involving the deceased and the wider community. Similar practices also took place at the Watch Hill site and at Davidstow I, though perhaps somewhat later. What distinguishes Lousey (and a number of Trevisker Series sites yet to be considered) is that there is some sense that the qualities (color or texture) of each mound component (slate/quartz cairn, turf/subsoil mound, upper cairn) were particularly significant in the sequence of construction. Although the defciencies of the Lousey report do not permit a more thorough discussion of this point at the present time, it will be returned to in the discussion of other sites.

5.4.5 Bodmin Moor sites

Considered here are the Stannon Downs and Colliford Reservoir cemeteries (Harris, Hooper and Trudgian 1984; Griffith et. al. 1984), combined here more for their topographic/geographic similarities and their predominantly stone constructions, than for any significant similarities in their ritual or structural features. Among the Stannon Downs sites, Stannon Downs 2 (Figure 5.29), with its radiocarbon determination of 1926-1601 BC (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3) is perhaps the earliest site of the three, while Stannon Downs 3 (Figure 5.30) may have been built somewhat later by virtue of the Wessex II style bone pin accompanying the cremations. Stannon Downs 1 (Figure 5.31) unfortunately has no radiocarbon determination, but bears enough parallels with Site 3 to indicate that it may be a contemporary site. Both sites are similar in size and moreover, were incorporated into field systems or enclosures relatively soon after, or concurrent with, their constructions. Their central deposits are also similar (Appendix 3). At Stannon Downs 3, mourners placed three separate deposits of cremated remains into an urn in a large pit under a granite capstone central to the site. The two lower deposits were separated by a clean soil layer. At Stannon 1, in the large central pit capped with a granite stone, ritual participants lit three fires which were probably extinguished and separated by turf layers. The significance of these actions is unclear, and

perhaps the pit functioned as a pyre (though no cremated remains were recovered), further linking the two sites in character. If the chronological sequence suggested here for the Stannon sites is accepted than several points can be made about the development of burial ritual/construction in the cemetery. The most obvious observation is that in these sites at least, the practice of multiple cremation burial replaced, or at the very least succeeded, inhumation. A second, perhaps more interesting point concerns the enclosures. Stannon 2 is a larger site than the other two, and stood free of enclosure walls, while Stannon Downs 1 and 3 are smaller and were perhaps intimately asociated with the field systems which surrounded them. There is some suggestion then, that over time the funerary rituals and constructions surrounding the dead on Stannon Downs came to be more closely associated with the settlement and domestic life as the funerary architecture became less monumental. This conforms with the accepted general picture of later Bronze Age funerary development throughout southern Britain, which describes a greater association between funerary and domestic practices evidenced by burial style (cremations in domestic pots) and cemetery location (Bradley 1994; Barrett, Bradley and Green 1991; Bradley 1997). Some support to this view of the Stannon cemetery development is gained by considering the construction of Stannon Downs 3 (Figure 5.30.1). The sequence of construction at the site probably involved the infilling of the space between the two walls (yet still allowing continued access to the interior) before the entrances were blocked and the site was finally mounded over. Thus, until its final infilling, the site bore a striking resemblance to some of the nearby Middle Bronze Age hut circles in the Stannon Down settlement (Mercer 1968), many of which contained low rubble core faced stone walls. A number of these structures were also incorporated into field walls, and had southern entrances which faced into enclosures, in a manner similar to that seen at Stannon Downs 3. There is an indication then, that the builders of this funerary site were establishing or building upon a homology between the house and the tomb, which we can see as especially significant given the development of closer associations between the living and the dead beginning at the end of the Early Bronze Age, when this cairn was built. Stannon Downs 3 is also a profitable addition to the larger discussion, prefaced in Chapter 4 and expanded in Chapter 6 below, concerning the symbolic associations which were perhaps being created between mounds/tombs and houses throughout the period, evidenced by

constructional and ritual features of both types of site.

The development of the Colliford Cemetery (Griffith 1984) probably took place over a comparatively short period. The radiocarbon dates from the central deposits at Colliford Reservoir II (CRII), Colliford Reservoir IVC (CRIVC), and Colliford Reservoir IVA (CRIVA) were all obtained from large or mature oak timbers (Table 5.1, Figure 5.3), which suggests that the cemetery was under development later than the dates indicate, perhaps somewhere between 2038 and 1500 BC. Sites CRII (Figure 5.32) and CRIVC (Figure 5.33) are likely to be generally contemporary, with the 2-sigma date range for the south-eastern pit complex at CRII (2038-1603 BC) providing a reasonable date for activities at both sites. The radiocarbon determinations for CRIVA could indicate that this site was constructed slightly later than its neighbor CRIVC. In the absence of dates or artifact associations, Site CRIVB can perhaps be compared with its southern neighbor in terms of size, and of course, location. This site also bears some structural similarity with Chysauster (flat topped kerbed mound with and outer face and protruding central cist), whose primary dates (1926-1528 cal BC) overlap with the latter part of the CRIVC date range 2142-1734 cal BC).

In addition to their dates, sites CRII and CRIVC bear other general similarities which could indicate that a particular tradition of barrow building was being respected by the builders of each site, who fulfilled certain ritual requirements though slightly different means in accordance with both specialist interpretation and particular funerary circumstances. The elaborative histories of both sites point toward a tradition in which a number of constructional and ritual activities necessarily followed the interment of human remains (or some reference to burial perhaps in the case of CRII). At CRIVC (Figure 5.33.1), this tradition amounted to a sequential elaboration of the site's form by first yellow clay, then turf, stone, and further stone. This process was further highlighted by the incorporation of the stones and pygmy cup into the turf mound, and punctuated by a period of inactivity at the site during which a soil began to develop. It is difficult to be sure how much time took place between the burial and the final stone mound layer. Comparative dates for other Aldebourne style Pygmy Cups overlap with the date range suggested here for this monument (Burges 1982; Ellison 1984; Ford 1991), but considering the soil development, it is not

unreasonable to suggest that a final pause in mound activities of some years may have taken place in line with a long term funerary ritual involving the whole community or kin group. It is possible then, to see the elaborative and ritual activities at the mound as forming an important part of the rite of passage for the deceased and the community, in which the stages punctuating the passage of time were marked by the addition of particular structural features (the replacement of turf and soil by stone was perhaps significant in this context), ritual offerings, and natural process of weathering and soil development. The actions which marked each stage of the rite could have have referred to views of the state of the deceased in his/her progress towards ancestal purity and the absence of danger/defilement, as well as the lifting of mourning restrictions through incorporative rituals at the tomb. Before the addition of the first stone cairn, the site had a flat top, which would have provided a excellent pedestal for commentary on these issues.

Considering the structural evidence at CRII, a similar set of contemporary funerary practices to those suggested above can be envisaged for this site. This is indicated by the building up of the centre mound with a number of distinct materials (with the mourners also alternating stone and soil deposits and incorporating other items into the mound, like charcoal), the construction of an outer ring, and the excavation and filling of several ritual pits with symbolic materials, all before the rite of passage involving the deceased and the mourners was finally brought to a close by an upper cairn (Figure 5.32.1). The absence of a cremation deposit does not signify, considering both the nature of the soil and a corresponding lack of remains on contemporary sites of this period in Cornwall. It rather seems (based upon the evidence from a number of contemporary sites like Davidstow I and Crig-a-Mennis (below), that the visual focus of ceremonies in this period is more on the construction of the mound, and the messages about life and death, and familial obligation that such a construction might reinforce in the community, than on the signyfying properties of the corpse. This point has some relevance to a number of other sites considered here and will be elaborated towards the end of this chapter.

At Site CRIVA, the builders employed the same sequential and perhaps symbolic construction principals used in the creation of the earlier sites. Structurally, CRIVA is a slightly larger version of Site CRII, and the mourners at both sites stripped the original turf from the site area to reveal the orange subsoil

upon which they erected stone(s) to the north-west of the sites's centres. The construction of site CRIVA also proceeded by way of layers of predominately stone or soil/turf, and the final activity on the site was the construction of a visually impressive upper granite ring wall, symbolizing perhaps what the final stone caps at the earlier sites did.

5.4.6 Other Cornish sites

Considered in this section are a number of isolated barrows and cairns from The Lizard penninsula and central Cornwall. These include Trelen 2 and Poldowrain 1 from the Lizard, The Gwithian sites, Nancekuke, Crig-A-Mennis, Carvinak, and Cataclews. A general chronological order for the primary activities at these sites is indicated from both the material culture present at the sites and the radiocarbon chronology. Carvinak contained Beaker ceramics, while Trelen 2 may have been established in the later third millennium on an existing land boundary. Poldowrain 1's late dates may be somewhat at varience with the Beaker ceramics found there, though its probable non-funerary character may go some way towards explaining this. Nancekuke, Crig-A-Mennis, and Cataclews are all contemporary Early Bronze Age sites, and the latter two have urn associations. The Gwithian sites probably span a period from the Early through the Middle Bronze Age, since Sites GM-V and the ring ditch/pits probably preceeded the Layer 5 occupation, and the two cremation mounds were associated with the later Bronze Age Layer 3 houses (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3; Appendix 2, 3).

In addition to examining the individual constructional and ritual activities at each of the sites, their similarities and differences are worthwhile considering in the context of changing funerary practices throughout the period which I have alluded to above.

At Trelen 2 (Figures 5.35, 5.35.1; Smith 1984; 1988), three distinct blocks of activity occurred at the site, each perhaps separated by periods in excess of 100 years based upon the radiocarbon dates. The first of these involved the creation of the central burial deposit, turf mound, and clay and turf ring, which

(on the basis of HAR5280 and HAR4540) were all constructed sometime during the latter part of the third millennium, or the earliest part of the second (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3). The site then underwent a period of weathering during the Early Bronze Age which was followed by the second group of activities, involving the excavation of the new ditch and yellow subsoil cap for the barrow. It is not inconceivable to imagine that this phase of barrow redefinition and enlargement may have accompanied another burial deposit(s) at the site, though the near levelling of the mound by agricultural activities makes this impossible to prove. After another period of abandonment, at some time between 1520 and 1010 BC, a Trevisker Style 6 pot was placed (or eroded) into the ditch. The location of Trelen 2 upon an existing land boundary perhaps gives some indication of why the site was chosen for subsequent constructional and ritual activities. If the boundary was an important territorial marker (and its importance is affirmed by its renewl at the time of mound construction), there may well have been a desire to affirm the continuity of certain portions of the lineage concerned with its maintenance, along the lines suggested by Barrett (1990b), Garwood (1991) and Mizoguchi (1992; 1994) for certain barrow sites in Wessex.

The early constructional history of the site deserves additional comment. The central burial (unfortunately disturbed, but probably a cremation based upon the size of the pit) was enclosed by lengths of hurdling which formed a rough circle. The excavator considered it more likely that the clay ring and its turf covering were revetted by this stake circle, which was then withdrawn before the turf mound was constructed (Figure 5.35.1; Smith 1984:25). Thus, for a time, the site appeared as an enclosure consisting of the fence, the ring, and the ditch. Looking at this another way, the burial appears to have been enclosed by a triple ring, consisting of first wood, then yellow subsoil/turf, and then the ditch, which would have appeared with a yellow clay base, and moreover, was probably often filled with water due to poor drainage. While discussing Tregulland in Section 5.4.4, I suggested that an important cosmological metaphor for the ordering of the everyday and sacred worlds may have been created by the builders of that site through the creation of concentric space via various enclosure devices, and moreover, that some quality of the features or elements occurring in each zone of this space may have been emphasized in line with their perceived relative positions within the system of concentric circles. At Trelen 2, there was certainly no functional

need for the hurdling to occur where it did, since it was withdrawn before the turf mound was built. Its purpose and location were therefore ritual and, like the two other components of the burial enclosure, it was deliberately tied into a concentric meaningful arangement involving wood, subsoil/turf, and water. The ditch at Tregulland then, may also have been originally planned as a meaningful part of the concentric arrangement. The discussion of concentric structuring principals guiding the construction of these sites will be continued in Chapter 6.

Carvinak (Figure 5.36; Dudley 1964) is a Beaker/Food Vessel site which shares general structural similarities with Trelen 2, and other sites discussed above having similar ceramic associations. Before moving on to a short discussion of these similarities and their significance in the wider picture of funerary practice being developed here, several points about the unique ritual and constructional activities at Carvinak should be made. Most of the early activities at the site involved the excavation of pits (some cremation or inhumation) or hollows which were carefully backfilled with stratified materials and covered or ringed with cairns of white quartz. The materials used in most of the pits (quartz, turves, purple shillet/shale, pink clay or sand) are local, and moreover were also used to construct the mound. A formal comparison of the pits/cairns with the mound reveals some general parallels, almost as if the ritual participants were constructing a series of smaller versions of Carvinak before the monument was actually constructed (Appendix 3). For example, the mound was constructed on a platform of pink/purple shale slabs surrounded by a ring of white quartz revetted by a temporary wooden fence. Overlying these was a turf mound with a quartz cap set into a layer of gray subsoil. The possible inhumation pit at Carvinak was filled with purple/red shillet, followed by turves, pink clay and quartz and covered by a large quartz cairn. The cremations in Pit 3 were surrounded by a ring of white quartz in a quartz lined pit. Following their deposition, the mourners filled the pit with quartz, pink sand and turves, over which they built a quartz cairn. One of the hollows was also ringed with a circle of quartz. It appears then that the builders and funerary specialists at Carvinak were working with a set of rules or perhaps relationships which structured both the creation of pit deposits and the construction of the mound. The logic of such a system can perhaps be understood by considering both the nature of the materials incorporated into the mound and the order in

which they appeared and dissappeared (Figure 5.36.1). Immediately before the construction of the mound, the circular wooden fence which enclosed the central funerary activities was removed. The site was then entirely encased in turf. Overlying the turf was a leached subsoil which provided the footing for a milky white final quartz cap. This replacement of wood by turf, by subsoil, and finally stone constitutes a perfect reversal of natural stratigraphy, which to some extent is mimicked by the pit fills with their basal deposits of bone, upper pit fills, and overlying cairns. One reading of this constructional practice is that a meaingful ordered process, or arrangement, was being acknowledged and renewed by the builders of the site through the juxtaposition of various materials imbued with particular symbolic properties relative to their physical positions within the known environment. Prefacing a more extensive discussion of this in Chapter 6, it is possible that certain natural qualities of these materials, such as their hardness, or their organic temporary nature were being drawn into metaphorical relationships which linked the physical world and the funerary rite of passage for the deceased with views on the sacred order of things.

In terms of the history of construction and elaboration at the site, the parallels between Carvinak and other Cornish Beaker/Food Vessel sites discussed above are noteworthy. As was the case for sites like Tregulland, Cocksbarrow, Davidstow XXVI, and Trelen 2 (an early site), the majority of ritual and burial activities at Carvinak were conducted before the construction of the turf mound. These activities were performed within a quartz cairn ring revetted interiorly with a probable hurdlework fence. During the final stages of this period of action at the site, mourners smashed a Food Vessel upon the pink shillet platform, tossed a grain rubber and a cupped pebble into the ring, and removed the hurdlework fencing. In a similar fashion to that observed at Trelen 2, and at Tregulland, the director(s) of funerary activities at the site appear to have ritually and symbolically brought to a close the most involved portion of the rite of passage represented there by particular actions (involving specific items of material culture) which may have emphasized a break, or rupture in the funeral rite, and between the dead and the living. The construction of the turf mound and quartz cap immediately followed these actions. The deposit of Early-Middle Bronze Age sherds and slate discs at Carvinak may have taken place at any time after the completion of the site. Judging from the non-Beaker Early Bronze Age ceramic styles represented in the deposit however, this

activity probably represents a generalilzed ancestral offerings which occurred many years after the Beaker/Food Vessel site was built. The fact that the majority of the funerary activity at Carvinak (and at other Beaker/Food Vessel sites noted examined above) preceeded the final mound which (though significant in its own right), did not involve the mourners in a protracted construction ritual, can be contrasted with the sorts of activities which took place at Nancekuke, Crig-a-Mennis, and Carvinak.

Nancekuke (Figure 5.37; Christie 1985) is a relatively simple site compared to the Beaker/Food Vessel sites just discussed. Unfortunately, no distinctive dateable artifacts were recovered from the site apart from the ditch finds which are all part of an Early-Middle Bronze Age artifactual repertoir present at many sites in this study. On the basis of the radiocarbon chronology alone then, Nancekuke was constructed sometime between 2045-1641 BC, roughly contemporary with Crig-A-Mennis and Cataclews. The site consists of a probable inhumation and ritual fire (or pyre and cremation pit) which were buried under a yellow turf and subsoil mound. During the construction of the mound, the mourners lit a fire upon it, and when the site was completed, they tossed a number of ritual offerings into the surrounding ditch. Sometime after the site was abandoned, another fire was possibly lit in the ditch and related activities took place at its edge. The timing of this final activity is unknown, and could equally relate to either an incorporative ritual in the funerary rite of passage or some generalised ancestor deposit. The relatively simple burial activities at Nancekuke contrast with the more complex enclosures and pit fills at the other sites just discussed in this section. The mound and post-mound activities (the fire and ditch offerings) on the other hand, can be favourably compared with the rituals involving the mounds at Crig-a-Mennis.

Crig-a-Mennis (Christie 1960; Figure 5.38) is a complicated site which was probably built sometime between 2042 and 1680 BC. Based upon the site stratigraphy, mourners performed a number of activities both before and during the construction of a complicated mound in a similar fashion to that described at contemporary Davidstow I. In terms of the earlier actions at the site, the excavator suggested that they may have involved at least the ditch or the trench ramp, the arc of stones, and the central deposit (Figure 5.38.1). The orientation of the site at this early stage was upon the equinoctial sunrises and sunsets, and there is some sense that movement into or out of the enclosure at each allignment (and perhaps

also on these occassions) was either physically or symbolically facilitated by the berm and the trench-ramp. The fact that passage into the enclosure at the eastern side via the trench-ramp would potentially involve crossing a water barrier may be significant, as is the left turn a person might take from the ramp once in the enclosure, implied by its particular construction (Figure 5.38). Therefore, probably before but certainly after the completion of the initial deposits and perhaps the first mound or mounds, this ditch design encouraged symbolic or physical emphasis and movement through water from the sunrise position, around in a clockwise direction along the berm towards an exit at the causeway. As noted above for the St. Austell sites, such a constructional indicator encourages speculation upon what sort of metaphorical devices the funerary specialists may have used to link movement at the site with a notion of time as it related both to the symbolic life passage of the deceased, and the event of burial. This discussion will be continued in the next chapter.

Alongside the ditch, the character of the mound at Crig-a-Mennis is perhaps its most interesting feature. There is some evidence to suggest that the builders of the site chose this particular location for construction because of its underlying geology. As noted in Appendix 3, the site lies on a geological break between a soft pink sandstone, which lies on the north/north-western side of the mound, and a harder greenish slate which underlies the barrow on its southern side. As a result, the soils overlying each of these components are different in both color and texture. Turves and soil stripped from around the central portion of the barrow (and perhaps from the ditch) provided the construction material for the three turf/soil mounds which covered the charcoal, stone and cremation deposit, and later the inurned cremation burials. The builders of the site engaged in a particular selection process whereby the second, oval mound was constructed solely from turves and soil derived from the soft pink sandy side of the site, while the following larger flat mound was built with the orange and grey turves which overlay the shale on the southern side of the site (Figure 5.38.1). It is not immediately clear which feature of the turves (their location, their color, or some aspect of their parent material) was significant to the builders, though in line with other sites covered here, no doubt the color of the mound was not unimportant. A way forward might be to consider the character of the rest of the mound layers. Following the construction of the flat top

mound the builders capped the site with a sandy subsoil, and finally a shaley rubble cap and slate and quartz revetment wall. In a similar fashion to the building of Carvinak a reversal of stratigraphy is apparent, as each mound layer becomes harder and/or is found deeper. This strongly indicates that the stratigraphy of the surrounding landscape was imbued with particular meaningful qualities which were referenced by the funerary specialists at particular times during the course of the final funerary rituals at Crig-a-Mennis. This may have had a dual function and consequence, in that the progress of the funerary rite was made sense of through the manipulation of familiar symbolic materials, and simultaneously, the system of meanings referenced by these materials was reproduced and perhaps reworked.

In terms of the elaboration of the site, there is no suggestion, based upon the stratigraphy, that a great span of years separated any one group of actions from another. Following the central deposits, the mourners constructed two small mounds, followed by two burials and a flat mound, upon which they built a fire (Figure 5.38.1). The construction of this mound was possibly followed by some ritual pits and deposits to its east. During or after this, they capped the turf mound with two layers of subsoil and stone and revetted it, digging and backfilling another pit in the process. The central charcoal/stones/pit/cremation deposit may have been related to the subsequent inurned cremation burials as a pyre or focus for pyre materials. Further, based upon the fabric and character of the cup and eastern pit complex respectively, they too were related to the cremations, perhaps as later post-mound/burial activities similar in function to the fire upon the orange/gray turf stack. The shale pit may have functioned similarly. Although the equinoctial allignments were clearly important for orienting and reading the initial burials rituals at Crig-a-Mennis, the protracted complex mound construction and related fires, depositions and pits became the major focus of activities at the site during the latter part of the rite of passage. The progress of mound construction and the other activities were probably intentionally and meaningfully related to one another by the funerary specialists, so that as the form and appearance of the mound changed, specific actions marking the passage of the funerary ritual for the dead and for the mourners were performed. Though complicated, this sort of post-burial incorporative emphasis recalls the activities at Davidstow Moor 1, and at Watch Hill, where as I have argued, the incorporative portion of the funerary rite of passage was highlighted at the

site at the expense of extensive activities related to the corpse.

Turning now to the contemporary site of Cataclews (Figure 5.39; Christie 1985), the radiocarbon determination from the fire or funerary pyre indicates that the site was built sometime between 2109 and 1643 BC (Table 5.1). These dates fit in well with the assumed Early Bronze Age dates for the development of the Cataclews cemetery with Food Vessel, axe hammer, and Collared Urn associations (Crawford 1921; Preston Jones and Rose 1987). Certain problems with the excavation record rather limit an assessment of the sequence of activities and rituals at the site. As noted above, the central activities at Cataclews may have involved the cremation and burial of at least one individual, which took place within a slate kerb or revetted ring cairn associated with some charcoal and quartz pebble offerings. The site was then mounded over and capped with yellow subsoil. Following the completion of the mound, mourners made a small deposit of various pot sherds into the top of the site. In terms of its burial, Cataclews is comparable to Crig-a-Mennis because the acts of cremation and interment may not have been temporally long separated. This conforms to a number of Trevisker sites already discussed and will be addressed below. The deposition of sherds into the mound is more problematic. This action recalls a very similar sort of activity at Carvinak which, as argued above, may have constituted some ancestral deposit. The sherd deposit at Cataclews would not be entirely out of place within the time frame suggested by the radiocarbon dates for the fire, but could equally be part of a later deposit.

Before turning to the Gwithian sites, Poldowrain 1 (Harris 1979) must be briefly addressed. It character as a funerary site is somewhat in doubt due to the contexts and associations of the Beaker sherds, which appear more as refuse, than as deliberate objects accompanying a corpse or ancestral offerings. A ceramic production site is perhaps possible, due to the burnt gabbro and serpentine pieces, but the somewhat late dates for the basal level of the mound within Beaker chronology as a whole might call this into question. Although the earlier Late Neolithic dates for the pits and pot underlying the mound raise some doubts about the integrity of the Early Bronze Age dates for the platform, the appearance of Beaker ceramics in some sort of domestic setting rather later than they appear in the funerary record would not be unusual for southern Britain, since the status and particular meanings of these ceramics underwent a change

prior to their dissappearance from the archaeological record during the Early Bronze Age (Bradley 1984:72). If Poldowrain 1 is some sort of burnt mound, it is interesting that its construction involved the gradual accumulation of a number of structural layers in a similar fashion both to that observed at contemporary mounds with urn associations, and at Lousey Barrow, where the builders may have scattered Beaker Sherds around the burials and alternated between soil and stone in the construction of their mound.

Unfortunately, not a great deal can be said about the Gwithian sites, due to the scattered, incomplete record (Figures 5.40, 5.41; Callow, Baker, and Pritchard 1963; Megaw 1976; Megaw, Thomas and Wailes 1960-61; Nowakowski 1989; Thomas 1961). Based upon a revised interpretation of the stratigraphic relationships of Layers 3 and 5 at Site GM-V, what was originally interpreted as a framework of branches over a small pit with an orgainc filling and a possible inhumation grave was in fact, plough marks at the base of Layer 5 (dating to 1530-1050 BC) covering the mound above the deposits. The stratigraphic reinterpretation opens up the possibility that the site may have been associated with the series of huts and squatters camps in the Beaker or Early Bronze Age Layers 7/8. The grave at GM-V had been marked by a post, and was re-excavated in antiquity by means of a lateral trench into the mound. A primary inhumation site in the vicinity of an early, short term occupation is interesting when considered alongside the suggestions and evidence for the temporary storage and manipulation of skeletal material during the Beaker Early Bronze Age at both settlement and ritual sites in the South-West. Gwithian GM-V may well represent a further example of similar practices.

Notwithstanding the fact that few details are available for the ring ditch and nearby cremation pits, one interesting observation can be made about the site. Although the earlier pits were covered by the Level 5 basal crossploughing, they are nonetheless alligned directly alongside the western edge of a field boundary which was maintained and renewed throughout the Level 5 occupation at Gwithian (Thomas 1961). There is some sense then, that the earlier funerary activity at the site influenced or structured the nature of the subsequent use of the land.

Little more can be said about the small cremation cairns near the later Bronze Age Layer 3 houses (Thomas 1958). Their domestic location, simple deposition, and lack of elaborate or sequential covering

mounds appear to lend support to the view, mentioned above, that during the latter part of the period considered here, a change in funerary practices which involved the treatment of the corpse and the location of the burial site was taking place. I will return to this point below.

5.4.7 The Shaugh Moor sites

This little group of six sites appears in nearly every respect as a small, complete earlier Bronze Age cemetery (Figure 5.41; Wainwright, Fleming, and Smith 1979). Although no cremated remains were recovered from the sites, cairns and pits of the size and design examined here would not be uncommon on other upland cemeteries of this period in Cornwall like Stannon Downs or Colliford Reservoir. Moreover, small funerary cairns are common on north Dartmoor, where they occur in large cairnfields, and date from the Beaker period onward (Fleming 1980). Finally, the two vessels buried at Sites 2 and 71 appear similar in their contexts to Trevisker and Biconical Urn accessory and cremation vessels found on earlier Bronze Age sites in both Devon and Cornwall, while the faience beads have similar associations (e.g. Pollard and Russell 1969; Preston-Jones and Rose 1987). Based upon the radiocarbon determinations from the sites, the cemetery was created during the period between 2112 and 1376 BC (or minimally between 1925 and 1409 BC), and probably began with the construction of the central cairns at Sites 1 and 2, and the creation of Sites 70, 71, and possibly 126 (Table 5.2; Figures 5.4, 5.42-5.45). The central activities of all of these sites (apart from Site 126) appear contemporary and similar in form and ritual associations (small cairns covering charcoal pits and/or charcoal deposits, dug or made with respect to prominent moorstones). The date for the construction of Site 4 is impossble to be certain about, despite its similarity to Sites 1 and 2. In terms of the elaboration of the cemetery and the individual site histories (see Appendix 3), Site 126 and Pit 146 under the ring cairn at Site 2 present a problem if an assumption is made that the ring cairns on Sites 1 and 2 were part of the original design/construction. Although Site 1 underwent some robbing and reuse during the Medieval period, structurally it appears fairly clear that the construction of Site 126

preceeded the laying down of the cairn ring (Wainwright, Fleming and Smith 1979:15). At Site 2, the charcoal from Pit 146 under the ring produced an age span rather later than that of the central pit. Therefore there is some suggestion, based upon this and the primary 1- and 2-sigma date range for Site 126 (which overlaps but also succeeds the Site 1 range) that Pit 146 and the ring cairns on Sites 1 and 2 may have been added later in the history of the cemetery due to the perceived importance of these two mounds (Figure 5.42.1). The nature of the importance may lie in a recognition of the individuals honoured by the sites. Site 2 did produce the only unusual "grave good" found on the site, but the social status/dominance of these dead (and their descendants) may have been less relevant to this south-western moorland community than some other aspect of their lives. Given the long term continuity of settlement and land use on southern Dartmoor (and dates for domestic activities at the Shaugh Moor settlement which overlap all those from this cemetery), it is not unreasonable to imagine that at the Shaugh Moor sites, the recognition of particular ancestors among a long-lived moorland farming community was taking place. Keeping in mind the significance of the enclosure and reave systems for structuring the lives of the local inhabitants from the later Early Bronze Age (Chapter 4), the role of these particular ancestors in the setting up of the early land boundaries and/or settlement enclosures on Shaugh Moor may have been particularly important to their descendants, as the efforts and concerns of these Middle Bronze Age communities became increasingly invested in long-term land management and control (Barrett 1994). Additionally, highlighting such long-term tenurial rights to particular portions of the moor through cemetery enhancement may have fulfilled a broader social purpose for this moorland community if Dartmoor was indeed a frontier zone between ethnic groups (Parker Pearson 1995).

5.4.8 Other Devon sites

Considered here are Barrows I and II at East Putford, Rose Ash, and Upton Pyne. The sites are all quite different and are best interpreteted individually before considering them as a developmental group.

Barrows I and II at East Putford (Figure 5.46) in north Devon are unique among the sites examined here for containing the remains of log structures which were built to cover one or more inhumations. Unfortunately, it is unknown whether this might represent a local practice since few barrow sites in neighboring parishes have recorded deposits, and most of the nearby excavated examples contained cairns under mounds (Grinsell 1970). The details of funerary construction are less clear at Barrow II than at Barrow I, though a log structure under a turf mound does seem to parallel the latter site's construction.

Far more can be said about Barrow I. A general Early Bronze Age (perhaps Wessex I) date for the site is indicated by the dagger (type unknown) and other items accompanying the corpse. In terms of its elaboration, the stratigraphy at the site indicates that a turf mound was built over the wooden mortuary structure housing the inhumation (Figure 5.46). It then appears that mourners waited for the structure to collapse before they continued with the construction of the mound (Appendix 3). They afterwards highlighted this event with the addition of the burnt red clay and shillet cap directly over the collapsed structure. They then completed the monument with a gray subsoil cap from the ditch. Two things are notible about the activities of the builders/specialists: the timing, and the deliberate soil colors of the two mound caps. The hiatus in the construction of the mound until the collapse of the wooden over the body hints that a period of liminality was being observed at the site, perhaps equated with the physical disintegration of the corpse and its hut. The end to this potentially dangerous time was commemmorated by a distinctive red burnt clay and shillet cap. The use of a red, fire transformed material must have contrasted greatly in appearance with the final natural gray subsoil mound from the ditch, which signaled an end to the ceremonies directly involving the deceased, and perhaps also the mourners. The funerary specialists at East Putford then, were developing an effective metaphor which linked time and the funerary rite of passage with larger cosmological themes signified perhaps by the color, origin, and nature of the mound materials. As at other sites discussed here in which various soils play a dominant part in mound construction, the referents of the symbolic red burnt clay/shillet and white subsoil are likely to have been mutiple, and moreover, selectively chosen by the ritual specialists in line with their particular agendas. Some discussion of these possible meanings within the broader context of the funerary sites in the South-

West will follow in Chapter 6.

Upton Pyne 248b (Figure 5.47; Pollard and Russell 1969; 1976) is a later Early Bronze Age site, and was probably constructed between 1749 and 1495 BC, based upon the radiocarbon determination from the near primary deposit (Table 5.2; Figure 5.4). The points raised in the discussion of East Putford I concerning barrow construction and soil selection also have some relevance to this site. Upton Pyne was built on the side of a gentle slope, and as a result, was visible for a considerable distance from the south and west. The location of the barrow in this area, when considered alongside its unusual construction, indicate that the builders of the site used these two elements to heighten the importance and meanings of the funerary ritual performed there. The history of the site involved the urn burial of one, and then later at least one or perhaps two additional infants, inurned or associated with urns containing burned organic materials. The first burial in the Biconical Urn probably only preceeded the other burials and urn deposits by a short while (some trampling or weathering of its overlying mound is indicated), as all were placed upon a levelled stripped surface and covered by the reddish sandy mound. Based upon the character of the cremated remains, the site appears to have been intended for the burial of a small group of infants. The inversion of **all** the urns is unusual among barrow sites with mutiple interments and was probably significant in light of the age of the dead. Ethnographically, infants are often treated differently after death from more integrated members of a community, and for some south-western communities (as noted above), this may have involved separate burial and distinctive material culture association documented elsewhere (Mizoguchi 1994). Following the interments, the builders began to construct a complex multicomponent mound by selecting particular materials which they had earlier stripped from the site (reddish sandy subsoil, followed by turf and soil, followed by the white leached A horizon). During this process they deposited small amounts of pyre material containing further cremated bones and perhaps some purple clay deposits. After they completed the cap for the turf and soil mound, they waited, while the now white leached mound hardened and weathered (Appendix 3). Only then did they return to the site and complete it by replacing the white cover with a striking orange and red clay mound, using a special component of the subsoil (Figure 5.47). The mound at Upton Pyne then, was carefully composed, and its construction was timed,

possibly to coordinate with stages in the general rite of passage involving both the infants and the community. What stands out, and presumably stood out to the observers of the funerary activities are three things: first, the association of the reddish subsoil with the cremations (the small mound covering the first burial was similar to its successor), second, the gap of time in construction while the white leached mound became hard and weaathered, and third, the fact that the final mound was a distinctive red/orange color and constituted a special component of the subsoil. The builders of the site may have sought to contrast these colors with one another, but more likely they used each different soil component to create an evocative display which encouraged a particular reading of the funerary rite of passage in light of the meaningful referents of each of the materials. It is important to stress here that this process was an active one. The meaningful referents of the materials were **created** by the actions of the builders of Upton Pyne through their incorporation into the site at different times of the ritual. For example, the red subsoil was deliberately associated with the newely buried cremations as it both covered/followed them and was mingled with pyre material. The builders allowed a very visible process of hardening to occur to the white leached A horizon near the end of the funerary ritual, and selected a particular component of the subsoil to provide the final envelope for the mound. Through these actions, the cosmology which incorporated the natural world and the lives of the people within it was momentarily crystalized in a particular way, but also altered, since each ritual event, like the building of Upton Pyne, incorporated this familiar symbolic material in a new way.

The whole burial and construction process may have taken months or even a few years to complete, and involved most visibly the various mounds. This conforms to the slightly earlier Bronze Age sites considered here (Crig-a-Mennis, Watch Hill, and possibly East Putford), and suggests that the importance of the mound in structuring funerary ritual which began during the Early Bronze Age in the South-West continued into the Middle Bronze Age, at the expence of elaborate pre-burial ritual activities at the site. By contrast, the later Bronze Age inurned pit burial at the Rose Ash site (Table 5.1; Figure 5.3; Wainwright 1980) exemplifies the general trend toward simple cremation burial which has been documented for south-central Britain during this period (Barrett 1994) and may be compared with the relatively

contemporary Layer 3 cairn burials at Gwithian (Thomas 1958).

5.4.9 Farway East/Hill

The Farway/East Hill sites in east Devon (Figure 5.48; Fox 1948; Pollard 1967; 1971) belong to two separate large barrow groups on East Hill and Farway Hill which contain sites that were built from the Beaker period into the Middle Bronze Age. The sites either lie alone, or in small clusters of 2 to 7 barrows/cairns as much as 0.75 miles apart, indicating perhaps that the area was utalized for burial by a number of small related communities utilizing the Otter, Sid and the Yarty watersheds. The sites can be considered as a distinctive regional group on the basis of their geographical isolation, landform location, and common ritual features. In terms of the latter, the three central graves at Farway Cairn, White Cross Cairn, and Burnt Common Ring were built with north-east to south-west orientations. This is somewhat unusual since north/south or east/west grave orientations are far more common among the other sites examined here (out of 11 other graves considered in this work, only 2 have orientations other than the cardinal directions) and elsewhere in south-west Britain (Trahair 1978). The cairns and ring cairns on Farway/East Hill also overlay and/or encircle a number of distinctive pits which exhibit rule-goverened stratified fills, and some sort of pre-ritual soil stripping also occurred at all of the sites reported by Pollard. In terms of artifactual material, three of the sites contained fossil sea urchins in graves and pits, and Beakers from the region were all manufactured locally. Finally, flint obtained from the clay with flints Quaternary deposit overlying the Greensand played an important and varied construction role in all the sites.

The immediate issue in addressing these sites is the lack of absolute dates for the cemetery. However, the artifacts recovered from both the earlier and modern excavations, as well as the similarities among certain of Pollard's (1967; 1971) sites provide a reasonable framework for discussing the monumental and ritual development of the region. Burnt Common Ring produced the only ceramic vessel

from the modern excavations (a Beaker of Late or S4 Style). This compares with the other Late Style Beaker from the flint ring below the mound at Kirwan C, which was in company with a Food Vessel. Kirwan's other excavations generally produced non-Beaker, Early to Middle Bronze Age material in company with cremations under large turf mounds without flint ring cairns (Appendix 3; Fox 1948; Grinsell 1983; Kirwan 1868). Enough identical ritual elements are shared among four of Pollard's sites (flint grave construction, pits, flint rings, and sea urchins at Farway Cairn, Farway Rings, Burnt Common Ring, White Cross Ring) to indicate that they all are roughly contemporary, and probably date to a period earlier than that represented by most of the Broad Down sites excavated by Kirwan. Before turning to a brief discussion of what this indicates about the development of funerary practices for the cemetery, I would like to take some time examining the way in which particular principals of the social world were highlighted and reproduced by the builders and funerary specialists at the early sites.

Before the builders completed the flint cairn which ended ceremonies at Farway Cairn (Figure 5.49) they erected a number of ritual posts and excavated some pits which surrounded the burial. These features, like so many other pre-mound constructions/rituals at Beaker/Food Vesel sites in the South-West, probably preceeded the deposition of the corpse. At first glance the posts look like roof supports for some sort of structure. If this was the case, it was a special structure indeed, since every post was set up either on, or very near a cardinal direction, or on/near one of the four sunrise and sunset solstice allignments, as though the significance of these positions to some aspect the funerary ritual was being established. Moreover, the significance of each position was further elaborated by a number of other nearby features, like the pits, and most especially, the grave. This shallow boat-shaped feature was built pointing towards the midwinter sunset. This would have specifically and effectively linked the associations of this allignment with the death of the individual, and his/her passage from life into death. The builders of the site also accentuated this allignment by erecting a second post (D) there. Through the grave and the posts then, the funerary specialists at Farway Cairn sought to relate the rite of passage to a timeless yearly cycle. They also simutaneously linked the deceased's rite of passage, and this cycle, with the natural world. For other sites of this period I have suggested that the removal of the wooden structure was probably a meaningful

act, which indicated a significant break in the funerary ritual, perhaps relating to the end of a period of liminality for the corpse. By replacing the impermanent wood with a final, permanent light gray flint cairn (and surrounding the body with the same stone), the builders used the properties of each natural material to highlight the completion of this rite of passage. The construction and transmision of a portion of a cosmology in which death, grey flint, and the winter solstice were all meaningfully related was therefore accomplished at Farway Cairn. As I have argued above for other sites, the particular way in which these materials were manipulated at Farway Cairn was integral to the creation of their meaning, and moreover, served to recreate the cosmological structure which all subsequent actions would have drawn upon. I will return to this discussion in Chapter 6.

At the Farway Rings (Figure 5.50) the excavation and backfilling of a number of pits constituted the principal activity at the sites. The sequence of activity seems to have involved first the soil strip, then the excavation and filling of the B pits followed by the construction of the cairn ring, and lastly the excavation and backfilling of the A pits and cremation pit(s) in Ring I. The precise function or meaning of the pits may remain a mystery, but the distinction between them is clear. The A pits are backfilled pits; soil was taken out, then redeposited after, or in combination with, a charcoal or cremation deposit (Figure 5.51a). The A pits then, exclusively involved the burial of something. The class B pits on the other hand are **specialized deposits** which apart from one case, involved not burial, but the manipulation of various types of soil, rather in the same manner in which builders/specialists constructed the mounds at Crig-a-Mennis, Upton Pyne, and Carvinak. When mourners stripped the sites at the Farway Rings, they removed the turf, topsoil and the underlying gray clay with flints layer, exposing the yellow subsoil. They then refilled the B pits excavated into this subsoil with a rule-governed stratified combination of materials which most likely originated from the site stripping (Figure 5.51b; Appendix 3). If we acknowledge that the Beaker/Bronze Age physical buried landscape (bedrock and its various soil components) was meaningfully consituted, and (as suggested above) that the natural relationships between its components were built into cosmologies (aspects of which were highlighted during rites of passage), then the B pit rituals at Farway Rings involved manipulating **the order of things**, in a similar manner to a mound construction. The point

to these rituals may have been instructional, or perhaps a functional, beneficial result was anticipated, but either way their early appearance in the rituals enacted at the rings parallels the symbolic activities associated with the burial at Farway Cairn.

The builders of White Cross Ring (Figure 5.52) followed a similar defined sequence of actions to that completed by the builders of the Farway rings when they first stripped the site (albeit only removing the turf/topsoil), and then excavated and filled a number of B pits. Following this they constructed a flint ring within which they probably buried at least one individual accompanied by a fossil sea urchin, while mourners perhaps tossed some flakes and tools into the grave and enclosure as offerings to the deceased while the grave was being backfilled. The red cap for the grave is of some interest. The clay for its construction was probably obtained in the nearby Sid Valley, which was also the probable source for the clay which was used in the production of the Beaker at Burnt Common Ring (Figure 5.53). The significance of this material to the mourners seems undisputed, and its contextual parallel between the sites (in direct association with the burial) suggests that one of its natural qualities (its color, or landform location) was being practically related either to some aspect the body, or its intombment. By actively associating the burials with red clay, the funerary specialists encouraged a particular reading of this portion of the funerary ritual based upon the symbolic referents of the red clay, which existed prior to, but were also renewed within the act of burial. Further significance may have been attached to this association if at Burnt Common, the Beaker was made specifically to accompany the deceased, as has been suggested for these pots. The red clay contrasts with its predominately gray/white surroundings but, based upon the structural relationship between the two colours at the sites, it does not appear likely that a deliberate contrast was being created between the two materials. It may be more the case that, as I have indicated for the red clay, the symbolic associations of both materials were being called into play at particular times or in certain instances during the meaningful constitution of the burial ceremonies at both rings. Grey/white flint comprised the bulk of the structural features on Pollard's sites, and a number of natural and manufactured flints were placed into pits in several of the sites. In its different forms as a traded item, as a hard material transformed into tools, and as natural underground stone, the symbolic associations of flint to the Honiton

communities are likely to have been multiple. Nevertheless, as in the case of the red clay, the ways in which the material was incorporated into the funerary rituals at the sites limited this fan of referents and encouraged a particular contextual understanding of this material, in the same way that I have suggested other barrow builders in other places constructed cosmologies at the funerary sites using natural materials (e.g. Carvinak, Tregulland, Crig-a-Mennis). Further discussion of the symbolic properties with which these materials may have been embued will follow in Chapter 6.

Apart from the two small damaged cairns at Dagger's Piece and White Cross, all of the funerary sites excavated by Pollard just described share at least one particular feature, yet no site is identical. For instance, the graves at Farway Cairn and Burnt Common Ring are similarly built, while ritual activities at the Farway Rings and White Cross Ring all began with the excavation and filling of B pits. All the sites apart from Farway Ring II and White Cross Ring contain A pits, and mourners began activities at Farway Cairn, Burnt Common Ring and White Cross Ring by stripping the turf/topsoil to expose the gray clay with flints layer. Finally, all the sites but Farway Cairn contain flint ring cairns. It appears that what was necessary to include in the funeral rituals at each site was a matter of choice on the part of the builders/specialists, since no particular feature, such as the flint ring for example, consistently correlates with the treatment of the corpse or other specialised deposit. This combination of similarity and difference observed among the sites can be understood as resulting from the way in which the Beaker builders and specialists differently and selectively drew upon a common core of traditional knowledge to relate the burial ceremonies to broader natural and supernatural cosmological concepts in line with their own community's needs. With each ritual enactment, this core of knowledge was shaped into a particular configuration by the use of concrete but polysemous symbols like the alligned posts, the soils, and the flint, which in turn created the variability we observe in the archaeological record. The form or nature of funerary practice was undoubtedly also changed by this process. If one accepts that Pollard's material is all roughly contemporary and, as noted above, that the majority of Kirwan's sites date from a period subsequent to this earlier Beaker activity, then a general sequence of funerary development for the region can be suggested which resulted from the gradual transformation of ritual tradition through each performance or enactment at

the sites. This began with the burial of one or more individuals in grave pits (both inhumation and cremation) occasionally below low, small, primarily flint cairns. These cairns were frequently encircled by small flint rings. Alternatively, simple rings encircled other funerary and ritual deposits. The interments at these sites were frequently accompanied by offerings to the deceased and concurrent with or or preceeded by a range of ritual enactments designed to encourage a particular reading of the burial process. As time progressed, the sites became more monumental, as mourners built large turf covering mounds over these funerary deposits, which ceased involve inhumation and extensive pre-mound/burial activies involving ritual enclosures and specialized deposits. This rise in monumentality may have corresponded in part to an increasing practice of cremation, and a change in the way flint was incorporated into funerary ceremonies, since ring cairns dissappeared in favour of the continuity of other structures, or the addition of new ones which were not involved with initial enclosure rituals. It is noticible that the Farway/Broad Down region contains a far greater proportion of mounds than East Hill (Figure 5.48), perhaps indicating a general order of cemetery development relative to the landforms. It is unfortunate that the two small cairn sites on East Hill excavated by Pollard were disturbed and contained no dateable associations which might shed further light on this matter. The development of funerary practices in the Honiton area involving the mound and ritual activities and deposits suggested here, echoes that outlined for the Beaker to Early Bronze Age period in adjacent south-central Britain (Barrett 1994). However, the visible contrast in this case between the earlier and the later sites is not only between the grave and the mound, but also between the presence and types of ritual activities that were carried out prior to and involving interment in the early period, and the focus on cremation and mound construction later. Some evidence of this development has been alluded to above and will be considered in more detail below.

5.4.10 Court Hill Cairn

Assuming that the date for the original burial is accurate, and considering the site stratigraphy and

construction, the original funerary acts at Court Hill involved the interment of an adult male in a flat grave, and the construction of a drystone wall to enclose it (Figure 5.54; Green 1973). The grave was excavated in a similar boat-like shape to that observed at Farway Cairn, St. Neot on Bodmin Moor (Wainwright 1965), and at other early sites in southern Britain). In this instance however, the direction the creators of the grave focused upon was north, towards the opening in the encircling cairn ring. Some attention to a northern or southern orientation is not uncommon in the graves of the south-west, as noted above, but a northern entrance to a burial enclosure is less common (Watch Hill had a blind entrance at this orientation). Considering this, and the outward direction of the "boats" here at Farway Cairn and St. Neot, the builders of the site might well have created this opening not as an entrance for mourners, but as a symbolic **exit** for the deceased. If this was the case, then the northerly orientation of the boat and opening become more understandable. At most south-western Bronze Age sites, both funerary and domestic, participants/occupants entered or approached enclosed spaces from the east, or the south. I have suggested above for funerary sites like Cocksbarrow, Crig-a-Mennis, and Davidstow Moor III for example, that staged ritual entrances of this nature into the enclosed space of the tomb by the mourners and the remains of the deceased were highly symbolic actions designed to incorporate the funerary ritual into the wider cosmological structure, in which eastern astronomical associations had some significance. Similar comments concerning the association between acts of interment and sunset positions have also been made above. With these instances in mind, the association which the builders at Court Hill made between the grave and the northerly direction may have been designed to create a symbolic association between the dark quality of this allignment (which is the only one that lies between sunset and sunrise positions) and the passage into death of the young man. Further, this unusual allignment may have been specially chosen over another due to his unique physical condition, or manner of death.

In terms of site elaboration (Appendix 3; Figure 5.54.1), if the radiocarbon dates are accepted, some 300 years at the very least separated the Early Bronze Age inhumation burial from the later intrusive cremation at Court Hill (Figure 4.7; Appendix 2). The first millennium date range returned for the cremation is in part supported by the post-Wilberton Late Bronze Age chisel find in the soil just above the

burial cairn, which was constructed after the inhumation grave was disturbed. However, the intrusive nature of the second burial has more parallels among barrow sites of the Beaker period or post-Beaker Early Bronze Age, where grave re-opening and bone selection by near descendants is far more common. Either way, some importance was surely attached to the deformed young man buried at Court Hill and the way that he died, evidenced by the reopening of his grave, and the circle of stones which his descendants placed around his body. If, as the dates suggest, a great time frame separated the two acts of burial at the site, then it seem more likely that oral tradition, rather than hegemonic desires, motivated the later burial and mound construction on the site.

5.4.11 Chewton Plain

The sites on Chewton Plain (Figure 5.55; Williams 1947) belong to a large yet sparce cemetery, which consisted of perhaps 13 sites that were built between the Neolithic and the Early Bronze Age. The Beaker and non-Beaker Early Bronze Age mounds/cairns were constructed some distance from one another in groups of one or two sites. There is a great deal of variability in the constructional and ritual practices of these early builders, and despite the unfortunate historic disturbance of the central graves at Sites 4, 5 and 6, the record of this cemetery is still useful for what it reveals about the developemnt of mound construction and funerary rituals.

No particular unifying practices are apparent at the sites, though Site groups 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and 5 and 6 are similar enough to one another to perhaps indicate their contemporaneousness. Sites 1 and 2 (Figures 5.56 and 5.57) contained very similar central burial deposits consisting of dark soil and a few scraps of cremated bone and charcoal, all under a moderately sized single phase soil mound. Mourners placed flint tools either with, or near the burials. The Beaker-Early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead and scrapers suggest that these sites were probably built sometime during the early second millennium. Site 5 and 6 (Figure 5.58) may also have been roughly contemporary with one another due to

their identical cairn constructions and close proximity. Site 5 contained a Beaker, perhaps suggesting that these two sites predate the others in the cemetery. Sites 3 and 4 (Figures 5.59 and 5.60) may have been built somewhat later, on the basis of the Collard Urns accompanying cremations at both sites. Both sites were also built with a combination of stone and soil, and are considerably larger than the other sites on the Plain, with diameters of 18.6 and 22.9 metres respectively. This contrasts with the range of diameters between 7.3 and 14 metres at the other sites. The nature of the enlargement at Site 3 appears to indicate that some time after the initial mound burial within the 21 metre ring, mourners added a cremation burial, and during the process, both heighted and enlarged the site. The length of time between the early burial and later enlargement of the site is unclear, though there was no indication of any entensive weathering or soil development separating the small inhumation mound from the cairn, suggesting two fairly close Early Bronze Age burials.

Taken together, the evidence for barrow construction and interment at Chewton Plain indicates that a progresive enlargement and complexity of barrow form took place between the construction of the Beaker sites and the later cremations barrow-cairns accompanied by Collard Urns, in a similar manner to the change observed at the Farway/East Hill complex between the small Beaker enclosures and cairns, and the later larger mounds. I will return to these and similar observations below.

5.4.12 The Cotswolds Sites

The Charmy Down and Lansdown sites (Figure 5.61; Grimes 1960; Williams 1950) are considered here as a distinctive regional group on the basis on their geographical, topographical, and ritual/constructional characteristics. As indicated in Appendix 3, the Charmy Down sites probably formed part of a small community cemetery, and Lansdown 6a is part of a similar barrow group not far to the west, which may have had a slightly longer history of activity than that suggested below for Charmy Down. In terms of their constructional/ritual characteristics, the builders at Charmy Down and Lansdown began

their activities by preparing the sites with a turf and topsoil strip, leaving a central platform (Appendix 3). The exposed stone around these platforms was then "dressed" (Williams 1950:35) in a fashion which gave height to the central burial area and later mounds. Additionally, builders at Lansdown 6a, and Charmy Down 1 and 2 faced, or edged their cairns with intermittant upright slabs. Also, the builders at these sites, and at Charmy Down 6 incorporated local limestone and topsoil into their sites in a fashion which suggests that some traditional perception of the qualities of, and relationships between these materials was in operation across the area over the period when the sites were being constructed.

The details of construction and site elaboration at several of the barrows may now be considered. Both Charmy Down groups consist of a combination of larger and smaller sites. At each larger site, the builders used a special construction technique which involved alternating between topsoil (from which the stone had been removed) and oolite boulders and/or pebbles (removed from the topsoil), and finishing both sites with slabs (Appendix 3; Figures 5.63.1, 5.64.2). At Charmy Down 2 at least, this construction was accompanied by the lighting of a fire and the possible deposition of some feasting remains, actions which may have been designed to draw attention to the use of alternating materials for each mound cap. At Lansdown 6a, the builders only used small oolite rocks for the outer revetment to the mound in a manner similar to that observed in the Charmy Down 2 inner cairn. These constructions hint that a complex perceptual and meaningful ordering of the physical components of the landscape was present in the region. This ordering separated not only soil and stone, but also, different components of the stone in terms of their shape and/or origin. One would expect that the symbolic associations which the builders made between each of these materials, and wider concepts relevant to the funerary rituals varied in time, and between areas, as the structure of meaning which incorporated these components was revised by each ritual performance. It comes as no suprise therefore to find that Lansdown 6a, Charmy Down 2 and Charmy Down 6 all exhibit slightly different uses and combinations of these materials, in a similar fashion to the manner in which the yellow clay rings appeared at Davidstow Moor.

Artifacts accompanying the burials indicate that the sites detailed by Williams and Grimes were constructed during the Beaker period/Early Bronze Age. Lansdown 6a and Charmy Down 1 both contained

central cremaion burials accompanied by Food Urns, and a young person accompained by a Beaker of Late Style was also interred with the Form 3 Food Urn at Charmy Down 1 (Figures 5.62-5.63). Charmy Down 2 may have been contemporary with its neighbor or, its construction was at least anticipated by the builders of the smaller site when they constructed the "platform" upon which the sites lay. Some indication of the temporal relationship between the eastern and western Charmy Down sites, and among the western group itself is indicated both by the structural similarities of the sites, and by the artifacts recovered from Charmy Down 3. Charmy Down 3-5 are likely to have been constructed during a short period of time based upon their proximity, and their constructional and burial similarities. Then, the creation of Site 6 may have followed, the building of which incorporated the group into a small, cohesive cemetery (Figure 5.64). Similar artifacts to the biconical shale bead and the pulley ring at Charmy Down 3 have been found in graves with Wessex I and Collared Urn associations respectively (Burgess 1980; Grimes 1969:223). The development of the entire Charmy Down cemetery then, may have begun with the building of the western sites (perhaps contemporary with Lansdown 6a), and finished perhaps slightly later during the Early Bronze Age with the completion of the eastern group by the ditch and mound at Site 6. The order of site construction in the eastern group is of some interest, since it indicates a desire on the part of the builders of each site to locate their burials in specific relation to the others (Figure 5.64.1). Regardless of whether the sequence of burial and mound construction was 3-4-5-6 or 4-3-5-6, the builders of CD 5 and 6 carefully manipulated the relationships originally set up by the initial two tombs, as CD 5 was squeezed betwen the first two (and deliberately built up against CD4) and the builders of CD 6 related this final site to all the others through the surrounding ditch (which connected it to them and turned them all into a group), and perhaps also by its construction. If we understand the Early Bronze Age to be a time in which the spatial relationships between the dead were still of some importance in defining the geneological relations among the living (Barrett 1989; 1994; Mizoguchi 1992), then the construction of an elaborate layered mound during the post-burial incorporative portion of the rite of passage, might also have served as a means through which the mourners both finalized and completed some necessary rights and obligations to their dead kinsman/woman. Further, the unusual constructional form of this mound (Figure 5.64.2) may

simultaneously have symbolically related the final portion of the deceased's rite of passage to these obligations.

5.5 A developmental outline of south-western funerary practices

In the above analysis I have attempted both to reveal the ways in which the funerary monuments were involved in the production/reproduction of local traditional knowledge, or cosmology and, to chart on a local level the development of south-western Bronze Age funerary practices throughout the period. The discussion must now proceed in two ways. The first involves an analysis of the tradition of knowledge created by the ritual performances described above through a focus on the variety of its expression and production. The second path of analysis involves a drawing together of the many local stories told above, in order to gain some general understanding of how the funerary monuments facilitated the transformation and development of Bronze Age society throughout the later third and second millenniums. The former constitutes a somewhat separate subject, and will be pursued in the following chapter. The latter follows below.

With the benefit of a contextual, local perspective, the cemeteries and individual sites across the penninsula can now be revisited with a long term interpretative goal. On the St. Austell granite between the Beaker period and perhaps the Middle Bronze Age, it was possible to chart an increasing emphasis, with time, on post-burial, and in one case, timed mound construction and related ritual activities (represented by Trenance Downs, Watch Hill and Caerlogas III), coupled with a decline in extensive pre-barrow rituals involving various enclosure features, astronomical allignments, and careful partial bone selection or grave intrusion (represented by Cocksbarrow and perhaps The Longstone). At Davidstow Moor, similar involved Beaker and third millennium funerals which made use of astronomical allignments, enclosure, and post-cremation careful bone selection (sometimes involving consistent body parts of both humans and animals) and wrapping, or grave pit intrusion (represented by DXXVI, DIII, DXIX, and perhaps the yellow rings at

DVII and DIV) came to be replaced in the early second millennium by sites in which the construction of the mound and related rituals involving fires, charcoal pits and perhaps in-situ cremations came to play a much larger part in the funerary ceremonies (DI, DV, and perhaps DXXIV). In West Penwith, the simplicity and rapidity (pyre to cairn) of the later Early to Middle Bronze Age Trevisker cremation burials appeared in some contrast to the intrusive, mixed and jumbled Beaker burials at Try. At the Treligga cemetery, the number of hot cremations, in-situ fires, and simple cairns at the later Early Bronze Age sites contrasted with the Treligga 7 pre-mound ring, Food Vessel cist deposits, and colorful mound. At the Honiton sites in south-east Devon, the small Beaker flint cairn rings, post circles and B pits came in time to be replaced by simple burial deposits covered by turf mounds. At Chewton Plain, during the course of the Early Bronze Age a progressive enlargement and complexity of mound form was observed, and the early Beaker burial at Chewton Plain 5, unlike the other burials, was accompanied by the metatarsal bones of an ox.

The evidence from these cemeteries appears to indicate that some understanding of the development of south-western funerary practices may be gained not by focusing upon an inhumation-cremation shift, or a increase in mound size, or a decrease or increase in barrow simplicity, but rather by charting the appearance and disappearance of pre-mound solar rituals, enclosures, skeletal storage or selection, fires, charcoal and hot cremation deposits, and sequential post-burial mound enlargement accompanied by related features/activities. Some consideration of the single sites and smaller dated cemeteries increases the coherence of the regional/local observations above, and further grounds these changes temporally (Table 5.4). The ritual and chronological evidence from the majority of third millennium, Beaker, Beaker/Food Vessel, and Food Vessel sites in the South-West indicates a similar preoccupation of some of the builders/specialists with the careful selection of cooled and perhaps curated cremated material for inclusion into the burial deposit. Often this selection involved a bias towards skull, longbone and tarsal/carpel fragments. Occassionally a corpse or cremation was accompanied by similarly selected animal body parts. As noted above, the graves of other early sites were reexcavated, and original burial deposits were removed, disturbed or added to (Try, Gwithian GM-V). Certain of these sites may originally have been designed to be temporary. Some of the pre-mound or pre-burial rituals at the barrows involved the

construction of special temporary enclosures which were dismantled at significant times, and were often accompanied by symbolic or timed pre-mound rituals tied into the yearly solar cycle (Trelen 2, Carvinak, Tregulland). The creation of a number of specialized pre-burial or barrow pit deposits also appeared at several of these sites (Carvinak), and artifacts were deposited or offered to the dead before the site was completed. The mound itself also appears to have had some significance. Consequently, there is some indication that during the later third millennium and early second, certain pre-mound features, components of the mound, and the human body were used to structure the perception of the rite of passage, during what may have been an extended period of pre-burial liminality which was brought to a close by separation rituals, offerings to the deceased, and the completion of the tomb.

The appearance of timed sequential post-burial mounding associated with a number of peripheral, or mound top activities does not generally occur on these sites, and appears probably no earlier than 2000 BC almost entirely among Urn communities (Crig-a-Mennis, Colliford CRII, CRIVC, Charmy Down 6). This practice can be compared with funeral visits to the tomb by mourners during which artifacts were deposited and activities (pits, fires, deposits) were performed (Nancekuke). The completion of the rite of passage involving the deceased through the timely addition of various mounds/caps continued into the later Early Bronze Age (East Putford I, Upton Pyne), long after the earlier rituals ceased to be performed. Concurrently with the practice of timed additions to the mound, a greater incidence of pyre material, hot or in-situ cremations and less skeletal storage and careful bagging/selection of bones began to appear (Chysauster, Treligga Trevisker sites, Cataclews). At these Early and Middle Bronze Age non-Beaker/Food Vessel sites, a high incidence of fire and charcoal features can be observed, sometimes accompanied by bone (Crig-a-Mennis, Shaugh Moor Cairns, CRII). There is every indication here that beginning in the early part of the second millennium in the South-West, a closer temporal association between cremation and final burial was taking place, paralleling a similar trend in south-central Britain. In the South-West, this appears to have been part of a larger process whereby the burial rite was dually focused upon transformation and incorporation. This was accomplished in two ways. The first was through a series of devices designed both to connect the pyre (the main locus of transition/transformation for the deceased)

with the tomb, (e.g. in-situ cremations, deposits of pyre material, the intombment of still hot or recremated remains, sometimes with pyre material), and by actions and deposits which directly or indirectly referred to fire as an agent of transformation (lighting of fires, deposits involving charcoal, charcoal pits, deposits of burnt matter, and fired ceramics). The second involved the timed mound construction and associated activities and deposits which functioned simultaneously to mark the temporal stages in the transition from dead person to ancestor, and to structure the performance of familial obligations to the deceased (ritual meals, deposits, offerings at the tomb). Towards the end of the period considered here, as noted above in Sections 5.4.5 and 5.4.6, burial practices across the penninusla became simpler, and human remains and simple tombs/pits were increasingly associated with the home or the settlement. The later Bronze Age Level 3 Gwithian Cairns, and Rose Ash have already been mentioned as examples of this trend, and to this short list we can add the burial under the hearth in House 2222 at Tethellan which occurred between 1423 and 1315 BC (Nowakowski 1991), and the human bones found around House 95 in Unit 5b at Brean Down, which was probably occupied sometime between 1420 and 780 BC (Bell 1990).

5.6 South-Western funerary rituals in context

The general funerary sequence (Figure 5.65) can now be integrated into a broader long-term view of the period by drawing upon the south-western socio-economic context detailed in Chapter 4. Barrett (1989; 1994:74,135) has considered how the development of south-central British funerary practices "addressed" or made possible, and concurrently, were structured by the economic and social changes which took place in Bronze Age society between the third and the second millenniums. Since a similar explanatory goal is sought here, his interpretation of these changes is relevant to this discussion. His review of south-central Britain during the third and second millennia outlined a gradual shift from a period characterised by "a temporal structure which harmonized the routines of life [such as the gleaning of natural recources by the movement along paths between places] with the natural cycles of the day and night and the

passing of the seasons." This temporal structure was gradually replaced by one which increasingly involved the labour of agriculture, and the seasonal maintenance and inheritance of particular portions of land. The "annual sequence of economic activities" for both of these societies then, controlled the way in which time was measured (Leach 1961:133). Funerals, like other rites of passage, are intimately involved in structuring the appearance of time, so there is some expectation that the events of death and burial influenced, and were in turn influenced by, particular conceptions of the nature of time during the Beaker/Bronze Age. During the early part of this period in the South-West, there is some indication that the community mode of production relied to a great extent upon the seasonal exploitation of recources within defined territories (Chapter 4). Evidence of hoe agriculture in the Beaker and Early Bronze levels at Brean Down (Bell 1990), and environmental evidence for long fallow systems similar to those described by Barrett for southern Britain (1994:144) are indicated by the pollen record below some funerary/ritual sites. For these communities, time was experienced as a series of repetitions, or repeated contrasts (Leach 1961) as day followed night, sunset followed sunrise, winter followed summer, and so on, all within an unchanging natural landscape in which rivers flowed from mountains, and all the elements had their particular place in the order of things. The event of death in such an ordered and timeless world would necessitate denial or some sort of negation, since death implies a different "irreversible", or "non-repetative" notion of time (Bloch and Parry 1982; Leach 1961:125), incompatible with the dominant every day Beaker/Early Bronze Age perception. This denial is precisely what the builders of the early funerary sites in the South-West tried to accomplish during the ceremonies involved in mound construction. Through elaborate pre-mound rituals they sought to relate the life and death passage of the deceased and the event of burial to recurring yearly oppositions, and with the natural order of things viewed through a cosmological construction (often created at, or as part of the mound) which included elements of the natural landscape, and perhaps the body of the deceased. This sense of timelessness was also reinforced in part by the elongated liminal period at some sites during which the body or its cremated remains were perhaps stored for a time, or moved around and mixed/sorted before their final burial (echoing earlier, Neolithic practices).

Some change in these various burial rituals is first apparent sometime between c. 2000 and 1700 BC, as the builders of sites like Crig-a-Mennis and Davidstow I, and perhaps Lousey Barrow and Charmy Down 2 structured the final portion of their funerary rituals through mound transition rituals, and post-burial incorporative actions involving the mound and related deposits as noted above. This change occurs alongside the appearance of very early land boundaries and structures on Dartmoor (Saddlesborough Reave, early activity at the Shaugh Moor settlement) and Brean Down (Structure 57 in Layer 6a). The eventual disappearance of the early timeless funerary ritual practices (alongside the continuity of the new ones) co-occurs in the South-West with what Barrett has described as a short fallow agricultural system (1994:144), evidenced by an increase in the intensity of land use and maintenance throughout the penninsula between 1700 and 1400 BC. Multi-cropping, manuring, formal enclosed settlements, agricultural and pastoral enclosures all appeared during this period at Trethellan, Gwithian Layer 5, Shaugh Moor, Brean Down Level 5b, and/or Stannon Down (Chapter 4; Tables 5.1-5.3, Figures 5.3, 5.4; Megaw Thomas and Wailes 1960-61).

I have described the funerary rituals of the later third and early second millennium as **timeless**, in line with the desires of the builder/specialists to negate the disruptive effects of an untimely death by relating it to an unchanging natural and repetative order of things. Conversely, the funerary mound rituals of the Early and Middle Bronze Age with their sequential, drawn out incorporative mound structures, related actions and transition emphases can be described as **timely**, since the builder/specialists deliberately sought to symbolically and physically link ritual liminality and incorporation with the passage of time, and change, during which deceased became ancestor and order was restored to the community by the timed obligatory community rituals to departed kin. The funeral rites of the later period then, involve the community of mourners in ways the earlier rituals did not, since the order of things (encapsulated in the transition from human to ancestor, flesh to bone, and profane or dangerous to sacred) was consciously related to, and depended upon the timely actions of the community of kin. This change in the stress of the burial rituals is understandable, since the living and the dead increasingly belonged to communities in which the relationships of people to one another were being redefined and consolidated under new modes of

production (Barrett 1994). The change in funerary practices throughout the second millennium then, both enabled and reproduced this developing social order.

The increasing connection between the funerary and the domestic realms in the South-West towards the end of the period examined here has been briefly addressed above, and comprehensively elsewhere (Barrett 1989; 1994). In Chapter 4, I suggested that the decline in ceremonial burial among the funerary sites of the South-West could be understood as a factor of the increasing importance of the house and the settlement compound to the reproduction and transmission of traditional knowledge. The exact manner in which the house itself might have replaced the barrow thus deserves further comment. That discussion follows this one in Chapter 6, along with a more detailed analysis of the traditions of knowledge which enabled the social totality of the Beaker/Bronze Age to be carried forward through the ceremonies of burial.

NOTES

1 The equinoctial and solstial positions of the sun referred to in this chapter are based upon latitudes of 50 to 51 degrees (Land's End to Exmoor; Burl 1983). Sunrise and sunset azimuths at these times are as follows:

	Midsummer		Equinox		Midwinter	
	rise	set	rise	set	rise	set
51°	50.16	309.83	90	270	129.83	231.16
50°	51	309	90	270	129	231

A more complete discussion, and a graphic and tabulated summary of the solstial alignments referred to in this chapter follows in Chapter 6, Figure 6.1, and Table 6.1.

Chapter 6 Funerary Action and the Meaningful Constitution of Bronze Age Society

"Understanding ritual practice means reconstituting the significance and function that agents in a determinate social formation can defer on a determinant practice or experience, given the practical taxonomies which organize their perception." (Bourdieu 1977:114)

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I suggested that the challenge in coming to terms with the funerary record of the Bronze Age South-West lay in critically addressing the fact that although each site is unique, and clearly a product of contingent circumstances affecting each particular community, a sense of familiarity pervades each site encounter at the theoretical level. Instead of locating this familiarity in the present, and seeking to identify a number of site types, (and at the general level, something called the Bronze Age funerary monument), I indicated that a more profitable approach would be to move from the construction of typologies to an investigation of the discrete activities, or practices which resulted in the archaeological patterning observed in the present. A preliminary examination of the sites in Chapter 5 indicated that the "sense of familiarity" between each archaeological encounter with these monuments owed its existence to several factors. The first, was undoubtedly the physical environment of the general region, which was a factor both in the selection of constructional materials, but also partially determinant in their meaning content. The second was the fact that, as observed in Chapter 4, many of the communities on the peninsula were involved in cycles of movement which governed their temporal and spatial relationships to the landscape and to one another, allowing for there to be a fair amount of contact and exchange of ideas between regional communities. Due mainly to these two factors, the communities on the peninsula appeared to be, third, operating within a general tradition of knowledge, or cosmology, which manifested and reproduced itself through a variety of distinct, though similar ritual performances taking place at the mounds. More specifically, this tradition of knowledge was likely created and reproduced through similar strategic ways of controlling and manipulating time, space, soil characteristics, and material culture on the sites. Given this explanation for the overall similarities between the sites, the real challenge, more accurately stated, is to come to some understanding of the particular significance

and functions of the myriad ritual practices comprising this tradition (as noted by Bourdieu above) for each community, so that its creation and reproduction in and through practice might be better appreciated.

In the previous chapter, I suggested that by focusing upon the **actions** of the ritual participants, it was possible to see how certain conceptualizations of the funerary rite of passage may have been created in line with particular "schemes of perception", which are part of all traditions of knowledge. In an attempt then, to enhance the preliminary observations concerning the existence of such schemes forwarded in Chapter 5, the current chapter aims to accomplish several things. First, it explores in more detail the specific meaning content of these perceptual schemes, paying special attention to the ways in which the schemes were objectified through the actions of the ritual participants, who made use of space, time and material culture in deliberate and strategic ways. This is done at the site specific, and later, as appropriate, at the cemetery/community level, paying specific attention to the changes in practice over time. Given this material, the chapter then also aims to identify several perceptual and cosmological constructs within which the variety of funerary practices throughout the peninsula may be understood.

Finally, the exploration of the historical and meaningful relationship between the tombs of the earlier Bronze Age, and the houses and household activities of the later Bronze Age is a natural outgrowth of this study. It is suggested here that the later Bronze Age house, as a built and moved through community construction in the landscape much like the Bronze Age burial mound, became the locus for the objectification of certain cosmological constructions previously objectified only during funerary practices. The second part of the chapter then, aims to briefly illustrate the development of the ritual building tradition as elements from it, and wider cosmological elements, gradually transferred from tomb to house. The chapter concludes with an overview of the results of this study, and then briefly considers their relationship to current formulations of Bronze Age funerary practice.

6.2 Solstial Alignments

Before turning to an interpretative account of the content of this tradition of knowledge within a number of different south-western communities, it is necessary to discuss the general use of solstial alignments by the builders of the sites, since a portion of the following analysis rests upon this activity. As suggested in Chapter 5 and elaborated below, the use of such alignments in the context of particular funerary rituals allowed specialists to powerfully link individual/community life-crises with larger cyclical calendrical events, thereby setting up a number of various schemes through which the former could be neutralized, rationalized, and/or interpreted.

I referred in the last chapter to a number of activities at particular sites that appeared to suggest that attempts were being made to focus the attention of the funerary participants towards particular points on the horizon. This focusing was carried out through the timing of certain rituals, selective placement or alignment of features and enclosure entrance/exit gaps, and the control of bodily movements to respect these points. Many points either lay on or near eight alignments. In particular, the equinoctial, midsummer, and midwinter sunrise or sunset alignments were chosen, as well as northerly and southerly alignments that could have easily been established by recording the position of the others. The ways in which these alignments comprised part of variable ritual taxonomies in the South-West funerary tradition, and the significance of the use of solstial alignments generally, comprises part of the forthcoming discussion. Before beginning however, it is first necessary to take a moment to consider the group of alignments as a whole, in order to lend some support to the prior and subsequent analyses.

Of the 75 sites in this study, 30 contained at least one example of a discernable alignment, in which a relationship was established between the centre of a site and one or more directions. For the interpretative and quantitative purposes of this study, each of these alignments was translated into a compass azimuth. A list of each azimuth observed appears in notational form in Table 6.1, while Figure 6.1 provides both the contextual details of each observation, and a compass diagram that plots out each alignment/azimuth and its position in relation to the solstial or other alignments noted above.[1]

The difficulties of making statistically informed definitive statements about this data in the absence of knowledge about the wider population of all south-western Bronze Age sites should briefly be stated before proceeding with this discussion. In order to answer the matter of whether or not the collection of sites with observed alignments in this study constitutes a random sample amenable to statistical analysis, a number of assumptions have been made both about the general population (all Bronze Age funerary/ritual sites in the

South-West), and about the way in which the sample presented here was chosen. There is no question from the outset that the prehistoric decisions to include alignments as part of a funerary ritual and/or, to focus upon a particular alignments, resulted from intentional, contextually specific acts which varied from site to site. The variation with respect to these decisions observed in this particular sample of 75 sites could therefore be considered to be random. Further, given the biased selection process towards well excavated sites (where features were well documented), and an assumed lack of bias towards sites containing alignments during each site's excavation/publication, the present site sample under consideration could be said to be representative of a hypothetical population. Clearly however, the results noted below only apply to the particular sites selected for analysis according to the criteria outlined in Chapter 5, and do not take into account any other sites with alignments, or the fact (when considering particular alignments) that many sites have no alignments at all.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that a number of factors probably contributed to (or influenced my subsequent interpretation of) the exact alignment of certain graves, feature, entrances, etc.. First, the "rescue" context of the recoveries renders actual reconstruction of the alignments impossible. Second, the subsequent destruction of some sites' locations and surrounding landscapes makes it impossible to take into account the effect a horizon feature, such as a hill, might have on the position/azimuth at which a celestial body came into view (as noted by Burl 1983). Third, in many cases (thought not in all) it is impossible to discern in the present, what may have been considered appropriate, or necessary in terms of a particular alignment's "conformity" to an exact azimuth, or solstial event. Therefore, any statistical results regarding the azimuths as a group (or set of groups) becomes somewhat invaluable at the general level.

While such a circumstance would seem to preclude any in-depth statistical analysis of the alignments, there is still something to be said for better documenting the distribution of alignments generally, and assessing the observed tendency (as revealed both in the individual site analyses in Chapter 5, below, and in Figure 6.1) for alignments to cluster around, or point towards, particular azimuths. As noted above, it appears from the individual site analyses presented in Chapter 5, and Figure 6.1, that site builders who made use of an alignment concept sought with some regularity to distinguish out a select group of particular points on the horizon. In order to lend some general support to this observation, a one sample chi-squared test was devised which assessed the significance of a null hypothesis, which proposed that considered as a group, all the observed alignments in the study would be distributed equally between azimuths of 1 and 360 degrees. In other words, if

H_o could not be rejected, it would strongly suggest that the sites' builders were not significantly concerned with one or more particular solstial events. In order to assess the viability of this hypotheses, the circumference of a circle was divided up into 15 equal segments or categories, and observed and expected numbers were determined for each segment/category based upon the total number of alignments observed in the study (Table 6.2). The chi-squared value produced (19.58) far exceeded that required to support the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance (6.571) indicating, at the very least, a possible non-random selection of azimuths by the builders of the sites.

Having rejected a hypothesis of non-selection, a more detailed look at the alignments actually selected by the site's builders is necessary. Figure 6.1 and a consideration of the particular azimuths for each alignment indicate that 83% (n=53) of all observed alignments in the study (n=64) occur within 10 degrees of one of the solstial or related azimuths defined above (north, south, equinoctial, midsummer, and midwinter sunrise and sunsets) (Table 6.3). Further, when only the alignments within 10 degrees of the above named azimuths are considered (n=53), 81% (n=43) of these occur within 5 degrees of the above named azimuths (Tables 6.3-4). While these descriptive statistics appear to suggest that the true position of one or another of these solstial alignments was being sought after by the sites builders, some additional measure of confidence is required.

In order to make some statement assessing the actual relationship between the alignments recorded in this study, and the group of "ideal" solstial/other azimuths noted above, the eight ideal solstial azimuths were collapsed into one chosen direction, producing four general azimuth categories (C1-C4: listed as columns in Table 6.5a). All alignments within 15 degrees or less of these ideal azimuths were then recorded (Rows 1-14 in Table 6.5a). Then, an estimated range of average alignment directions was computed for each, using a 95% confidence interval (Table 6.4b). When these average directions are compared with the "ideal" azimuths for each category, it becomes possible to say with 95% certainty that the average directions selected by the creators of all but 4 alignments in the study[2] lie between 0 and 9 degrees from each ideal azimuth.

Based on the above calculations, it appears possible to support a general statement that some selection process with regard to the ideal azimuths was taking place on most of the sites whose creators' utilized an alignment device. It remains now to reconsider the contextual specificities of the use of alignments noted in Chapter 5 along with other devices, in order to interpret their role in the formation and reproduction of particular taxonomic schemes.

6.3 Systems of perception

Initiating a search for a system of perception which structured, and was structured by ritual action, immediately raises the issue of how can one begin to understand, and moreover, re-present, a meaningful tradition of knowledge at all. When considering such an interpretative task at the outset, one is immediately confronted with the difficulty of having to combine what are generally depicted as two opposing modes of discourse. The first is the generalizing, comparative, or totalizing perspective of an observer/theorist. The other is the realm of practice and situated understanding belonging to the past or ethnographic present. The confrontation between these two modes in anthropological/archaeological explanation has been the focus for first, discussion about what should constitute an appropriate archaeological object, and second, discussion about the epistemological status of anthropological/archaeological knowledge, (e.g. Barrett 1997b; Turner 1967; Geertz 1973). This has already been partially addressed in Chapter 2, but some additional remarks here are necessary to frame the discussion and analysis below. As correctly pointed out by Bourdieu (1977:106, 98) it is surely the case that by aiming for a totalizing perspective in the analysis of ritual practice, the analyst's inquiry potentially subjects practice and its products to a "change in status" which neutralizes them. Further, such studies often produce some sort of artificial unified system, which exists "only on paper", and serves to reduce individual ritual acts to "impoverished performances" of an "unwritten score", where the analyst is both composer and conductor in the present. As Geertz (1973:18) has observed, " nothing has done more...to discredit cultural analysis than the construction of impeccable depictions of formal order in whose actual existence nobody can quite believe. Having stated this however, neither Bourdieu (1977:142) or Turner (1976:25-27) eschew the need to produce models of particular traditions of knowledge. Importantly though, they correctly situate this production within a proper understanding of how these traditions are produced in action contexts, a point also echoed by Barth (1987:23) during his discussion of Ok traditions of knowledge in New Guinea. As noted in Chapter 2, it is commonly recognized that the traditions, or cosmologies, which inform and are objectified through ritual practice are conceptualized through a series of "concrete" or "dominant" symbols (Barth 1987:30; Turner 1967:20). At the general level, these symbols are ambiguous,

polyvocal, and capable of unifying a variety of concepts or meanings (Turner 1967; 1969).[3] The ambiguity, multivocality, and unifying quality of symbols enables them to be the foundation for the setting up of a wide variety of analogous, oppositional, and homologous relationships which link physical objects, spaces and movements both with each other, and with intangible cultural principals (Bourdieu 1977:109-114). These relationships gain their meaning for ritual participants through their construction within a number of different points of view (alternatively "schemes", "universes of practice", or "planes of classification"; Bourdieu 1977:125; Turner 1967:41) themselves created within the rationale (e.g. life-crisis) and particular setting (e.g. circular ritual space, domestic area) of ritual practice. These sets of relationships can be seen to form the basis for a series of theoretically identifiable "partly autonomous", "partly linked" practical taxonomies, which organize the production of practices, and the perception of objects in and out of ritual (Bourdieu 1977:142). An entire tradition of knowledge or system of perception encompasses all such taxonomies, but is best interpreted at the "operational" level because this is where it exists and has practical coherence (Turner 1967). Yet, because this entire system is often based upon a relatively small number of ritual symbols and schemes (due to what Bourdieu (1977:122) describes as the "harmonic" qualities of symbols, and their widely recognized significance) a theoretical and often practical link from one universe of practice to another can be demonstrated, and some understanding of the system of perception governing actions at a broader scale presented. This is generally achieved by recognizing how certain symbols, or symbolic oppositions, may connect, or act as "switches" (Bourdieu 1977:123) between the various planes of classification, thus rendering to the theorist some comprehension of the entire tradition of knowledge. Such comprehension (though achieved through an experience of the same materials) is naturally, a product of "scientific collection" (Bourdieu 1977:122) and should not be understood to accurately represent the forms of indigenous knowledge, which exist in a more incomplete, indeterminate state in the level of a situational exegesis and/or practice, and indeed are far richer for their indeterminacy. The re-interpretation and representation of past belief systems in the present then, should come to terms with both the fragmented, practice-centered form of knowledge (which reflects the strategic and situational creation of particular ways of seeing and knowing) and, also the situated perspective of the analyst, whose particular interpretative horizon is situated so as to perceive the way in which such individual spheres of classification are potentially linked to one other.

It is within this understanding of how traditions of knowledge are manifested and reproduced by participant and theorist that I set out to examine and diagram the *particular* traditions of knowledge that were objectified at the funerary/ritual sites of the South-West. In the preceding chapter, I set the stage for an analysis of the meaning content of this tradition by first, describing what appeared to be the particular goals of the rituals under consideration (e.g. funerary, ancestral), and second, by detailing the operational or action contexts, in which a variety of symbolic media were strategically used to make the rituals meaningful and efficacious at a variety of sites. In what follows, I will examine the links between the goals of the rituals and the actions of the participants with respect to particular symbolic media, with the purpose of illuminating a series of autonomous and/or linked sets of cognitive classifications that were created and reproduced in the ceremonies within a number of deliberately designed spatio-temporal structures or "planes". These classifications of terms, ideas, states, places etc. will be revealed as the building blocks of local generative schemes which were both drawn upon, objectified, and thereby reproduced by funerary rituals over time. The ways in which these classifications might have operated to control perception and create particular meanings in the rituals will be suggested, and then an overview of the commonalities between traditions will be presented for the South-West within a larger task of explicating the general structure of the south-western Bronze Age cosmological tradition.

At this point between introduction and analysis, it is perhaps useful to recall that after a general overview of the funerary/ritual material during the course of this study, I concluded that a finite number of common "themes" or principals were created during the construction of, and activities within, the sites. More specifically, by establishing and accentuating principals of boundedness, time, stratigraphy, and color/texture, it appeared that meaningful associations may have been created in the ceremonies between, on the one hand, objects, actions, and spatial units (e.g. a stone, or the path of movement within a site), and on the other, certain ephemeral and sacred cultural concepts (e.g. the path of the sun, or the ancestral community). These themes therefore, enabled particular readings of the ceremonies for participants and other mourners to take place. I further suggest here that these themes or principals can be understood as phenomenological devices that conditioned and conferred sense to experience, and as such, they may be compared with the sorts of "planes of classification" described by Turner (1969) and others. An analysis of these themes and how they were created suggests that they indeed formed the basis for a number of cosmological constructs (or ways of viewing the "world"), in many of the south-western Bronze Age communities considered in this study.

All sites in which evidence for the crafting of such schemes by the sites builders and ritual specialists seems indisputable will be detailed below, with particular attention being paid to first, sites offering the best evidence, and second, cemeteries which appear to display local long term, evolving traditions of practice and belief. As with the analyses undertaken of individual sites and cemeteries in the preceding chapter, the assumption is made that the reader is already familiar with each sequence of activities undertaken by the builders and mourners, deliberately detailed in Appendix 3 for each area of the study. The reader is strongly encouraged to initially review this Appendix if necessary, or as needed, in order to provide the background knowledge for following the analysis below.

6.4 Chysauster

At Chysauster, it appears that a scheme of perception guiding ritual practice was set up in the full Early Bronze Age, and was maintained for the next 100-200 years as generations of mourners visited the site from time to time to bury juvenile members of their community and make offerings to them. This scheme was initiated as the earliest creators of the site fashioned a stone enclosure for two cremation burials (Figure 5.16). Together with the ring's well-fashioned outer face, the actual transport of the cremations in the interior through the southern entrance, and the tossing in of offerings through the southern entrance by mourners standing outside the enclosure appears to indicate that the site was, in general, experienced from the outside by mourners looking inward. This may have initially set up a dichotomy between the inside of the site, which was clearly reserved for the dead, and the outside of the site, where the community stood, and lived. A meaningful homologous opposition then, may have been set up which took the form of **inside:outside::dead:living**. As observed in Chapter 5, the builders set up an initial orientation within this space by the position of the first two cremations, which lay on an alignment 10 degrees from the equinoctial sunrise-sunset, thereby giving contemporary and later mourners during the following centuries a dominant **axis** to guide their activities (Figure 6.1; Table 6.1). The establishment of this axis, (and its reproduction through the action of further cremation burials, and the deposition of offerings on the south side of the monument in and out of the enclosure) served also to divide the site into two sides: an occupied side roughly **south** of this axial alignment which would have

been filled with cremations, human activities, and offerings, and a relatively unoccupied side roughly **north** of it, which was clearly inappropriate for these actions, objects and materials (as noted in Chapter 5 and illustrated in Figure 5.16). If an assumption is made that the rising and setting of the sun in the spring and autumn were important events in the lives of these communities, as seems clear, it becomes possible to suggest that each opposed side of the site may have been invested with meaning in line with the movements of the sun in spring and/or early autumn. The activities of the mourners with respect to each side of the site therefore might have been related to perceived qualities of light and darkness, based on the position of the sun above or below the horizon on opposed sides of the monument in the spring and/or autumn. Considering the above observations, it appears that over time, three planes of classification may have been set up and reproduced at the site through the actions of builders and mourners. The first was one of **enclosure**, the second was an **axial** one, set up along two sunrise and sunset points, and a third could be described as **circumferal**, as two opposed portions of the horizon circle set up on the site were given qualities based on their natural features with respect to the movements of the sun. This can be briefly summed up by the following columns, which indicate the sorts of analogous understandings that might have been created within each plane.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Circumferal*
inside/outside	sunrise/sunset (equinox)	light/dark
dead/living	light/dark	south/north
(initial burials)		offerings-burials/ø
		entrance/no entrance

What impact these constructions (and the generative schemes they fostered) may have had on how the dead or the rites concerning them were perceived is difficult to determine with any certainty, given that the signification at the site appears more implied, than out rightly stated (as should be expected, given the theoretical discussion of meaning above). The construction of the tomb, and burial/offering locations appear to speak far more clearly about the way the *cosmos* was defined and perceived (addressed later). However, given the fact that the site represents a series of funerary transitions between living and deceased persons, one

wonders to what extent various qualities of light and darkness, and the various directions of sunrise, sunset, and north may have been related in an undefined way with the state of life and death. More clear are the deliberate associations of the dead with natural stony materials, and items fashioned from stone (often light in colour, shiny or light-catching), obvious both in the materials chosen for monument construction, and the offerings thrown into the enclosure or placed with or near the cremations. This suggests that the offerings and stony tomb construction were seen as appropriate for the dead, who after passing through the pyre, and being placed in among stone, occupied a new distinct category from the living which might be metaphorically defined by the properties of the offerings and the tomb itself (hardness, lightness, brittleness, or even shining). At least part of this perception of the dead may have been furthered by the cremation process itself, which of course changes a human body into a hard, brittle, and often stony colour.

6.5 Trelen 2

At Trelen 2, it appears that an enduring and complex tradition of knowledge both framed and was reproduced during most the monument's history, stretching from the third millennium well into the second, as the monument was modified in its second major phase (Appendix 3). The late Neolithic land boundary deserves some initial attention, particularly since its alignment was maintained by at least two stakes during the early history of the site (Figure 5.35; 5.35.1). The stake alignment connected the point of the midwinter sunrise to the point of the midsummer sunset (Figure 6.1; Table 6.1), and its maintenance indicates a continuing interest in preserving some sort of axial plane on the site within which other activities, or the early rite as a whole, could be framed. The alignment of the fence (and the overlapping dates for charcoal from the fence and the primary ditch) also raises questions about the real function of the land boundary, and perhaps indicates that the site actually began as a later Neolithic funerary mound that incorporated some sort of solstial fence in its early stages. I will return to this below. In addition to an axial plane of reference on the site, the construction of the stake hurdlework circle, the surrounding clay and turf ring, and the first ditch served to create a triple enclosure within which the central deposit was placed, thus separating it from the mourners before the mound was built. This may have functioned to create an inside:outside dichotomy, with the mourners assembled around the

enclosure containing the remains of the deceased (assuming, of course, that the disturbed central pit contained a funerary deposit). This could have been understood in the form of a pair of homologous oppositions such as **dead:living::inside::outside**. It could further have set up some principal of concentricity based upon meaningfully perceived qualities of each of the three rings (wood, turf/subsoil , and ditch).

A third plane of classification was created at the site by the construction of the rings, during which mourners isolated two separate components of the buried landscape (the turf and the yellow subsoil) and played them against one another, making the usually buried subsoil visible for a time in the ditch, and in the first bank, (thus reversing its relationship with the turf, and then burying it again with the outer turf bank, restoring this relationship (but under inverted turves, perhaps further prompting interest or attention). By these actions the builders "played" both with natural stratigraphy, its vertical dimension, and with colour value as the two opposed characteristics of these two materials (their light and dark colour, and their above-below positions in the lithosphere) were highlighted through visibility and reversal, creating both an **above:below::light:dark**, and an **above:below::dark:light** pair of homologous oppositions. The burial of the central deposit under the first turf mound may also have been seen to makes sense within this scheme, humanizing it, since the mound turves were also inverted, and the act of covering the deposit by the mound placed it in a **below** ground position relative to the mourners. It is possible to argue that this small but powerful generative scheme was also linked indirectly with the axial plane on the site by the use of a highly important symbol already mentioned - the clay subsoil. The yellow subsoil in the vicinity of the site in addition to contrasting with the darker turf, also shares both a colour value and hue with the sun, whose appearance and movements were clearly of some symbolic significance to those present. A powerful and intriguing generative scheme may thus have been created by the use of the various mound components in two separate, though linked ways. This could be represented as:

turf:subsoil::dark:light (reversed)::MWSR:MSSS::above:below(reversed)::living:dead

The potential impact of this scheme for framing perception at the site relied on two things: the multiple qualities of the symbolic significata employed, and the emphasis on transition, or reversal at the site. First the potentially multiple nature of all of the symbols manipulated or highlighted by the builders (yellow clay, sun, turf, possible burial, and assembled mourners) allowed each to be linked directly or indirectly via one of its characteristics with all the others, either in its natural or reversed/changing state. For instance, the sun rises above and sets below the horizon at the two solstial points, going from the realm of the living to the place of the

dead, creating light and darkness by its movements. The living dwell above the horizon, in a world which goes from dark to light with seasonal and diurnal regularity, and at death go below the ground, to a dark world, (or perhaps, an opposite world of light and darkness from the living). The yellow clay resides naturally below the ground in a bright state, and opposite the deceased, but like the sun, experiences a reversal of fortune within the ritual as it moves from below to above the ground surface into the light, exposing its light.

The use of the MWSR and the MSSS alignments at Trelen 2 deserve additional consideration. Although any other sunrise-sunset alignment would have communicated the same qualities of light and dark etc., only these two alignments were selected. This indicates that the above scheme was intimately linked, at least for the earlier builders, with some arbitrary division of the solar year at these two points. Considering the nature of these solstial events for a moment, one heralds the beginning, and the other the ending of a 6 month period of increase in daylight and darkness. Again, the emphasis on a transition is noticeable, and as observed in Chapter 5, the use of these alignments would have placed a life crisis event within a timeless cycle, thus negating its power. Further, it would have embedded the view of life and death within yet another layer of significance (this one concerned with renewal and growth). Spatially, the end result of the use of these two alignments may also have extended beyond the establishment of an axis, since the two halves of the year might also correspond to two separate sides of the circular monument – a north-eastern circumference, and a south-western circumference (divided initially by the fence), that were related perhaps, with growth and life vs. death respectively.

Finally, some attempt also appears to have been made on the site to make use of the signifying properties of wood, by bringing it into an opposition with the other mound materials in both a temporal and vertical sense. As in many sites discussed in the previous chapter, the use of the hurdle work ring was temporary, since as the mound was being constructed, it was withdrawn. Therefore, to an observer watching the progression of the ritual, wood was clearly temporary, and was replaced by earth, setting up an opposition between two materials which moreover, occupy different (though linked) stratigraphic or vertical zones in the landscape.

The second main constructional phase on the site appears much like the first in the use by the builders of both enclosure (new ditch), and stratigraphy (subsoil mound) in what appears to have been a similar fashion.

The strategies of ritual visible at Trelen 2 may therefore be summarized by the following sets of classification planes.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Circumferal*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	MWSR/MSSS	SW/NE	turf/subsoil	wood/turf
dead/living	light/dark	growth-life/death	dark/light	above/below
	above/below	above/below (reversed)	dead/living	
		living/dead		

Given the rite of passage, or life-crisis context within which this sites construction most likely took place, some suggestions on the kinds of understandings fostered by the observance of (or participation in) the ceremonies at Trelen 2 should be forwarded. For these late third and early second millennium BC communities, the dead and the living may have been seen as occupying two separate worlds. The spatial (inside) and vertical (below) worlds may therefore both have been seen as representing some sort of conceptual "place" of the dead, which may have been situated below the world of the living, in a place of darkness (or light/dark reversal). A belief in the existence of an intimate link between the two worlds seems clear, and it may have been best understood metaphorically through the natural half-yearly cycles of solar increase and decrease. Weaving a complicated yet simple system of perception like the one described above may have functioned to affect the success of the rites themselves (enable a person to enter the other world), and further, as noted above, to negate the power of death in the community by concentrating on its close relationship to life. As will be shown, a very similar scheme of perception was forwarded (most likely for similar reasons) at both the Davidstow Moor and St. Austell cemeteries (see below).

6.6 Carvinak

At Carvinak, the builders, like many other Beaker using communities in the South-West first made use of a principal of **enclosure**, which served to divide up the neutral space of the site into an inside zone reserved for the cremations, cairns, etc, and an outside zone, where mourners presumably stood, creating an **inside:outside::dead:living** pair of opposed locations and states. This delimiting was accomplished through three separate constructional devices: the initial circular turf strip (which was created by exposing the pink-purple clay subsoil below the surface, forming a circular turf platform), the white quartz cairn circle, and the wooden fence, thus initially framing the entire rite within four potential material symbols (wood, pink-purple soil, turf and white quartz), which continued to be highlighted during the remainder of the ceremony.

It is also possible to suggest that the builders also made use of a **stratigraphic** plane of classification in which materials were highlighted and variously juxtaposed based upon several of their qualities. Recalling the discussion of the site in Chapter 5, it was noted that a series of general similarities could be made between the pit and hollow fills and their quartz caps, and the stratigraphy of the mound itself. At that time a suggestion was forwarded that some practical taxonomy was instrumental in dictating the sequential and stratified use of the materials comprising these features. The materials employed by the builders were turf/topsoil, purple clay, purple-red shillet, pink-purple clay subsoil, pink sand, purple-pink shale, yellow white clay, leached gray soil, and white quartz, and a consideration of the manner in which these materials were used indicates that the builders relied upon *several* qualities of each in order to set up a series of relational connections between them in specific instances. These qualities were their colour, their consistency, or hardness, and of course, their natural vertical position in the buried landscape. In terms of colour, the turf is brownish, while the sand, clay subsoils and shillet comprise a series of red, pink, and purple hues, and the leached soil, yellow-white soil in Pit 2, and the quartz all have a light value, or are bright, sparkling white. These three colour properties then, may have made up part of the symbolic repertoire in this community. In terms of their consistency, or hardness, the materials all fall at various positions on a general scale of loose (sand) to friable (turf) to firm-hard (clay-shillet) to extremely hard (qtz.), indicating that the significance of a state of hardness or softness-looseness was important in their general view of the world. Finally, their natural stratigraphy may be contrasted depending upon where they exist in the buried landscape in relation to each other between the surface and deeper buried locations. The multivocality inherent in each of these symbolic materials then, was carefully and variously employed by the builders as they contrasted and reversed turf and subsoil and turf and shillet, variously

intermixed turves, pink sand or pink-purple subsoil and quartz, covered turves with light clay and sparkling quartz, and encircled turves and reddish subsurface materials with quartz or white clay (Chapter 5, Appendix 3). This may have functioned to create a succession of cross cutting oppositional relationships between materials which were variously **light and dark, above and below** the surface, or **hard and softer,** depending upon the particular pit or mound activity. If this is the case, then each pit fill, and the mound construction itself, could be seen as arising from a generative scheme that rested upon these properties. That there was more internal logic to this system than initially appears is revealed by a consideration of how this scheme was intimately linked with a **temporal** plane of classification.

After the cremations were in place, the mourners performed three important actions: the smashing of the Food Vessel, the placing of branches next to the graves, and the removal of the stake circle. In a stratigraphic and temporal sense, these activities were all buried, and followed by the construction of the turf mound, which was then itself covered and replaced by the leached gray soil and milky-white quartz cairn. Temporally, and stratigraphically, each of these materials was related to the other by the builders, and a consideration of their opposed properties allows some understanding of the generative scheme which conditioned, and was objectified by their actions. Wood and clay are part of the ground, yet separate from it, as pots and trees occur mainly above the earth's surface. In this sense they are linked yet opposed to the turf, which they occur above. The turf could have been seen to be opposed to the quartz and leached soil mainly by its colour, and secondly by its texture and position in the landscape, since quartz is a hard material, and part of a bedrock formation in this region. The construction of the mound therefore first opposed something above and below, and then something dark with something light, and something above and below, and further, contrasted materials soft, pliable, or temporary, with permanent or hard materials, leading to the following *openly linked* homologous pairs: **dark:light::below:above::hard:soft.** It is reasonable to assume then, that this scheme may have also generally guided the creation of the individual cremation pit fills on the site. The above observations can be represented by the following three columns of homologous opopositions.

Enclosure	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
Inside/outside	above/below	wood-ceramic/turf
dead/living	hard/soft	above/below
	dark/light	turf/leached soil/quartz
	red/white	dark/light
	red/brown-dark	
	brown-dark/white	

Given the above, what messages about life, death and the existence and character of the natural and imagined worlds might the mourners have received from the ceremony at Carvinak? In the context of a funerary rite of passage the temporal and stratigraphic progression of the mound construction and the feature components may have been understood as relating to the change in status of the deceased from something soft or temporary, near the surface, like wood, to something more permanent, harder, buried, white or light, and perhaps even redolent with special, or magical qualities, of the sort inherent in white sparkling quartz (I will return to the quartz below). The act of burying the cremations below two separate similarly signifying materials seems also to assert that the place of the dead was below the ground, in a realm separate from the living. The *liminal* character of the pink-purple-red coloured material within this progression , and in general, seems obvious, since it is revealed only at the commencement and during the constructional phases of the site, and intimately associated with the cremations **before** they are finally covered by upper caps/cairns and mound. Its natural hidden position liminal position in the landscape may have furthered this contextual signification.

6.7 Crig-a-Mennis

As noted in Chapter 5 and Appendix 3, one of the earliest activities on the site was the digging of the circular ditch, and the cremation, or deposit of cremation remains and stone in its interior (Figures 5.38 and

5.38.1). This, and the additional fragmentary inurned cremations and interior eastern pits served to define the interior of this **enclosure** in terms of the dead, and oppose it to the exterior, where mourners most likely stood to watch the ceremony, creating, in effect a **living:dead::outside:inside** pair of oppositions.

This enclosure was also given a dominant alignment by the excavation of the trench ramp on the east and the creation of a causeway on the west. The orientation of the trench ramp was aligned three degrees from the equinoctial sunrise, while the causeway incorporated the equinoctial sunset, being centered on a point some 8 degrees from the alignment (Figure 6.1, 21a,b; Table 6,1). As argued above, these two features must have served to direct movement into, through, and out of the site in a clockwise direction, so mourners would enter from the east through the ditch on the sunrise alignment, proceed around the southern side of the enclosure, and exit across the causeway, leading to the possible creation of several homologous oppositions based upon the characteristics of the two entrance/exit passages and their deliberate connection to the two solstial alignments. For instance, the eastern entrance was a wet entrance, since it passed though the ditch, while the western exist was dry, since a clear passage out of the enclosure would have been possible due to the causeway. This effectively created a **wet:dry** opposition which could have been linked either to **light:dark**, or **above:below** states, depending upon the particular aspect of the solstial alignment chosen. This plane also appears also to have been created, or reproduced by the series of later activities and features near the trench ramp. These features contained charcoal, and/or some organic greasy substance, and a pot resembling (in fabric) the cremation urns. Considered the contents of the pits and the pot, all are either organic in nature, and/or the result of a transformation by fire, and indeed, may have been originally related to the cremations in some way, perhaps lending some sort of additional significance to the eastern orientation of the site focused upon living things or humans. The movement of the mourners during an obvious funerary ritual from east to west in the fashion described may also have further humanized the above scheme created by the entrance/exit alignments, fostering some general link between the following sets of opposed concepts:

light:dark::wet:dry::living:dead

This axial plane of classification, created both by the mound features and the actions of the mourners themselves, also created another sort of interpretative classification, which was later furthered by the construction of the mound itself. This plane could be described as **concentric**, since each side of the monument could have been perceived as the location of different human and solar activities, particularly if the ceremonies

on the site were timed to coincide with the spring or autumnal equinox. Rising on the east, the sun's path around the horizon would have run around the southern half of the monument, and during its time below the horizon, it would return around the northern side, returning again to rise on the east, thus potentially creating a **light** and a **dark** side of the site. If, as I have argued, the mourners made a left turn after entering the enclosure, their path would also take them along the southern side of the monument, along the path of the sun, leaving the north side of the monument clear, or empty of mourners during this procession. This may have set up two pairs of opposed, yet related concepts focused on the relationship of the monument to the mourners and to the sun which can be depicted as: **north:south::dead:living:dark:light**, where the north side of the monument (or, north generally) may have been understood as associated somehow with the dead because of its avoidance by the living.

Further evidence for the existence of a concentric plane of classification or experience on the site is apparent by the selection of materials used to construct the mound, and their origin in the landscape in relation to the site. As noted in Chapter 5, given the underlying lithology, the selection of the location for Crig-a-Mennis appears deliberate, and the use of material from the north-west and south sides of the site to construct the second and third mounds respectively confirms this. It appears then, that this concentric principal was reproduced and indeed may have guided the selection of the site for the mound in the first place, since the second and third mound components came from the sides of the site that were opposed in earlier rituals. The mound construction is also interesting from a **stratigraphic**, and **temporal** perspective, since a variety of materials were placed on the site in a timed, sequential order as the rites for the deceased progressed on the site. As noted in Chapter 5, the mound contained a series of materials that were deposited in *reverse* order of their stratigraphic positions, which may have served as a focusing device for those assembled. This order went from reasonably soft and friable (turf and soil) to progressively harder (shaley rubble to slate to quartz) with time, suggesting that the dual multivocal qualities of these materials (their location and consistency) were used in the formation of an open generative scheme based upon the oppositions of **above:below** and **soft:hard**, and perhaps, given the colour value properties of the outer final quartz crust and the earlier slate/shale, **dark:light**. The final burial of the cremated remains under these mound layers also suggests that some link between these pairs and the opposed states of **living:dead** may have been understood.

One could argue, then, that at least 5 planes of classification were created by the combined activities of builders, ritual specialists, and mourners at Crig-a-Mennis. Each served independently, or in relation to one another, to foster a series of opposed terms and concepts that formed the building blocks for a cosmological system within which the funerary rite could be understood. This series may be represented by the following:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Circumferal*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	E/W	south/north	above/below	above/below
dead/living	wet/dry	path of mourners/ø	living/dead	soft/hard
	birth-living/death	light/dark	softer/harder	
	pots-organics/ø			

Some comments on the nature of the understandings fostered by the funerary ceremonies at Crig-a-Mennis is necessary. The world of the living may have been seen as separate from the world of the dead, each of which were connected with a specific orientation arc on the horizon, and a place in a vertical perception of space either below or above the ground, in light and darkness. The dead, moreover, were distinct from the living in substance, being harder, and/or drier, and like stone, instead of moist like wood, or clay, which were subject to the effects of fire. The seasonal repeating passage of the sun was a testimony to the link between these realms and states of living and death, and the probable selection of the equinox for the funerary ceremonies suggests that a successful transition between life and death necessitated such timing.

Finally, the use of a water- filled ditch to frame the site and initially set up a ritual enclosure for the dead was probably not a matter of chance. At Carvinak, and at a number of sites to be discussed below, the choice of material for the initial site enclosures (banks, cairns, stake circles) appears to have rested upon beliefs of their particular symbolic significance within the generative scheme mobilized and reproduced. Water, I suggest, was chosen for similar reasons. Like these materials, it would have been seen to occupy distinct positions in the natural landscape (e.g. surrounding landforms, and emanating from the sky and from deep in the earth), and, like other natural materials employed by south-western builders, have had a range of colours and reflective properties, depending upon local weather conditions. All or some of these qualities may have been isolated by the builders as potentially significant within the context of the rite at sites like Crig-a-Mennis. A

further discussion of water and its place with the south-western cosmology follows in the general discussion of the South-West below.

6.8 Living and dying on the St. Austell granite

As demonstrated in Chapter 5, the sites of the St. Austell granite share a number of familiar constructional features, and further, provide evidence for some continuity of ritual practice spanning at most some 700 years between the later third and the middle second millennium. This continuity, I suggest, indicates a fairly coherent tradition of knowledge, which was objectified through varied practices on each site. A closer examination reveals that the content of this tradition took the form of a number of material culture, spatial, cosmic, and action symbols, many of which were shared between all the builders of the sites examined on the granite. These symbols included both elements of the natural landscape, such as the yellow kaolinized granite, stone, and wood, as well as cosmic foci like the sun, and its movements in relation to the earth, deliberately staged actions of the mourners and specialists, and finally, humanly created and modified items. In related though unique ways, ritual specialists and mourners manipulated these symbols to create a framework for conceptualizing their own identities, places and spaces in the world, the visible and invisible cosmos, and the tragic events which necessitated their ceremonies. Following a detailed overview of the kinds of perceptual constructions created on each site, an general overview of the Bronze Age tradition of knowledge present on the granite will be discussed.

6.8.1 Caerloggas Downs I

As noted in Chapter 5, Caerloggas Downs I likely represents a long-term ancestral site whose period of use may have stretched from the later Neolithic into the Middle Bronze Age. Activity consisted primarily of a series of offerings to the dead/ancestors that were made in a number of ceremonies (focused upon a tor remnant) over time that necessitated certain morphological changes to the monument. These changes were not random, however, and since their order appears to follow a sequence that has parallels with the shorter burial rituals across the granite, it is reasonable to wonder whether these distinctive constructional features also had specific

signifying properties which had similar effects on controlling perception and defining the world. As noted in Chapter 5, the site had three main phases, each of which may have encompassed a number of years of activity (Figures 5.10, 5.10.1). Phases II and III are of the most interest, since they are similar, and are both likely to date to a period more in keeping with the rest of the funerary sites. While the early phase of the monument drew attention to the tor remnant by means of the ditches, the latter phases of the site accomplished something different. Just prior to the construction of the first ring bank, the mourners constructed a spread of yellow granite/clay in the form of a rough ring, which effectively enclosed the tor, and the activities that had been taking place next to it. They then augmented this enclosure by creating the bank , which served to further separate the activities and objects within from those without. The access to this enclosure was moreover, controlled by the creation of an entrance which was both decorated with black soil, and later blocked by means of the chord of posts. These activities, in addition to the movement of the mourners into and out of the enclosure with their offerings, might well have served to create an opposition between an interior space reserved for this sort of activity (and perhaps filled with the presence or significance of the tor and its adjacent pits), and the everyday world of the community. A pair of homologous oppositions may have been created by these activities which could be depicted by the pair **inside:outside::dead:living**.

As already noted, the entrance to this enclosure was aligned on the MWSS (Table 6.1;Figure 6.1), which, it could be argued, also created an **axial**-horizontal plane of orientation on the site, allowing mourners to associate their commemorative activities with the connotations of this solstial event. Additionally, aligning the entrance passage or link between the worlds and spaces of the living and the dead on this solstial location also served to give this transition point a temporal aspect, since the MWSS falls at the end and beginning of a one half-year solar cycle. The blocking posts may have been very significant in this respect, since they may have prohibited access to the monument at times other than the appropriate yearly anniversary, thus fortifying the temporal association. The entrance passage then appears as a powerful dominant symbol linking least three planes of space-time which hints at the existence of a number of interconnected imagined cycles, places and states of being for this community (see below).

The significance of the site was further augmented through the construction of the cairn ring itself. First, the yellow granite was laid over the created turf platform, and then granite blocks were placed over this, followed by turf again and then wood posts, presumably from a series of large tree trunks. By such an unusual

construction, some vertical or **stratigraphic** principal appears to have been simultaneously brought into being and then questioned, or set up for reflection, since 4 separate, stratigraphically linked elements of the natural landscape were deliberately re-located in relation to one another during the construction of the cairn ring. This involved both a reversal of the positions of the turf and yellow clay, but also, a recognition of existing stratigraphic links between stone, turf and wood. While the yellow clay and turf relationship could have created a homologous opposition defined by the pairs **above:below::dark:light**, it may well have been that the relationship between these two, and the others (granite, wood, turf) was raised as a matter for reflection, and indicated no determinate scheme of understanding or categorization.

In the third phase of the monument, activity resumed at the site by a redecoration of the entrance passage (this time in yellow clay), and a heightening and elaboration of the cairn ring, which, along with the trampling of those present in and out with offerings (and later, turves), both appear to be deliberate acts designed to reassert the ideas of enclosure and axis referred to above. The construction of the second cairn ring over the first should also be examined. The combination of yellow kaolinized granite and two different soils implies a deliberate selection of material from locations alien to the site, and the erection of the posts in it implies some meaningful association. Later, however, the mourners removed the wood posts, and then covered the mound with black gritty soil and a final stony cap, ending constructional activity on the site. These actions would have served to very clearly contrast in a **temporal** way, the earlier and later group of materials. The materials chosen for each temporal phase of the Phase III ring are of interest since the lighter granite and soil would contrast in texture and colour value with the darker black gritty covering material, just as wood might be seen to be different in character to stone (wood being pliable and stone hard, and wood as trees existing on the surface in the light while stone occurs primarily in, or under the earth, in darkness)[4]. Such a series of relationships could be represented by the oppositions **clay-soil:black grit::light:dark::wood:stone.** Finally, though not explicitly formulated, it is not unreasonable to suggest that these oppositions may have been partially understood to relate in an indirect way to the two categories of persons involved in the activities on the site, namely, living and deceased persons.

Considering the series of actions which resulted in the creation of Caerloggas Downs I as a whole, it appears that a number of ritual specialists may have set up and renewed at least three separate, through linked, planes of ritual time and space on the site, which were reinforced through the actions of the community itself, as

they paid necessary commemorative visits to the site during the course of their lives. These were based upon principles of enclosure, stratigraphy, and time. Through the actions of the mourners, and the qualities of the particular items or things created (or referred to) in each of these "planes", certain meaningful relationship may have been set up between these symbols which allowed the rites to be understood in relation to a series of generative schemes linking both sacred and mundane principals. Such planes, and the kinds of understandings they fostered may be represented by the following:

Phase II:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphy*
inside/outside	MSSS~offerings	yellow granite/turf
dead-ancestors/living	to dead	below/above
		(reversed)
		soil-yellow granite/black gritty soil-stone

Phase III:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphy*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	MWSS~dead	yellow clay-soil/ black grit	soil-yellow clay/black grit
dead-ancestors/living		light/dark	light/dark
		wood/stone	wood/stone
		soft-pliable/hard	soft-pliable/hard

What vision might the mourners at Caerloggas Downs I have taken away with them after participating in these ceremonies? The importance of the site as a place associated with the ancestors would have been clear, as was the association of the dead with stone and darkness, represented by the tor itself (which was accentuated by clearing and encircling), and the descent of the sun at midwinter. A strong and ever-present link between the living and the ancestors might also have been perceived, since the timing and placing of the offerings from the

living coincided with a temporal and physical point in the solar year which was a transition in the sense of being both an ending and a beginning, marked also by a physical link between the spatial and conceptual "worlds" of living and dead. Further, the qualities of and relationship between living persons and the ancestors may have been understood in relation to the qualities and realms occupied by stone, wood, and clay in terms of hardness or softness, and stratigraphical/vertical position in the landscape. Finally, the passage of the sun itself must have been an important framing theme within which these activities were understood, (though the details of this are not as clearly spelled out for the mourners here as they appear to be on other sites on the granite and elsewhere) since the initial circular ring of yellow clay and the mound stratigraphy could be seen as devices designed to create metaphorical links between the kaolinized granite and the sun itself (see Cocksbarrow, and the Davidstow Moor cemetery below).

6.8.2 Cocksbarrow

At Cocksbarrow (Figures 5.8, 5.8.1), an analysis of the actions of the funerary participants on the site reveals that at least five classificatory planes or schemes may have been set up which enabled the rite of passage to be meaningful and effective on a number of levels. These were established by means of acts of enclosure, the setting up of lines or axes, the division of the horizon and the ritual space into circumference arcs, the creation of stratigraphy, or altitude, and finally through the control and division of time.

The creation of the stake circle and later, its replacement in stone effectively divided the site into an outside area reserved for the majority of the mourners, and an inside area, where the deceased was permanently laid to rest. Additionally, before the mound was built to cover the rings, the builders blocked their own entry through the MWSR doorway (Figure 6.1; Table 6.1), as though blocking the path of the deceased back into the world of the living, and by so doing perhaps reinforced the relationship between the inside zone of the monument containing the remains the deceased, and the outside world of the living. This may have been further accentuated by the construction of an exclusive inner cairn circle to contain the cremation. Further, the importance and distinctiveness of this space was accentuated by the restriction of access to it through first the gap in the stake ring, and later the entrances through the inner and outer cairn rings. Through structure and actions than, a pair of homologous oppositions: **inside:outside::dead:living** was effectively created at the site.

As noted in Chapter 5, when the cairn ring was constructed, the access to the site was restricted to a point directly on the midsummer sunrise, and opposed by the inner rings entry/exit, whose center was aligned 3 degrees from the point of the midsummer sunset (Table 6.1; Figure 6.1). The appearance of the midwinter sun above the horizon occurs on the shortest day of the year. As such, it is a beginning of a half-year solstial cycle. From that period onward, the days lengthen, until the cycle comes to an end on the day of the summer solstice with the descent of the sun below the horizon. Within each of these two opposed solstial symbols then, are two potential pairs of related principals - above:beginning and below:ending. These may also be extended to include some sense of darkness and light due to the fact that these alignments would also have heralded the onset of daylight and nightfall at the site, leading to the following string of oppositions:

above:below::beginning::ending::light:darkness.

It will be recalled that the sites builder's also initially set up a series of marking stakes and a pit (Z) which drew attention to the sun's passage between at least 4 important points on the horizon, roughly

corresponding (within 3 and 8 degrees) to selected solstial azimuths when viewed from the centre of the site (Table 6.1). Further, during the deposition of the cremated remains of the deceased into the centre of the monument, the mourners were directed around a clockwise course along a path traveled by the sun between two important solstices. Viewed from the perspective of a participant or onlooker at either or both phases, these actions set up a general division of the site into two parts: a dark side around which the sun cannot be traced (and later, where the living are discouraged from walking), and a light side which either contains or was initially bounded by two sets of sunrise and sunset alignments and which is later traversed by the living during their journey with the remains of the deceased. By these actions, the absence of sunlight or darkness was equated with a place not traveled by the living, and light from the sun could have been associated with them. Thus, a homologous opposition between **light:dark** and **living:dead** may have been established through the division of the site into opposed arcs.

It is also possible to consider how the natural stratigraphy, and its artificial recreation in the mound were used to frame some understanding of the ceremonies. Cocksbarrow consisted of a turf mound, which was later covered by a final cap of yellow kaolinized granite (hereafter referred to as yellow clay). This activity rendered the bright, lighter yellow clay which was normally buried below the surface to a uppermost position above the dark turf - a powerful act which would have been both visibly stimulating, and thought provoking. Such a stratigraphic strategy may be diagramed as a set of oppositions, which paired the opposed principals of **dark:light** equally with either **above:below** or **below:above**. It is worthwhile noting too, that the creation of the mound itself placed the deceased in a different stratigraphic relationship to the mourners thus placing **the living** and **the dead** in an homologous opposition to **above** and **below** (the earth) respectively.

Finally, the site's builders also created a temporal plane of interpretation when they replaced the initial wooden enclosure with the stone cairn circles. This replacement and transformation of the funerary enclosure at an appropriate point in the course of the funeral from wood to stone by the builders provides a valuable clue for speculation about how the properties or qualities of each of these objects may have been given signification in line with the mortuary context of the site. In its natural state wood is temporary, or impermanent - once cut, it eventually decays, and gradually disappears, and indeed, during the course of the ceremony at Cocksbarrow, this aspect of its character is stressed. Stone, however is permanent, and within the living memory of most people retains its form and characteristics, despite its situation. Further, wood exists in its most obvious form

above or on/near the surface of the ground, while stone, particularly in the landscape of the upland moors, links the surface with the generally invisible underground realm below. Given these considerations, and other recent observations of wood:stone oppositions in the later prehistory of southern Britain,[4] it becomes very easy to imagine the particular signification of these properties for the builders, which may be diagramed as the following set of oppositions: **impermanent::permanent::wood:stone::above::below::living:dead.**

The above observations can be expressed as a diagram, with each column representing a distinctive and unique classificatory plane forwarding a number of analogous oppositions created by the mourners at Cocksbarrrow.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Circumferal*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
outside/inside	MWSR/MSSS	mourners path/ ø	turf/yellow clay	wood/stone
living/dead	(sunrise/sunset)	light/dark	above/below	imperm./permanent
	light/dark		dark/light	above/below
	above/below horizon		(reversed!)	
	beginning/ending		turf/yellow clay	
			above/below	above/below
			living/dead	(reversed!)

In order to further the meaning component of each of these planes, ritual specialists mobilized at least 5 different symbols to create a particular reading of the rite of passage involving the deceased. These were: the movements of the sun, two activities of the mourners (the creation of the enclosures, and their movement within the monument), wood, stone, and the yellow clay. Of these, the yellow clay, the sun itself, and the activities of the mourners appear as most important. The sun and the activities of the mourners enabled the creation of, and linked together the axial, circumferal, and enclosure "planes" on the site, thereby creating a frame within which the funeral can be made sense of, and a larger generative scheme perceived theoretically. As noted above, during the final part of the ritual, the mourners carried the remains of their kinsman/woman for the last time between the two **physical** thresholds of the site at the **temporal** calendrical threshold of the half year cycle, which may have immediately set up a metaphorical relationship between this solar/sacred cyclical journey, and

the path of the deceased through life from birth (as beginning) to death (as ending). Joining the activities of the mourners with the passage of the sun through structure and action at Cocksbarrow, the world of the living was linked to the cosmos, understood both as the passage of the sun around a circular horizon, and its descent and ascent above and below that horizon.

Not unrelated to this construction, the **yellow clay** enabled the creation of, and linked together the stratigraphic and temporal planes created by the site. Considered as a dominant symbol, the yellow clay has clear analogous properties to the sun in its colour, and most importantly, in its stratigraphic nature, since naturally it lies below the surface, but through the activities of the sites builders, it also rises above it, allowing a theoretical connection to be made between a number of the analogous pairs noted above, and a rich generative scheme diagramed for Cocksbarrow:

light:dark::above:below::beginning:ending::outside:inside::living:dead::impermanent:permanent

Returning to the ritual context, and goals of this St. Austell community for a moment, how might the dead and the living, and the environment have been perceived within this extended web of signification woven by the builders of Cocksbarrow, and what purpose did the ritual serve towards furthering this perception? If we allow an interpretation to arise from the various planes of experience which the builders created at the site, it becomes possible to see that the deceased is both buried below the mound, and related to things below the ground, existing in a time/place of darkness before and at death, and therefore during its transition to a non-living state, becoming more like stone than wood. The mourners, on the other hand, walk in light, on/above the ground surface. Further, a person's life moves, like the sun from a beginning above the horizon to an ending below it, and this ultimate temporal and physical reversal finds a physical parallel (and expression) in the natural and ritually inverted stratigraphic relationship between the yellow clay and the turf of the buried landscape. At Cocksbarrow then, by linking the one-time funerary rite of passage with a repeated calendrical event through a number of dominant symbols, the site's builders and directors created the means by which death could be naturalized, or denied through an analogy with a sacred cycle, and the transition between life and death effected and unified for the person and the community. In the process, a local tradition of knowledge or perception was carried forward. This tradition, and the open generative scheme which fostered it was clearly

being mobilized in some form at Caerloggas Downs I, and thus, it should serve as a useful starting point for considering the remainder of the funerary rituals of other St. Austell communities.

6.8.3 Caerloggas Downs III

As noted in Chapter 5, Caerloggas Downs III may have been built in a time frame similar to Cocksbarrow, and probably generally overlapped with some of the earlier visits to adjacent Site II. The absence of skeletal evidence makes it difficult to say whether this site was explicitly funerary in nature like the others discussed here, though the series of activities performed appears to have had no less significance to the observers in terms of their potential ability to make some sense of themes of life and death. The dominant symbols mobilized by the builders of Caerloggas Downs III were already familiar to the mourners in this and other communities. They included the yellow kaolinized granite, stone, wood/trees, the sun, and its rising and setting and path around the horizon, and the actions of the community of mourners in relation to the built and natural environment of the site.

For example, one of the earliest activities on the site involved setting up a north-west/south-east axis to a roughly defined space (cleared of surface clitter) by the deliberate placing of a stone orthostat and branches in these opposed positions respectively. This axis, while not aligned exactly on the opposed positions of MWSR and MSSS (Figure 5.12; Table 6.1;Figure 6.1, 3a,b), would give to an observer knowledgeable of these horizon points standing in the center of the site (or anywhere nearby) some sense of association between these solstial positions and the items so deliberately placed to align near them them. Further, although it is not possible to demonstrate any deliberate timing to the activities involving these materials to coincide with these events, if this had taken place, it may have served to further their associations. A set of related oppositions may have arisen out of these activities which could be depicted as **wood:stone:: sunrise:sunset:: light:dark::above:below.** Such a set of oppositions would have been particularly effective for hinting at the important qualities of the opposed materials, especially since the stratigraphic or vertical position of each in relation to the horizon could been seen (with very little imaginative encouragement) as occupying a different vertical/stratigraphic domain in relation to the earths surface or horizon.

While constructing the mound, the builders took care to introduce a spread of yellow kaolinized clay on top of the turf mound in a pathway arc extending from an entrance gap the south/south-east to the north-west. This accomplished two things. It first reversed the natural stratigraphic relationship between the darker turf and the brighter yellow kaolinized granite (which is naturally found below ground), thereby drawing attention and encouraging reflection towards their contrasting appearance and natural context. Next, it delineated one side of the mound from the other (in a similar fashion to Cocksbarrow) both by colour, and by action, since the decorated pathway either implied or facilitated movement by ritual participants on the mound surface. The arc of the decorated hollow is of some interest since it parallels the path of the sun around the horizon roughly between the MWSR and the MSSS (Figure 5.12). This construction appears to indicate that the builders of the site were attempting to set up a dual framework of stratigraphic and circumferal perception, linked for all to observe by the usually buried bright yellow clay, which was placed above the turf, between two points where the sun rises and sets above and below the horizon. A meaningful scheme for linking the cosmos and the buried landscape was therefore created. It can be represented by the following two pairs of linked homologous oppositions **light:dark::below:above~above:below**. This generative scheme also appears to have been in operation during the final stages of mound construction, as mourners covered over the site at the close of ceremonies with a layer of black gritty soil, thereby burying the striking yellow mound with something very dark. This also gave this relationship a previously undefined **temporal** aspect, as the earlier activities on the site involving the mound elaboration and mourners' movements were terminated by the black masking layer, thereby bringing to a close all construction on the site. The act of barrow construction could also be seen in a similar light, if an individual lying **on** the original land surface was buried during the course of ceremonies **under** a turf mound, thereby humanizing the scheme noted above. The above remarks may be represented by the following series of classification planes and the analogous relationships they may have fostered.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Circumferal*	*Stratigraphy*	*Time*
Below/above	wood/stone	light/dark	below/above	yellow clay/black soil
Dead/living	sunrise/sunset	yellow clay/ø	dark/light (reversed)	light/dark
Inside/outside	light/dark	living path/ø	dead/living	
	above/below		below/above	

As noted above, given the lack of a definitive corpse on the site, it becomes difficult to say with certainty whether the generative scheme proposed above was clearly understood by the community to relate to the living and dying of a specific individual, or the qualities of living and deceased persons in both a real and imagined landscape. Given the open ended and contextual nature of such schemes observed ethnographically, it may be unwise to attribute more meaningful significance to the actions at Caerloggas Downs III than was ever originally intended to be there. Some sense, however, of the influence of a wider tradition of knowledge that fostered such relationships does exist, particularly if it is assumed that a number of roughly contemporary and nearby acts on the granite were fostering these metaphorical relationships. Another of those nearby sites is Watch Hill.

6.8.4 Watch Hill

As noted in Chapter 5, the one-sigma radiocarbon assays and pollen records at the site indicate that the funerary ceremonies for the two deceased individuals may have been conducted more fully into the Bronze Age, at a slightly later period of time to other rites at Cocksbarrow and Caerloggas Downs III (Appendix 2; Table 5.1). Despite this time gap, a consideration of the sequence of activities on the site (Appendix 3) indicates that mourners and funerary specialists manipulated some of the same items of material culture, and drew attention to similar elements of the natural landscape as their earlier neighbors. These items are the yellow kaolinized granite, wood, fire, stone, the sun, and finally its rising and setting, and path around the horizon. As in the earlier funerary sites above, it is possible to suggest that these items all functioned as symbols within several perceptual schemes fostered by the construction of the monument and the activities of the community.

A consideration of the earliest activities on the site (construction of the rings and the ditch with its pit and ledges) indicates that two distinct planes of space may have been created by the sites builders to structure perception (Figures 5.13, and 5.13.1). The first was one of **enclosure**, which was created by the excavation of

the ditch and the creation of the inner cairn circle. Both of these activities functioned to separate the crowd of assembled mourners from the enclosed space of the site (where the bodies of the deceased would eventually be lain), thus creating a now familiar **inside:outside::dead:living** pair of homologous oppositions. Further, there is some suggestion that this spatial distinction may also have had some polarity with a more imagined or mythic plane, in the sense that both the mourners and the deceased may have been perceived as occupying two distinct "worlds". This seems implied by the carefully blocked (but not used) northern entrance passageway in the cairn circle, indicating perhaps some concern about the potential movement by the dead into the realm of the living. If this is the case, then the infilling of the ditch at the end of the incorporative phase of the monument may signal an end to this period of fear, or a change perhaps in the character of the deceased from dead person to an ancestor with closer, more controlled links to the living.

Several other earlier activities linked or contemporary with the ditch and cairn rings can been seen to have functioned to create a second, **axial** plane of classification of the site. These were: the burning of the wood in the pit aligned on the MSSR, the creation of the outer cairn arc with points terminating on the MSSR and MSSS, the erection of an orthostat at the MSSS end of the wall, and the creation of two ditches near the MSSR and MWSS positions respectively (Figure 5.13.1;Table 6.1 4a,c; Figure 6.1). Such actions appear designed to imply several things. The pit and the stone are linked by the wall, thus reinforcing the relationship of significance between them already implied by the sunrise and sunset on Midsummer Day. This might have fostered an analogous relationship resting upon certain qualities of fire (or wood) and stone, and the qualities of sunrise and sunset respectively. Fire and the sun have a similar range of colours, and are both ephemeral in nature but perhaps more importantly in this present context, share properties of light giving and/or heat. Wood also can be seen to have analogous qualities with the sunrise since wood in the form of trees rises from the surface of the ground into the sky, like the sun. At the opposite end, stone is part of the earth, and frequently occurs below the surface of the ground, in darkness. By placing firewood and stone in these positions, the ritual specialists may have set up a way to understand the relationship between certain materials with the cosmos through the following series of oppositions:

light:dark::above:below:wood-fire:stone

The choice of MSSR instead of MWSR by the builders of Watch Hill deserves some comment, since it represents a deviation from the funerary practices observed elsewhere on the granite. It would be a mistake, I

believe to see this selection as in any way "invalidating" what appears to be a similar generative scheme operating across the granite relating to the significance and meaning of MWSR. Given the fact that these communities were probably operating within a series of temporal constraints relative to the natural occurrence of death, and moreover, mostly likely working within a remembered, intermittently realized and indeterminate tradition of belief, it should come as no surprise that its working out in practice should take a different and evolving form. Despite this however, it can be argued that the principal meaningful content of the tradition seems to have been maintained. This is also illustrated by the ledge positions in the ditch, which respect both the new MSSR orientation, yet refer to the MWSS position connected at Caerloggas Downs I at which time of the year offerings were made from the community to the ancestors. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the later deposits of stone, flints, and fruit may have served a similar function. Lastly, a similar plane of axial orientation was created as mourners dug the grave pit and laid the coffins at an orientation 10 degrees off the equinoctial sunrise/sunsets, as though signifying the condition of their kin relative to these points. Considered in the light of a funerary rite of passage, such an orientation (given the rich symbolic scheme already in operation might have implied that the dead were in a liminal zone between light and darkness, somewhere between fully above and fully below the horizon (or surface) and finally, between states of life and death.

This axial plane created by the builders of the site is intimately related via the dominant symbols of the stone arc, and the mourners ditch deposits, to a third plane of classification which could be described as **circumferal**. Recognized also at Cocksbarrow, this plane functioned to distinguish certain arcs of the circular circumference of the monument and horizon from one another, through a concern with the important axes noted above. As mentioned in Chapter 5,when standing inside or on the south side of the monument the outer cairn circle would appear to run along the portion of the horizon that was in darkness on Midsummer Day. Moreover, this arc was complemented by the discrete deposits of broken urn on and near sunrise and sunset positions between MSSR and MSSS (Figure 5.13.1), so that light and dark could potentially be contrasted and metaphorically related to ceramic and stone. Again, in the context of a funerary ritual, it is reasonable to suppose that qualities of living and deceased persons may have been also understood in these terms, given the respective positions of persons and stones in the landscape, and more particularly, if this was a pot from the deceased's household. The early activities at the site might therefore have encouraged the following set of conceptual classifications:

light:dark::living:dead (ceramic:stone)::above:below

A look at the second phase of the site reveals new attempts by the builders to make the ceremonies meaningful to observers, as both similar planes of experience were recreated and endowed with significance, and new devices were invented. The mound construction itself is illuminating in this respect. The dual rings of variously coloured bright subsoil and yellow kaolinized granite surrounding the mound appear to be attempts to renew the plane of **enclosure** separating the living and the dead, as now the mound burying the dead (instead of the space of the dead) was ringed with two layers of bright subsurface material, thus highlighting it, and perhaps reminding all present of the continuing separation of, (or relationship between) the dead and the living. Because these upper mound layers were also distinct in colour and origin, some attempt may simultaneously have been made to draw attention to their properties via their **stratigraphic** and **temporal** relationships within mound construction. For instance, the bright yellow-red cay ring was covered and followed by the final black gritty soil layer, in a stratigraphic and temporal technique that dually replaced and opposed **light** and/with **dark** (also observed at Caerloggas Downs I). The extent to which this act should be construed as signifying something definitive in terms of the status of the deceased individuals is debatable, as is the precise relationship between the colour values, their stratigraphic/vertical significance, and the relationship of these two qualities to the living/dead opposition clearly being forwarded at the site. As noted above, it is perhaps unwise to force the symbolic repertoire being highlighted at the site into a coherence not supported by the activities themselves. Nevertheless, given the generative schemes objectified at some of the other sites on the granite, it is clear that some aspect of these materials values and their location in the natural landscape was of some relevance for conceptualizing the status of the community and its deceased in this phase.

Some suggestion of the control or definition of time by the builders is also apparent in one of the final acts of the site, which opposed fire and/or wood to stone, as the stone that may originally have come from the MSSR hollow was replaced while the ditch was being unfilled. Again, in the context of a funerary ritual, certain qualities of each hollow material could have been easily related to the qualities of living and deceased persons (or any number of qualities of living beings and imagined ancestors, e.g. warm, vs. cold, pliable vs. hard, living in light vs. occupying a dark realm, etc.). The association of the pit with the midsummer sunrise does suggest that some attempt was being made to curtail the multivocality of these symbols towards qualities that were also shared or opposed by the sun, such as light, heat, and an ephemeral nature.

Finally, the later ditch "offerings", also appear to follow the axial logic which was established earlier at the site since, as noted above, they tended to cluster around alignments avoided in the earlier phase of ceramic deposition (MWSS, south-south-west, and north), perhaps indicating the significance of these alignments in terms of their overall character, and/or within the cycle of obligations between the community and its ancestors (Figures 5.13; 5.13.1). The above observations may be reduced to the following sets of homologous oppositions and analogies, each made possible by the creation of at least 5 planes of classification by the builders and specialists At Watch Hill.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Circumferal*	*Stratigraphy*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	MSSR/MSSS	pot/stone	**Phase II**	yellow subsoil-clay/
living/dead	wood-fire/stone	light/dark	subsoil- yellow clay/black grit	black soil
(north ~entrance)	light/dark		wood-fire/stone (ditch pit)	
	above/below			ceramics/later offer.
	pot~MWSR-south-MSSS			deceased/ancestor
	north-east/south-west (ledges)			
	light/dark			
	above/below			
	east/west (grave)			
	light/dark			
	life/death			
	Phase II			
	MWSS-north-south~fruit lithics, broken pebbles, wood			

Again, as noted several times in the above discussion, there is some suggestion that the Watch Hill community had a similar cosmology to that of its neighbors in the Early Bronze Age. For instance, the living

and the dead may have been perceived as operating in two separate worlds, which had a vertical relationship, and may have been understood in relation to the stratigraphy of the buried landscape, and a horizontal or axial plane of experience tied into the movements of the sun. The qualities of each of these worlds, and the beings within, may further have been understood in relation to qualities of fire, wood, and stone, such as light, heat, and an ephemeral or temporary nature (and their opposites). That this whole scheme was tied into a yearly seasonal/solar calendar which governed the activities of the community seems indisputable, since as noted in Chapter 5 and above, the importance of an obligatory midwinter transition for honoring the dead would also have served to symbolically unify the states of "being" brought so harshly into contrast by the death of these two people.

6.8.5 Trenance Downs and The Longstone

As mentioned in Chapter 5, Trenance Downs was thought the excavator to have been constructed at a somewhat later date than the sites already examined. This, and its separate location on the granite should explain in part some of the differences noted in the rituals enacted during its construction and use as noted in Chapter 5. Despite these differences however, a number of strong similarities in the sequence of activities and the symbols mobilized by builders and specialists lend support to an assertion that the potential cosmological scheme framing ritual activities and their meaning on the granite were reproduced without fundamental change from at least the Later Neolithic to the Middle Bronze Age. For example, the mourners, like their ancestors and relatives defined their ritual space by means of an enclosure bank, and further, established an important link between the inside and outside of this bank by means of a passage, through which individuals walked in order to erect the stones, create the small cavity, and dig the pit, thereby creating an **inside:outside** opposition. Again, the absence of human remains on the site makes it difficult to be certain whether this pair of oppositions may have been linked to some notion of living and deceased as on other sites. The importance of the transition between these two spaces or worlds however, is evidenced by the unusually long entrance passage, which, by its orientation (for a person standing inside the enclosure facing out along the passage) also gave the circular construction a dominant axis on the MSSR (Figure 5.14; Figure 6.1, Table 6.1). Also in an **axial** fashion the builders set up two opposed smears of white kaolinized granite on the south-west and north-east interior walls

of the monument (which were, moreover, carefully finished) implying the site and these orientations were meant to be experienced from the inside. Standing inside the monument facing the entrance, a person could turn to the left, and see, at the other end of the enclosed space, the stone orthostat and its surrounding stones, which had been set up on a northerly orientation (like the blocked door and later deposits at Watch Hill)(Figure 6.1; Table 6.1). This may have served to oppose the MSSR orientation (and the sun) to these materials at this orientation, which of course, is outside the sun's path above the horizon. This may have encouraged a **light:dark::sun:stone::above:below** series of opposed terms for the group participating in activities at Trenance Downs, given the fact that the sun is also below the horizon as it moves from sunset to sunrise around midsummer. The white quartz (lines and piles), which the builders deliberately incorporated into the darker cairn material during its construction, might also have focused attention towards the contrast between light and dark values. Additionally, the importance of stone to the rituals on the site is evidenced not only by its incorporation in the site's construction, but also by the fact that as the mourners were filling in the interior with soil (thus blocking the entrance passage) they deposited a large number and variety of stone artifacts (Appendix 3), implying that stone also took on meaning in some **temporal** plane of classification on the site, in a similar manner to the gritty black soil. Give the above, it may be possible to diagram the logic of perception objectified at the site of Trenance Downs in the following manner:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
? living/dead	MSSR/North	granite-brown black soil/black gritty soil	sun/stone
outside/inside	sun/stone		
	light/dark		
	? Above/below		

As noted above it is difficult to speak with confidence about the particular message the participants took away with them from Trenance Downs without having some definitive idea about the rationale for the creation of the site. If it was funerary in nature, then the mourners might have been encouraged to reflect upon the changing status of their deceased kinsperson in light of the oppositional relationships between sun and stone. Clearly, the existence of two spaces and perhaps "worlds" of living and dead would appear to have been

envisioned, with an emphasis on the world of the dead being a dark place somewhere below the horizon (and symbolically, to the north). In this context, the association of stone with death, or at least, the new status for the deceased, is clear.

Given the above site reviews, certain actions at The Longstone become more understandable, such as the replacement of the wooden post by the stone (perhaps indicating a new permanent status for the deceased (perhaps as ancestor) after a given period of time. The east-west orientation of the grave and the menhir/orthostat also make sense in this light, given that in general, western and northern orientations appear to have been generally associated with stone, the descent of the sun below the horizon and presumably, death, while eastern orientations suggest life, and an existence above the horizon. Further, the white pebbles accompanying the grave indicate the perceived new or developing status of the deceased. The above can be reduced to the following two planes of classification and related oppositions:

Axial	*Temporal*
east/west	
sunrise/sunset	wood /stone
stone/grave	temporary/permanent

6.8.6 The St. Austell granite cemetery reviewed

While not every action of the St. Austell communities can, or should be compared with every other, there is some sense that each community was operating within a very similar view of the world, the relationship of living and deceased persons in it, and the construction of the cosmos generally. It seems likely that the living and the dead were perceived by many of the communities as occupying separate worlds, both conceptually, and vertically. Each of these worlds, moreover, and the beings that dwelled within them were believed to have different characteristics, many of which could be understood by reference to natural organic and inorganic materials in the landscape. The existence of these vertical worlds may have been easily observed for these groups in the stratigraphy of the buried landscape, which in turn, was most likely given significance ritually in line with this construction. This belief in the existence of dual worlds can be seen to have incorporated a

horizontal plane of experience, (where communities who watched the sun rise and set around the horizon conferred meaning on various directions and arcs) as well as a temporal one, (evidenced by the repeating solar cycle of increase and decrease which evidently framed their actions to some extent). A strong belief in the interconnectedness of these various perceptual worlds seems undeniable since mourners consistently first: sought to juxtapose the materials and symbols associated with each, often reversing them, second, delayed the times of ceremony to coincide with important solstial or equinoctial events, and third, framed the same events themselves through monument construction and human action. Indeed, many of the funerary sites on the granite appear entirely focused upon facilitating and/or recognizing this change or passage from one or more of these worlds to another, since by such means, death and life could be understood and more importantly, mediated.

6.9 Tregulland

In a fashion similar to the builders of other several other Beaker/Food Vessel sites in Cornwall (e.g. Trelen 2, Carvinak), the creators of the site of Tregulland used at least three separate elements of enclosure to frame the burials and related pit activities. The first was the triple stake ring, which I have suggested also operated to create a concentric division of space on the site (see below) (Figures 5.24 and 5.24.1). The second was the cairn -soil enclosure, and the third was the ditch. All three features functioned at different times to both create an inner space (or a series of inner spaces) to the site, and separate the living from it, thus creating a spatial and perhaps conceptual opposition between the living mourners and the cremations and related activities, effectively setting up a **living:dead::outside:inside** pair of opposed themes.

Also at Tregulland, a more complex classification of circular space was also in operation, which went beyond a simple inside:outside enclosure principle. As noted in Chapter 5, the initial triple stake ring may have served to structure the location of the burials, and the ritual pit, in relation to each other in terms of their sense of importance, or significance, or time of creation, according to some principal which placed relative values upon the space between each **concentric** circle. It was also noted that the form of the cairn ring and related ditch enclosures may have extended this classification scheme through the various qualities of the materials

employed, such as stone, turf, soil, clay and slate, yellow clay, and water. There is certainly some indication from the site report that the mourners isolated a number of separate materials from the ditch and placed them in particular positions within the bank during its construction. As noted in Chapter 5, this may have led to the creation of a three-part concentric enclosure of turf, yellow clay-subsoil-slate, and water (from the ditch). There is also some indication, based upon their use, that more than one quality of each was instrumental in the choice of the design. Briefly, the materials could have been seen to variously contrast both in colour (the yellow clay or outer buttress would have contrasted in value and hue with the loam and turf of the inner and upper buttress, and the water in the ditch may have seemed lighter still, or brighter, as it reflected the sun, or a cloud-filled sky), and texture or consistency (the cairn material was distinct from its inner and upper turf buttress, which was again distinct from the clay, slate, and yellow clay outer buttress). All, moreover, had a distinct **stratigraphic** origin in the landscape. For example, the main cairn buttress materials were obtained from different vertical levels of the ditch (higher and lower), while the water would have been most likely perceived as emanating from deeper underground as it seeped into the ditch, or alternatively, as emerging from underground at a local spring. There is some indication that either, or all of these qualities may have been used by the sites builders to oppose, or relate the enclosure components with one another. It is difficult to be sure exactly what sorts of schemes might have been created by this concentric device, but, as at Trelen 2, some principal of light and dark, hardness, or some sense of verticality may have been intended. At the very least, some awareness of the difference in the qualities of these materials was most likely achieved by the assembled mourners at the site. The importance of, in particular, the vertical or stratigraphic position of the signifying materials to this community seems supported by the dual burial of the site below the mound and outer capping, and the earlier, careful burying of the outer cremation and the ritual pit by mourners, who carefully replaced the turves to render their activities almost invisible below the ground surface.

Though not further followed up in the later history of the site, by orienting the central grave directly between the equinoctial sunrise and sunset positions, funerary specialists also created an east/west **axis** to the site and placed the deceased in a liminal position in relation to it. By this act, it would have become possible to define the deceased in terms of its liminal location between the qualities of these two alignments (see below).

Finally, the temporal progression of constructional changes and related activities on the site strongly indicates that the builders and specialists made use of a **temporal** plane of classification to further structure

perception of the site, and the rite. To briefly recount, the wooden stake circles were clearly meant to be temporary and there is a strong indication that, at the very least, the innermost and the outermost circles were withdrawn when the cairn, buttresses, and ditch were created. In a temporal way then, the wood was temporary, and was replaced by other materials like stone, subsoil and turf. Further, the smashing of the Food Vessel in the cairn's interior was followed immediately afterwards by the raising of the turf mound over the site. As at Carvinak, and Trelen 2, (sites both of broadly similar age to Tregulland) it is instructive to consider the similar nature of these two early items of material culture in relation to the qualities of the materials that replaced them. Trees and clay could both be seen as once being part of the buried landscape, but also existing mainly in a realm above it as trees, and posts, and pots. Both are also short lived in comparison to other more eternal materials. Turf, subsoil, slate, and water are all part of, or originate from the ground, and would have appeared ever-present, thus contrasting with the earlier items. In character, and through ritual action them, a dual opposition may have been set up between things **temporary** and things **permanent**, and things **above** and **below** the ground surface. Such a scheme would also explain the choice of a cairn ring to cover and encircle the dead, and the final mound cap of deeply buried subsoil and stone from the ditch. The above suggestions for perceptual schemes forwarded at Tregulland may be combined in a series of 5 columns, corresponding to 5 planes of classification which I have suggested were set up at the site in order to frame perception.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Concentric*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	E/W	turf/clay-slate/water	softer/harder	Wood/stone-turf-clay-slate
dead/living	light/dark		above/below	Pot/turf mound
	above/below		darker/lighter	

The kinds of understandings that were created as a result of observation and participation at Tregulland might now be suggested. In the context of an obvious funerary ritual the stratigraphic location of the mourners in relation to the dead, indicates some belief in the existence of two vertical locations, one above the ground and one below it, which were seen as reserved for the living and the dead respectively. Living human beings may have been related by analogy to wood and ceramics, and seen in their living state as temporary, and in death more permanent. During the burial rite, the balance between these two series of states was shifted, as the

deceased (through a metaphorical relationship with the changing monument itself) moved from one to the other. The alignment of the central burial on a dominant solstial alignment might have indicated that for part of the ritual, this person lay between the dual states or qualities represented by the sunrise and sunset, perhaps in a zone of transition between the vertical "worlds" above and below the horizon, between light and darkness.

6.10 Sunrise on Davidstow Moor

In the previous chapter, I suggested that on Davidstow Moor, it was possible to trace out the reproduction of a long-lived, fairly coherent tradition of knowledge exemplified through the use of a common yellow ring theme and attention towards similar solstial events or orientations. It remains to be seen however, just what set of conceptions about the deceased and the cosmos were being reproduced and changed at the sites in question through the use of these particular symbolic media. As on the St. Austell Granite, a closer look at the range of symbolic media available to the mourners on the sites reveals the use, not only of mound materials as signifiers, but also the actions of the mourners themselves, the sun, and its passage around and above and below the horizon.

6.10.1 Davidstow Moor XXVI

Beginning with the earlier sites, although Davidstow Moor XXVI was the focus for much activity for a long period of time, it is the Beaker activities that are most useful to examine here. As noted in Chapter 5, these probably comprise the construction and related activities involving the pit ring, the cairn, and some of the central aligned features. Considered in detail these actions suggest that the creation of these structural features, the actions of the participants in relation to them, and the timing of these actions all involved the use of particular symbols (both physical and ephemeral) which served to create a number of distinct spatial and temporal conceptual planes, which in turn, produced and reproduced a taxonomic scheme specific to the rite of passage being practiced at the site. The first of these planes was established by the construction of the original post or stone ring, with its south-western entrance allowing the mourners (and/or) specialists entrance and egress. This created a defined interior space, or enclosure, (in which ritual activities to do with the deposition of

dead were conducted) and opposed it to the world outside, creating an **inside/deceased :: outside/living** dichotomy.

This circular space was also oriented by the builders (by the west-south-west post entrance between holes entrance **and** the opposed eastern pair of stakes/stones) to respect two axes. In the spring, the eastern axis would have respected a sunrise date just after the spring equinox. In the autumn, the axis would have respected a sunrise date just before the autumnal equinox. The western axis, or enclosure entrance would have been aligned upon a spring sunset position just before the equinox position, while in autumn, the sun would set through this entrance just after the equinox (Figure 5.18; Table 6.1, 8b,c; Figure 6.1, 8b,c). The creation of these gateways I suggest, set up a second **axial** plane, based upon a spatial dichotomy between sunrise and sunset, possibly, bringing the fundamental qualities of each into an opposed homology of **light/above horizon :: darkness/below horizon** within which an understanding of the rite as a whole could commence. Within this same "plane", the activities within the enclosure were then later, and further oriented by the alignment of the interior features, and the lighting of the fire some 3-4 degrees from the point of the midwinter sunrise, which served to powerfully relate both the rituals involving burial, and the lighting of a fire, to this particular direction or event marking the beginning/end of the solar cycle. While the lighting of fires are not uncommon on Beaker sites, the position of this fire at the ring edge, and close to the horizon position of the sunrise appears designed to create a thought-provoking relationship between the two. Fire and sun (particularly at its rising) share many analogous qualities. In particular– there is a similarity of colour (reds, oranges and yellows), the properties of heat and light (particularity in the cold darkness of midwinter), and finally both are physically ephemeral in nature. The majority of the activities at the site's interior then, were conducted with reference to this event, which was further defined through the means of an analogy stressing qualities of light, heat, and bright/warm colours.

Interestingly, in addition to creating an analogy between fire and sun/sunrise at this position, the builders also opposed this location to the pre-equinoctial sunset in the later phase of the monument, indicating the existence of a third, **temporal** plane of classification at the site. Recalling the history of events noted in Appendix 3 and Chapter 5, when the cairn ring was constructed, an opening was left at the original sunset "gateway" position, but the fire site was covered by the stone cairn ring and a deliberate wall facing was created within it at the old fire/midwinter sunrise point. It was therefore, not only **spatially** that the mourners opposed

two sunrise and sunset positions of the monument, but it was also **temporally**, as one phase of the rites to do with the deceased ended, and another began. During the life-crises ceremonies at Davidstow XXVI, it appears the light and heat of the sunrise alignment was being opposed, and eventually succeeded, by the darkness and chill of the sunset. Such an opposition in this ritual context might have created a clear metaphorical link between the life, death and burial of the deceased individuals (and their lives as living persons), and the qualities and movement of the sun. Further, as noted in Chapter 5, it exemplifies how in ritual, things at a human scale may be understood through their deliberate relation to events at the level of the cosmic, or sacred.

Considering the above discussion, a generative taxonomy that both informed and was reproduced by the various actions at the site can be suggested:

inside:outside::death/dead:life/living::dark:light::cold:warm::above:below

It is important to stress when considering this taxonomy, that while the relation between the oppositions to the left and to the right of the death:life opposition can be **theoretically** extrapolated from the analysis above, it was probably not explicitly formulated by the builders of the site.

The deliberate "closure" of one axis and the continued use of another suggests that it might be possible to see that a distinct temporal plane of classification was being created at the site through the actions of the mourners in another way. This can be supported by the observation that a possibly wooden post enclosure was **replaced** by a stone cairn at some point in the monument's history. As noted in Chapter 5 and Appendix 3, the cairn construction was accompanied by the deliberate deposition of a number of holed, cup-marked or trimmed slates offerings (Figure 5.18.1), as though reinforcing the point that the latter phase of the funerary ritual, and perhaps the changing status of the deceased, was intended to be understood in reference to the properties or attributes of stone (as opposed to wood, if this was the material removed from the holes before the cairn construction). If this is the case, the properties of these materials in terms of their position in the landscape (wood/above:stone/below), their compactness/pliability (wood/soft:stone/hard), and their temporary vs. permanent nature could be seen to have formed part of the same general and generative scheme by which the Davidstow Moor Beaker community conceptualized themselves, life, death and perhaps their ancestors.

Following the remark made above, in this case it is also debatable whether the shift of focus from the sunrise to the sunset axis (accomplished through the cairn construction with its maintained south-western entrance) was clearly understood by the participants to be connected with a **temporal** shift at the site from a

post/stone circle to stone cairn ring. Did they for example, equate in some way the later activities involving the cremation tampering in the central pit with the meanings and attributes exclusive to the sunset discussed above, as suggested for Caerloggas Downs I and Watch Hill, and was early autumn the time to honor the ancestors, or the newly dead at Davidstow? Whatever the answer to these questions, actions of the mourners in these two separate planes of meaning created on the site represent a good example of how linkages in the past might have been made between two separate parts of a wider tradition of knowledge represented by the temporal and spatial planes of classification at Davidstow XXVI.

The above discussion may be represented in shorter form by the following sets of equivalent oppositions:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	sunrise/sunset	?wood/stone
dead/living	light/darkness	
	above/below	MWSR/late winter SS
	(MWSR~fire)	light/dark
	MWSR/late winter SS	fire/stone

Considered within the purpose of a life-crisis ritual, the actions of the builders and the participants with respect to the symbolic media visible at Davidstow Moor XXVI appear to indicate some conception that, in his or her final state, an individual is related somehow to stone (stones are given as offering to the deceased at the site, and stone forms the final enclosure material), which exists partly or entirely below the ground, in darkness (where eventually, the remains of the deceased are placed). This rather terminal classification however, is counterbalanced in the earlier portion of the rite by the strong emphasis on the sun, its light, and heat, and its appearance above the horizon at the beginning of the solar cycle, indicating perhaps that an individual while living is another thing entirely, both in character, and in the vertical space it occupies. An important and necessary connection, or link between these two physical /corporeal and spatial modes of being is exemplified by the sun itself, which would have appeared to an observer to live in the worlds both above and below the

horizon, and whose transition between them is heavily emphasized during the rite of passage through a focus upon the axial alignments. As noted in Chapter 5, the attention towards the MWSR and the timeless cycle of sunrise/sunset may have been devices designed to deny the finality and rupture of death for this particular community and the deceased individuals it placed within the site.

The characteristics of the scheme of perception that was temporarily objectified through the rituals at Davidstow XXVI has some interpretative value when addressing the generally contemporary Beaker activities at Davidstow III.

6.10.2 Davidstow Moor III

As at Site XXVI, it is possible to see how the creation of the monument, and the actions within it, set up a number of ways to present the meaning content of the rite. During the course of the ceremonies at Davidstow III, two major activities served to divide the ritual space into opposed zones. The first was the construction of the clay blocking-mound across the wide eastern entrance to the enclosure, creating an outside and inside spatial division. The second was the probable transferal of the remains of the deceased to their final resting - place by the mourners to the interior of the site **after** its construction through the entrance passage (Figure 5.19). By these actions, an opposition was set up between the outside of the site (which was filled with members of the community), and the inside of the site, which became, with the addition of the cremation, associated with the deceased. This opposition, represented here as **living:dead::outside:inside**, was also created (though somewhat differently) at Davidstow XXVI.

The threshold between these two spatial places is of some significance. It was first embellished by a spread of colourful clays and then more formerly defined as a south-eastern passage in and out of the enclosure by the creation of the blocking mound (Appendix 3; Figure 5.19). As such, this entrance (embellished with the yellow, red, and orange subsoil) can be perceived to have functioned as an important condensing "bipolar" (after Turner 1967:28) threshold symbol for the community, linking the **spatial** transition (in:out) with the **conceptual** one (life:death). Further, the gap plays another role in another solar classification plane on the site within which much of the meaningful content of the ritual may be interpreted. The group of symbols used by

the builders/ directors in this instance was the morphology of the entrance itself, its general orientation towards the location of the midwinter sunrise, the sun, the red, yellow and white clay subsoil spread within the entrance, and the transferal of the deceased into the enclosure by the mourners at this position. First, it is interesting that the mourners deliberately chose the south-east end of the original wider bank opening to create an entrance passage since, as noted in Chapter 5, its nearness to the point of the MWSR relates the burial of the deceased in the ritual to the rising of the midwinter sun at a certain alignment or **axis** on a conceptualized circular horizon plane (Table/Figure 6.1). Further, the unique morphology of this general sunrise entrance, I would argue, was deliberate, and designed to create a narrow **passage** through which the remains of the deceased would have to travel in the interment ritual. With such a construction in this particular location, the establishment of an analogous relationship between this solstial event/transition and the passage/transition of birth seems probable, particularly since the midwinter sunrise (as noted above) falls at the **beginning** the solar cycle. Additionally, the spreading of white, yellow and burned red clay subsoil across the entrance may have served to meaningfully augment this relationship between the entrance and the sun, and further define/reproduce the meanings of this earthen symbol. Placing the coloured subsoils in this location, I suggest, emphasized an analogous relationship between these materials and the event/concept of the sun's rising, and indeed, the sun itself. During its rise and movement across the sky, the sun displays a spectrum of bright colors including red, yellow and white – the same colors observed in the burned and natural clay subsoil. The coloured suboils then assume a powerful bipolar symbolic role, linking the physical or everyday, with the sacred. By creating and elaborating an axial plain in this fashion, the builders of Davidstow III may have been crafting (and presumably reproducing) a powerful generative scheme directed around the sun, which made general links between the following: the sun-coloured clay subsoil and **human birth /solstial beginning**, the appearance of the sun's **light or brightness** at a certain point along the horizon, and, its rise at that position **above** the horizon (to where the living dwell). Significantly, the subsoil in the entrance was, of course, obtained from a position **below** the surface, and placed in an **above-ground** context, replicating the movement of the sun from below, to above the horizon. Significantly, the small bundle of carefully selected cremated materials, by contrast, went in the opposite direction, going below the ground under a small turf mound. By these varied actions a simple generative scheme may have been created at Davidstow III, which lent significance to the funerary proceedings:

above:below::living-birth:dead-death::light/darkness

In light of this, the significance of the yellow clay-turf bank construction may now be addressed. All the yellow ring banks on Davidstow Moor had an identical construction, which consisted of an interior turf core covered by a yellow subsoil cap. This had two important consequences. First, by creating the banks in this fashion, the mourners could have simultaneously drawn attention to the differences between these two materials (turf and subsoil) by artfully reversing their natural position, creating in effect a string of homologous oppositions based on their opposed qualities, which can be depicted as **dark:light::turf:yellow clay::above:below.** I would argue that through this particular construction, the specialists on the sites were creating yet another classification plane to frame the meaning of the rituals which could be described as **stratigraphic**, or vertical in nature, since it drew particular attention towards, or manipulated, the normal vertical relationship between materials natural to the surface and buried landscape.[5] Second, the creation of the bank on Davidstow III produced a bright yellow ring that framed the activities taking place within in, in much the same way that the sun itself around the horizon framed the world of the living. Through this skillful manipulation of soil as a material culture symbol, the builders of Davidstow III created an *imago mundi* (Eliade 1952:58) - a miniature universe that served to link the substance of the funerary ritual with the larger functioning and structure of the cosmos itself. I will return to this below. In light of the above, the scheme of perception fostered at Davidstow III above may be abbreviated by the following:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphy*
inside/outside	MWSR~coloured clay	turf/yellow clay
dead/living		above/below (reversed)

Before considering the consequences of such constructions for the mourner's perception of the activities at the site, some additional remarks about the entrance passage are required. Given the three planes of classification above, and the remarks made earlier about the entrance passage's existence in two poles of significance (the spatial and the cosmic), the entrance passage at Davidstow Moor III should perhaps be understood as a dominant symbol linking all the classificatory schemes at the site. As noted above, the entrance passage connects the real space and created "world" of the living with the real space and created "world" of the dead. Through its morphology, orientation and colourful elaboration, it connects the plane of enclosure to the

axial plane. Here, the entrance passage forms a physical analogy for birth, and forms the passageway for a rite of death, and lies near an important two-fold cosmic transition between darkness and light and the beginning and ending of the solar year. Its colourful, ornamented character also draws attention to the vertical or stratigraphic relationship between turf and subsoil, which naturally mimics the sun's dual position above and below the surface of the ground. By using the coloured clays near the midwinter sunrise location, in the passageway between the realm of the living and the dead, the analogous qualities of sun and the coloured subsoil seem meant to have furthered a metaphorical relationship between the passage of the deceased between the physical and conceptual spaces and worlds of living and dead, and the passage of the sun between two cosmic planes. With just a few symbols then, the builders and specialists at Davidstow III appear to have potentially created (and defined for observers) the relationships between several cosmological states of being and space/time.

Considered within the context of a life-crisis ceremony then, for the mourners at Site III, birth and death, living and dying, and living and deceased persons were meant to have been understood in relation to the qualities of and movement of the sun, and moreover, its corporeal reality in the surface and buried landscape represented by the yellow clay in its natural and reversed positions. Again, as at Site XXVI, it appears that the deceased was perhaps constructed/imagined as belonging in a dark world of the dead, which lies below the horizon, while the living by contrast, from their birth, occupy a separate space, filled with light. If indeed the delay in the final interment of the deceased was timed to perhaps coincide with the important solstial event of MWSR, the mourners may have been able even more strongly to reflect upon what may have been important perceptual connections between birth and death. As noted in Chapter 5, the establishment of these connections may have been a powerful unifying force against the rupturing power of this individual's death in the community.

6.10.3 Davidstow Moor V

Although Davidstow Moor V may slightly post-dates the activities at the two early sites by a number of years based upon the 1-sigma radiocarbon assays (Table 5.1) (and the presence of a Collard vessel as

opposed to a Beaker vessel) it is possible to see the reinvention of the same local tradition of knowledge at this site (albeit in a new and novel way) though the manipulation of a similar series of symbols. These were: the sun and its passage around, above, and below the horizon, the yellow clay subsoil, stone, fire, wood, and pottery. At the site, the eastern activities involving the wood posts, charcoal, and urn burial were all conducted within 15 degrees of the point of the MWSR. If the urn burial is omitted, the remainder of the south-eastern activities cluster within 7 degrees of this alignment. Opposing this group, as noted in Chapter 5, the mourners set an arc of upright stones into the mound (and presumably somewhere nearby the large fallen stone which made up part of the barrow kerb). This row spans an arc of some 32 degrees, with a midpoint that lies 5 degrees from the point of the midsummer sunset (Table 6.1, Figure 6.1, 10a,b). By their actions, the builders may have been attempting to create an **axial** plane of classification, within which a series of homologous oppositions could be set up centering on the relationship between MWSR and MSSS, which can be depicted as: **MWSR~fire~wood~ceramic urn::MSSS~stone**. Perhaps not surprisingly, the symbolic significata used by the mourners in the south-east can be seen to have a number of shared characteristics in their unburned states, which are not found in stone, such as moistness, and pliability, or in the case of fire, heat, and an ephemeral nature. Stone, by contrast is already hard, has a physical form, and does not burn, or give off light and heat. Further, by deliberately relating the qualities of these materials to the particular characteristics of the MWSR and MSSS, the funerary specialists were also in a position to connect these qualities or states of being with the qualities and activities of the sun in the wider cosmos. Such a perceptual scheme could be represented by the following set of oppositions, with varying strengths of relationship between the oppositions to the left and to the right of the central sunrise/sunset pair:

wood~ceramic~fire:stone::MWSR:MSSS::above:below::light:dark

In this way, a powerful, yet overdetermined/indetermined scheme for reading the ritual practices on the site could have been created (as Bourdieu 1977: 111 notes for other similar schemes), as various aspects of each symbol might have been brought into a series of relationships with each of its opposed items. For example, wooden posts like the ones erected on the site came from wooden tree trunks. Living trees, and the wood from them are pliable, and moist, and exist primarily above the ground surface, in the light. There is also some support for believing there to have been some ritual attention towards the contrastive properties of light and

dark values, in that another contrast between darkness and lightness was accentuated in the central pit below the mound, as charcoal and white clay were juxtaposed in the fill.

Returning to the south-eastern feature complex, it is interesting to note that the items used in the south-eastern rituals undergo a similar transformation of their qualities, through fire/burning, to the human body. Soft wet clay is fashioned into a pot and hardened/burnt in the pyre, while wood, as noted above, is moist and pliable, and when consumed in the fire, leaves charred, brittle remains and ashes. In each case, the process of burning renders wood, clay and human body dry, hard, and brittle.[6] The qualities of stone both oppose these materials in their unburned state, and parallel them in their burned state, suggesting first, that something about this transformation was highly significant to the community of mourners at Davidstow V, and second, that the mourners were being provided with a means of conceptualizing the characteristics (living and deceased), of themselves and their deceased kin. I will return to this in a moment.

If an axial plane was created on the site, it remains to be seen just what other devices were employed by the builders to give meaning and significance to their activities. It may well be the case that the act of covering the central pit, as well as the eastern activities later with the mound/buttress effectively set up a relationship between the mourners themselves, and the remains of the fire, wood, cairn and pot (which they also buried). Further, as noted in Chapter 5, by encircling the mound with a cairn circle and outer yellow "ring" buttress, the mourners were reinventing the same principal of **enclosure** seen earlier in the cemetery. The body of the mound at Davidstow V thus simultaneously separated the worlds of the living and the dead in both a circular, and **stratigraphic** way, as the living were separated from the mound both horizontally and vertically, since after the site was completed they would have walked on the surface of the land above the ground, and on and around the mound which contained the remains of all the earlier activities. The above observations can now be combined into the following series of columns:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphic*
within/without	above/below	above/below (mound/turf)
dead/living	light/darkness	living/dead
	MWSR/MSSS	
	wood-fire-ceramic/stone	

impermanent/permanent

soft-pliable/hard

What form might the knowledge imparted to the mourners by their observations and activities have taken? Again, as at Davidstow III, the mourners were clearly being provoked into a consideration of the connections between the human and cosmic worlds. In the axial plane, humans while alive might have been seen to be like wood, or clay – that is: soft and pliable, and existing on the earth's surface, in the light. In both the axial and stratigraphic planes, as deceased beings, they undergo a process of drying and hardening, becoming like stone, and belong not among the living, but instead in an opposed place below the ground. The interconnection between these two worlds is evidenced by the rising and setting of the sun and its yearly path in a real, observable way, as the sun appears and disappears above and below the ground surface. Finally, in a more powerful way than at Davidstow III, the opposed MWSR and MSSS axial alignments may have served to offset the rupture and finality of death by situating it between **both** poles of the solar calendar, thus ensuring some message of renewal, or unity.

6.10.4 Davidstow Moor I

As noted in Chapter 5, the builders of Davidstow Moor I also practiced what appears as a creative remembering, whereby they drew together a traditional repertoire of ritual symbols (fire, yellow ring, wooden posts, sun) in new yet familiar ways, thereby reinventing the tradition of knowledge objectified throughout the cemeteries use from the third millennium. This was accomplished in several ways, and created an extension of the meaningful schemes that comprised it into the Early Bronze Age. First, it seems obvious that several actions were designed to lead the mourners towards a consideration of contrasting coloured and stratigraphic soil relationships. The fills, cap and mound layers over the central hollow for example, were created by repeated, alternating bands of white clay and dark turf, which served to contrast these colour values (dark vs. light) and draw attention to their stratigraphic relationship (above/below/above/below)(Appendix 3). Further,

by the initial creation of the yellow stripped ring, the specialists drew attention to the presence of the yellow clay subsoil **below** the ground surface (Figure 5.22.1). Both of these activities I would argue, set up a series of oppositional **stratigraphic** relationships between what was above and what was below, and what was dark, and what was light. This sequence in the central hollow fill was repeated in the covering mound, suggesting some ambiguity or reversal between the light and dark values of these materials.

The creation of the initial yellow ring (as well as the subsequent stake ring) could be argued to have served another purpose, which was to divide the site into an interior and exterior space, with the interior reserved mainly for the remains of the dead. This set up a plane of enclosure, and a related pair of homologous oppositions defined by the terms **living:dead::outside:inside**.

The site's signifying properties were further complicated by the construction of the stake circle and its opposed extra stakes, and features (Figure 5.22). As noted in Chapter 5, the south edge of the stake enclosure entrance containing the burning post aligned onto the rising midwinter sun, which was anticipated by the burning of the aforementioned post just 10 degrees to its north (Table 6.1; Figure 6.1). In a similar fashion, the extra stakes of the ring in the north-west opposed this alignment, and considered as a group, spanned an arc of some 7 degrees leading up to the setting of the midsummer sun, as though anticipating this position as well (Figure 5.22; Table 6.1; Figure 6.1). It appears then, that the builders of the site were not only planning their ceremonies at the site to coincide with one of both of these events, but also opposing them, and relating the sunrise to the symbol of fire, with which it shares a number of features, as noted above. This created in effect an **axial** plane of classification across the site that potentially opposed and related a number of symbols. If one considers the solstial alignments alone, then each contrasts the coming of light with the onset of darkness, as the sun rises and sets above and below the horizon. Added to this is the association of the MWSR with fire, and heat. These relationships may be represented here as **dark:light::below:above:cold:warm**.

Finally, as noted in Chapter 5, the wooden stake circle was a temporary enclosure only, and was later removed to make way for the construction of the mound. By this act, a new **temporal** phase of the ritual as a whole was initiated as wood was replaced by turf and later soil in a procedure that also buried the cremated remains of the deceased individuals below the ground. Such a replacement, considering the contrasting properties of the two materials (one belonging to the earth, the other extending above it), might have been viewed as a replacement of something normally above the ground by the earth itself in terms of a temporal

above:below relationship. Considering the above remarks together then, the means by which the sites builders gave meaning to the activities at Davidstow I may be represented by the following series of classificatory schemes and oppositional qualities:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	MWSR/MSSS	turf/yellow clay	wood/turf
dead/living	dark/light	turf/white clay	above/below
	above/below	dark/light	
	MWSR~fire	above/below	
	warm/cold	(reversed)	

Although each of these "planes" appears independently created on the site, the links between the stratigraphic and enclosure planes appear obvious, especially since the yellow ring on the site acted both to reveal the lower yellow subsoil, and initially to separate the ritual sphere from the surrounding landscape in a manner similar to the other subsoil rings in the cemetery. The ability of the mourners to appreciate the dual significance of the ring (and by extension, a larger portion of the symbolic system in use) is plausible, since the dual signifying properties (stratigraphic and enclosure) of the circular yellow ring were accentuated at other sites in the cemetery throughout its history.

What sort of messages might the funerary participants have taken away with them after the close of this rite of passage? As suggested for the other sites, if the deceased's life was equated in some sense with the temporal and physical movements of the sun, then given the particular symbols mobilized and juxtaposed on the site it may have been possible to conceive of a person's life as moving from a beginning into light, and warmth, and ending in a place of cold and darkness underground. Further, living persons may have been equated in some way with trees in that they occupied the same vertical space, which was separate from the dead. Finally, as in the case of other earlier communities on Davidstow Moor, the analogies being drawn between the movements of the sun and the stratigraphy of the buried landscape may have reinforced the impression of close ties between the states of living and death for persons by metaphorically relating them to the dual nature of (above:below/below:above::light:dark/dark:light) and passage between, the physical/cosmic world.

6.10.5 Davidstow Moor overview

A number of the above comments may be brought together in an overview of the tradition of knowledge objectified and reproduced at Davidstow Moor between the later third and mid second millennium. What appears to the observer is a long history of ritual discourse linking the relation between life and death to the repetitive movements and ever-present nature of the sun. It is possible to argue that the sun was referenced in a number of different though related ways by the sites' builders through time. As noted in Chapter 5, the recurrent yellow ring in its many different forms unites much of the cemetery and its temporal use is not consistently constrained to any one portion of any rite. Rather, as constructed or created in Sites XXVI, III, V and I (and by extension II, IV, VII), it acted more as a symbolic framing device for activities or objects contained within it. To this may be added the construction of the yellow banks themselves. As previously noted above, in Chapter 5 and in Appendix 3, the builders drew deliberate attention to the relationship between turf and yellow clay subsoil – sometimes mixing the two materials together to create a buttress or feature, or revealing the yellow subsoil below the turf by ditches and strips, and/or reversing their stratigraphy in the construction of the banks (which served to bring normally buried yellow material from below to the surface). Given their morphology and circular appearance, a strong case can be made that the yellow banks (and ditches) were designed to mimic the horizontal circular passage of the sun around the horizon and its repeated journey above and below it. The sites were meaningful in other related ways. The spatially constrained and timely use of wood, stone and fire during the rituals on the sites created, in effect, a series of perceptions about the organization (both sacred and profane) of the cosmos, as living persons were related by analogous qualities to wood and clay/ceramics, and their stratigraphic existence was defined and related in various ways to warmth and light. By contrast, the dead may have occupied another plane of existence altogether, and in dying, eventually took on another series of characteristics, which were metaphorically and stratigraphically defined (like stone, hard, permanent, of or below the ground).

Putting all this together, it may be possible to suggest that for the time represented by the funerary/ritual actions on the Moor, the communities of Davidstow perceived the cosmos in two ways. First, as

consisting of two vertical realms or worlds of existence – an upper one, characterized (variably) by light, heat, and living things, and a lower one below, in which could be found darkness, coldness, and the dead. These realms, while imaginary, or perhaps mythical, could also be evidenced in the real landscape via the natural stratigraphy. The passage between these two realms (which might have been perceived as permeable and intimately interconnected) was daily traversed by the sun, the evidence of which took physical form in the presence of the yellow clay subsoil. Another plane of existence, this time a horizontal one, also may have formed part of their cosmology. In this construction, the same attributes of living and deceased persons and worlds were related temporally with the sun's daily and yearly passage around the horizon, so that a variety of eastern orientations were related to human life and its varying qualities, while opposed orientations in the west were understood to be associated variably with death, deceased persons, the coming of darkness and so on. If this is the case, then it is clear that the sites themselves acted as imagined worlds (as noted above), which provided via the actions of the mourners, the means by which the daily and seasonally meetings of these two communities, and their perceived qualities could be controlled.

6.11 Other interpretative devices in Cornwall

Although not as definitive for the expressed purposes of interpretation, a number of other Cornish sites bear silent witness to attempts by their builders to structure perception and experience through a series of classificatory devices based upon movement, spatial orientation, and the qualities of particular symbolic significata. Several of these are notable for their builders attempts to use an **axial** principal to direct attention towards a significant solstial alignment, and then to relate that alignment by association to some other important feature in the rites, thus setting up an analogy capable of creating meaning. Others make more metaphorical use of the components of the buried landscape in mound construction, indicating a similar desire to connect the rite and define the mourners and deceased in relation to a series of principals that appeared to be objectified in the buried landscape.

At Try, the north/south orientation of the grave and the location of the burials to the east of the stone (Table 6.1; Figure 6.1) both indicate that some axial principal may have defined the relationship of the burials and the stone in relation to each other in light of the qualities of the sunrise and/or sunset. Orienting the grave

between a light and a dark part of the horizon where the sun was above or below the surface may also have made a statement about the then-current state of the deceased or the liminal qualities of humans generally.

At the site of St. Neot, on Bodmin Moor, the central grave was oriented towards a direction 2 degrees from the MWSS (Figure 6.1, 30 and Table 6.1), in an act which both established a dominant axis at the site, and placed the state or location of the deceased in a relationship of likeness to one or more of the qualities of this event.

At Stannon 2, the mourners dug a grave which they oriented some 14 degrees from a north-south orientation, so, like the sites above, they established some axial principal within which an image of (or current state of) the deceased could be compared with the qualities of the two solar-based alignments it lay between.

Finally, as noted in Chapter 5, the grave at Gwithian Site GM-V was aligned between the equinoctial sunrise and sunset positions (Table 6.1, 22 and Figure 6.1), again indicating that the nature or then-current state of the deceased might be understood as between, or liminal to the qualities of these alignments. Although tempting, it is probably unwise to attempt to be more precise about the meaningful content of the schemes created on these sites due to the lack of other, clear classificatory planes that were *clearly* linked to these via additional material culture. Similar examples exist for other sites, which demonstrate the creation of planes of **stratigraphy** or **time** within which oppositions and analogies might have been created.

For instance, Nancekuke's builders cut thick turves which had yellow clay subsoil adhering to them, and then inverted them in the construction of the mound, thus reversing the natural stratigraphy of the site in the mound overlying the grave and cremation/ritual fire, and drawing the colour and stratigraphic properties of the dark surface turf into an oppositional relationship with the lower brighter subsoil. During the months and years following the completion of the mound, mourners tossed a number of natural and humanly made stony objects into the ditch. The deposits of stone after the completion of the mound, as opposed to before, hints that a temporal division was possibly being made which opposed the state of the deceased before and after the completion of the first portion of the funerary rites, and connected its latter state to the qualities exhibited by the stone deposits, such as hardness, whiteness or shininess (see Appendix 3 for details of the ditch deposits). The builders of the site of Stannon I also inverted turves, bringing the local buried bright yellow subsoil to the surface.

At Lousey Barrow, mourners created, over the course of the funerary ritual, a stratified mound that incorporated three common elements of the buried landscape (slate, turf and subsoil). They first set up an association between the dead individuals and stone through the construction of a cairn and several orthostats, and then covered this cairn with a two-phase mound, which by its construction reversed the natural relationship between turf, and the local yellow stony subsoil. This act would have served simultaneously to highlight the different qualities of these materials (colour and texture/compactness), and to bring light coloured and stony materials to the surface, forming an dual opposition between things above and below, and things dark and things light.

Things dark and things light were also carefully contrasted at the sites of Treligga 1, and 7 as mourners encircled the burial areas with rings of white quartz, thus surrounding the dead with stone, separating the living and the dead, and highlighting the properties of quartz (its whiteness, translucence, or brilliance) in relation to the darker, duller gray slate which formed the remainder of the enclosures or mounds.

6.12 East Putford I

At the site of East Putford I, builders and ritual specialists created at least four separate, though linked, planes of classification within which the body, the passage of the sun (indirectly), and variously coloured items of the buried landscape were used as symbols to create a meaningful and successful rite of passage. The wooden structure that the mourners built to contain the body was aligned on a north/south axis (Figure 5.46; Table 6.1; Figure 6.1), which presumably was established by reference to one or more solstial or equinoctial events (e.g. the equinoctial rising and setting of the sun). This implies that this axis, and thus the orientation of the body were given some meaning in relation to the qualities of the sun, or its position in relation to the circular horizon at these two points. Along a southern orientation, the sun would have been perceived as above the horizon and giving light. At the northern orientation, the sun would have been perceived as still below the horizon, moving between a sunset position to a sunrise one, thus this orientation may have been associated with darkness. Aligning a newly deceased body between these two points may have enabled a generative scheme to

be set up which involved the opposed pairs of: **light:darkness::above:below::living:dead**, which further, implied some liminal state for the deceased between two worlds or states (see below).

The mourners also "played" with the natural stratigraphy of the site in their construction of the mound, which had a turf core that was subsequently covered by a light gray subsoil cap, obtained from the ditch. By this deliberate use of two separate earthen components, and their stratigraphic reversal (and presumably also through the excavation of the ditch itself), the differential qualities of the two major barrow components (turf and gray subsoil), and their natural relationship were highlighted. Two separate qualities or characteristics of these materials might have been seen to be opposed: their contrasting colour values of lighter and darker, and their stratigraphic positions one above the other. By the construction of the mound, then, opposed themes or values of **light** and **dark** were related to stratigraphic positions of **below** and **above**. Further, stratigraphically, the symbolic arrangement between the wooden burial hut, turf, and gray clay also constituted a reversal of the natural vertical order in which wood from trees overlay turf, which in turn overlay the subsoil. This may have strengthened the suggested scheme above. Finally, if some important homology existed between persons and wood for the East Putford community (based upon their similar qualities in relation to subsurface sediments), then the place and state of the deceased during the ritual may have been defined for the mourners in relation to it. This generative scheme that was created in a stratigraphic, or vertically defined plane was given additional significance in relation to the ceremony by the fact that the builders *timed* the addition of the mound cap to a period after which the interior wooden structure housing the deceased collapsed. In Chapter 5, I suggested that the collapse of the structure was a significant event in the progression of the funerary ritual since it might have implied a change in the status of the deceased, or, a change in the relationship between deceased and mourners. By tying the addition of the light gray subsoil cap to this change in status, a strong analogy may have been created between the new status of the deceased, and the qualities of the light gray clay (colour value, depth). Through this same waiting period, a temporal relationship may also have been set up between the wooden hut over the burial, and the subsequent mound layers. The importance of wood in relation to the deceased was clearly temporary, since it was later visibly "replaced" by turf encasement, and later, when the structure itself collapsed, by a gray clay shell. A series of variously linked pairs of opposed states may have been the end result of the ceremonies involving mound construction which could be depicted as:

dark::light::above:below::living:dead.

Finally, the creation of the ditch encircling the mound served to create a barrier, probably filled with water, between the living and the deceased thus creating in effect an interior to the site which comprised the inhumation and its covers, and an exterior, around which the mourners would have gathered. By this construction, a pair of homologous oppositions was set up between the two places of living and deceased on the site (inside:outside::dead:living). The structure and content of the knowledge produced on the site can now be depicted by the in the following series of columns, each corresponding to the 4 planes of classification in operation on the site.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
inside/outside	N/S	turf/clay subsoil	wood/earth
dead/living	dark/light	dark/light	temporary/permanent
	below/above	above/below	living/dead
			above/below
		wood/earth	turf/subsoil
		above/below	dark/light
		living mourners/deceased	

What message might the mourners have received from the careful arrangement of the material culture symbols at East Putford? Perhaps that during the course of the rituals on the site, the deceased was progressing from a place and a state similar to wood (which is temporary, and exists above the ground surface), towards a below-surface place, and in the process becoming more permanent, and embodying the qualities of whiteness, or lightness. Some deceased to ancestor transition may have been envisioned by the community in light of the fact that the body was clearly not living when buried, and yet underwent some further change in status later in the ceremony. That this transition involved a liminal component seems clear from the both the waiting period and the orientation of the wood structure, but it is important to note that the mourners did not necessarily link the kind of analogy they created in the axial plane with those created in the linked temporal and stratigraphic

classificatory schemes. The light of the sun was obviously not, for example, linked directly with the gray subsoil an above:below opposed pair. Rather, the relationship of lightness and darkness to positions above and below the horizon was established differently via the medium of these two separate symbols in three distinct classificatory planes, in a general process that caused far less confusion than potential enlightenment for those participating, since as noted above, the tradition of knowledge objectified by these sorts of rituals was neither coherent or closed, but rather capable of structuring perception through multiple qualities of multiple symbols in particular instances. The deposit of the reddish burnt clay and shillet in the hollow over the collapsed burial hut also requires some mention. Its deposition occurred immediately before the light gray cap was formed, after the settling of the mound's center, and what was a perceived transformation of the deceased. The material was red in colour, which resulted from a process of transformation by fire, thus its use at that particular moment might have been appropriate since it could have referred to the transformation of the deceased, and further, renewed and created a link between the colour red and liminality, or transformation based upon its temporal and stratigraphic position between turf-wood and final gray clay cap.

6.13 Upton Pyne 284b

As noted in Chapter 5, the builders of Upton Pyne 284b did not erect elaborate pre-mound structures and enclosures, but rather concentrated upon the construction of the mound covering the cremations. The careful stripping of the site, and the timed and sequential choice of particular mound materials indicate the establishment of intimately related **stratigraphic** and **temporal** planes of classification which functioned to set the mound materials in specific relationships to one another, and to the cremations. This being the case, the symbols employed in each of these planes were the mound materials themselves, and it is reasonable to assume that more than one quality or attribute of each may have unified a suite of ideas and objects within the general cosmology. These qualities, and their potential significance however, must be teased out by a dual consideration of the materials origins, and how each was employed. In other words, where did the material occur naturally, in what order was each deposit placed on the mound, and with what materials or objects was it associated? To begin to answer this question, the nature of the cremations should be examined. The majority were children, or infants, and their collection together into one mound supports an observation, forwarded

elsewhere (Mizoguchi 1992), that young individuals were treated in death differently to other members of the community, either because they were seen to belong to a sub-adult age group, or because of their possible lack of defined social status relative to full adults. The death of these individuals might therefore present something of a problem for communities whose general tradition of knowledge embodied various concepts concerning the states, or qualities of particular individuals, living and dead, and, moreover who were concerned to ritually mark and assist in the passage of individuals from one of these states to another. The death of an immature or undefined being may have been perceived as heightening the liminality usually associated with the newly deceased and may therefore have required a complex and powerful ritual to reassert the normal order of things. The implication here is that the careful site stripping, and the sequential construction of the mound with a variety of different materials was designed to accomplish such a task. The local materials employed by the builders differed in texture, colour, and stratigraphic position. The subsoil was a reddish sand and lay below the turf and lower leached A-horizon. It was the soil intimately associated with the burials, since it formed the exposed burial surface, and was used to form the small initial mound covering them. The turf was darker, and served to bury the cremations and the subsoil, hiding them from view. The leached horizon was white, and allowed to harden during a planned break in activities at the site, perhaps implying some period of waiting in which the status of the dead children underwent a change from the qualities symbolized by the red subsoil to those more characterized by the hard white cap. Finally, the site's outer envelope was formed gradually by the mourners, again, implying a change in the status of the deceased children, or a change in the relationship between them and the mourners that was celebrated ritually through the construction of the cap. It was comprised of the subsoil, but in actuality, consisted of a bright, firmer clay subsoil existing *within* the sandier subsoil. For anyone conferring or acknowledging some aspect of, for instance, power, or liminality on this material due to its revelation at the start of the ritual, its usually hidden position or unusual red colour, this particular clay component may have been not only visually evocative, but conceptualized as even more significant and powerful than the subsoil, and thus appropriate for the final stage of this ritual.

In terms of its stratigraphy, the site went from normal grass and brown turf before the ritual commenced, to white, to red, and then, with the construction of the mound, to brown, to white, and then to red-orange, in a manner which first peeled off in order, and then restored in reverse relationship the natural stratigraphy on the

site, almost as if the buried landscape were turned upside down, encasing the deceased children in a mini reversed world below the one occupied by the living.

Much seems to have been only vaguely implied by the builders' actions, but an observer watching the progression of the ritual might have come away with a number of ideas about the structure of the cosmos (which might have been defined according to a principal of verticality, where one kind of place or world lay above another) and the range of meanings inherent within each of the components of the buried landscape and their relation to the state of the deceased children and the mourners. Movement towards a final state for the children may have been viewed as a move towards depth, hardness, or whiteness, while the turf/soil with its dark value and surface context may have been seen as associated more with the corporeal aspects of living humans because of their daily, intimate association with it. As noted above, the liminal and hence powerful nature of the reddish sandy subsoil seems implied by its timed revelation, hidden stratigraphic position, and intimate association with the newly dead. In light of this the choice of the special reddish-orange clay subsoil component to complete the mound is interesting. If the subsoil had or powerful associations was believed to have inherent powers, then a special part of it which was brighter, and had more consistency may have been even more revered and thus appropriate for a closure deposit on a series of inherently liminal burials.

The above comments can be compacted into the following sets of oppositions:

Stratigraphic	*Temporal*
above/below	sand-turf/leached soil
sand-turf/leached soil	dark/light
dark/light	soft/hard
soft/hard	
leached soil/orange-red subsoil	leached soil/orange-red subsoil
below/above~above/below	below/above~above/below

6.14 Stone dead at the Broad Down/Farway necropolis

Among the primarily Beaker sites from the cemetery reviewed in this chapter, a similar range of material culture and natural symbols were used in broadly similar, though distinctive ways, indicating the presence of a fairly coherent cosmology which defined and gave meaning and significance to the structure of the real and imagined world, as well as the place and qualities of the living and the dead within it. The dominant symbolic feature of this cosmology, which occurs at all the sites discussed, is the gray flint, which forms a component of the parent material underlying the turf and topsoil on the ridges. The frequent appearance and contextual use of the flint indicates that it was of primary importance to the meaningful schemes created by the builders as they sought to complete successful rites of passage for their deceased.

6.15 Farway Cairn

The builders and specialists at Farway Cairn skillfully made use of a variety of material and cosmic symbols during their myriad activities on the site. These symbols were wood (comprising the posts), the flint (in the cairn and grave), and the sun and its movement around, above and below the horizon. Each of these symbols, moreover, was employed in at least four different planes of classification that were set up by the site's builders. These could be described as axial, stratigraphic, and temporal. The earliest plane created on the site was **axial**, and was established through the erection of the posts, most of which, as noted in Chapter 5, fell on or very near the solstial, equinoctial, or north/south alignments (Figure 5.49; Table 6.1 25a-h; Figure 6.1). This may have been a device designed to relate and situate the transition of the deceased with the yearly calendar, and also to mark time at the site towards a culmination at the MWSS, since the boat shaped grave platform was pointed directly at this alignment that was also marked by a second wooden post. The deceased may then have been interred at the site at this time, and or, at the very least, have been seen in some sense as journeying towards this alignment, given the boat-shaped central platform/hollow. Irrespective of whether of not the interment of the deceased actually coincided with the MWSS, the post and grave alignment would still have served to associate the deceased with the qualities of the MWSS, which, as noted above for other sites, both signaled an onset of darkness and a place where at this time, the sun sank below the horizon. Placing the deceased in the center of such an arrangement, "pointing" at the midwinter sunset and away from the MSSR, may have allowed for the setting up of a series of increasingly familiar homologous oppositions such as:

light:dark::above:below:living:dead. Some support may be gained for an assertion that the builders were concerned with qualities of lightness and darkness in the natural world, because they also appeared to deliberately contrast light and dark values on the site during the filling of the outer pits, which contained either stratigraphic arrangements (or a mixture of) various amounts of light and dark materials (charcoal, lighter flints, and darker soil) (Appendix 3). Finally, midwinter also marks one of the two major transition times of the half-year solar cycle (along with midsummer which was marked at the site by the rear of the departing "boat" platform and a post), so its axial and possible temporal selection by the builders would be highly appropriate in a rite of passage designed to mark the passage between two states of personhood.

The qualities of these "personhoods" also appear to have been defined by the builders through the creation of two other linked planes of classification, a **stratigraphic**, and a **temporal** one. The posts, for example, were temporary on the site, and were replaced as the dominant structural features when the cairn was created, ending construction. Therefore, as noted in Chapter 5,as the deceased and the mourners passed through the rite, the form of the mound changed from wood to stone. This stress on temporality through the construction of the site itself may have placed these two materials in an opposed relationship on the basis of at least two possible qualities -- their permanence or durability, and their vertical position in the landscape. Considered in the context of a *funerary* ritual which both celebrated change, and buried something, both of these qualities may have been employed to create a generative scheme based on the opposed characteristics of these materials and their perceived relationship to persons living, and perhaps dead.

above:below::temporary:permanent::living:dead.

The existence of some perceptual connection between stone and the deceased by the members of the Farway community is also demonstrated by the intimate associative relationship between the latter (its presence assumed, as noted in Appendix 3 and Chapter 5) and the materials filling and surrounding the grave hollow, all of which were flint.

The above observations may be combined into the following series of homologous oppositions that I have suggested were established by the creation of three perceptual devices.

Axial	*Stratigraphic*	*Temporal*
MSSR/MWSS	temporary/permanent	temporary/permanent
above/below	above/below	living/dead

light/dark living/dead

living/dead

The appearance of several of the above oppositions in at least two entirely independent planes of classification (axial and other) would have lent support, I believe, to their power to structure perception and serve as building blocks for a cosmology in this region. In terms of that cosmology, it is worthwhile, given the rich crosscutting generative scheme at the site, to speculate on what messages the mourners may have received from this particular rite of passage. Through the temporal plane, the mourners may have perceived the deceased as undergoing a transition from a living state which was similar to wood –i.e. temporary, and living above the surface of the ground (and perhaps soft, or pliable, though this quality was not explicitly isolated by any of the classification planes), to a state of death bearing similarities with stone – i.e. permanent, of or below the earth, and perhaps hard, or light (through again, this cannot be conclusively demonstrated). From the axial and stratigraphic planes, the place where the deceased would journey may have been imagined as being below the vertical plane occupied by the living, and which was also characterized by darkness. The flint is obviously a dominant symbol on the site, and as such, may have had multiple meanings for this Farway community. I have already suggested that it was seen to be in some way associated with death, but this association could have unified both corporeal and more ephemeral meanings. It could, for example, have referred to the qualities believed to be inherent in, or exhibited by unseen dead persons (and/or cremated or defleshed bone, which appeared during rituals at the Farway Rings) while at the same time referring to more sacred notions of ancestral permanence, or the related permanence of the kin group both living and dead, which of course would have been gathered together on this upland landscape during the funerary rite at Farway Cairn. Without additional contextual information however, further speculation on the polysemic character of this material is perhaps unwise, though the subject will be returned to below. The above site is worthwhile considering when addressing the acts of building and burying fossilized by the builders of Farway Rings and the other sites excavated by Pollard (1967; 1971).

6.16 Farway Rings

The builders of this site employed themselves with two main tasks – the creation of the two flint rings and the separate excavation and filling of the A and B pits with a combination of soils and cremation or charcoal deposits. The creation of the flint rings on both sites, given their timing in relation to the B pits, and their encirclement of the A pits and cremations at Ring 1 were clearly designed to create circular areas reserved exclusively for the remains of the deceased and presumably, related funerary activities. The construction of the rings therefore, fulfilled a function of **enclosure**, both containing the cremations and A-pits, and separating the bulk of the mourners from the dead and, during their interment, from those persons dealing directly with their cremated remains. This may have served to separate and define separate categories of "living" and "dead" for this community through the following pair of oppositions: **inside:outside::dead:living**.

In Chapter 5, I suggested that the creation of the B-pits was important to the specialists on the site in that it served to define and divide the natural buried landscape up according to a series of meaningful principals, thus reproducing and objectifying cosmological elements. The three materials utilized in the B pits were the topsoil, the clay, and the flints from the clay-with-flints parent material. Considering the apparent "rules" for pit filling (Appendix 3; Figure 5.51), and the two opposed qualities of the three materials present (their colour value and consistency) the logic defining their stratigraphic order appeared to rest upon a basic rule that light materials overlay dark ones (clay w/flints over loam), and/or hard materials overlay soft, or softer ones (flinty clay always overlay plain clay, clay w/flints always overlay loam). The underlying generative scheme dictating the pit fills then, appears to have rested upon oppositions of **dark:light** and **hard:soft**. This scheme also appears to have been linked with a theme of reversal, since the loam, which naturally occurs in a surface context in relation to the other materials, was always buried **below** the naturally deeper clay and flint component in the pits. This same dark:light::hard:soft scheme also appeared to dictate the order of the A-pit fills that were dug into the earlier B pits, and further, cremations and/or charcoal were always buried below other deposits, or below the ground surface, in a series of acts which placed transformed materials having an origin **above** the ground, into a deeply buried component **below** it.

At Farway Rings then, what appears to the temporally detached observer is a different manifestation of what was clearly the same local generative scheme seen objectified at Farway Cairn, created and reproduced

through an overlapping, but slightly different set of material symbols and, a distinctive classification scheme (stratigraphic).

Stratigraphic

above:below

light:dark

hard:soft

6.17 Burnt Common Ring

At Burnt Common, the specialists made use of a very similar series of symbolic significata to that observed at Farway cairn, including the sun, and its movement above and below the horizon, the light gray flint, and wood, though in ways that both overlapped, and differed from that site, as might be expected. The builders of Burnt Common either created the flint **enclosure** around, or with the intention of containing a subsequent central burial. In either case, the cairn ring effectively separated the deceased from the mourners, thereby creating two categories of persons (**dead:living**) that could be associated with either the **inside** or the **outside** of the monument, as appropriate.

The mourners also simultaneously created an **axis** to their circle, and gave some meaningful significance to the rite, and the state of the deceased by aligning the grave between the MSSR, and the MSSS (Figure 5.53; Figure 6.1 27; Table 6.1). As noted above in the discussion of Farway Cairn, each of the these alignments exhibits distinctive properties of light and darkness, and at each location, the sun either appears above, or descends below the horizon, so the use of this alignment by the builders may have focused attention on the opposition between a light or dark landscape, and the position of the sun in relation to it (**light:darkness::above:below**). Aligning a newly deceased person between these two points may have humanized and extended the oppositions inherent in the axis by linking the states of **life:death** to the above scheme. They also may have been making an important statement about the then-current liminal state of the deceased and mourners (as was noted above for other sites like Tregulland), since lying between these points, the body or the cremated remains would have been seen to be situated betwixt and between light and darkness,

and at the points of the sun's ascent and descent above and below the horizon. Even more significantly, clear links must have been made between what was happening to the deceased and the community, and these summer and winter midpoints, or transitions between the two halves of the solar year.

In addition to these two separate schemes for shaping perception and thereby making the ceremonies both significant to the mourners and presumably, effective for the deceased, the builders also controlled the timing of particular events during the construction of the flint ring, which drew wood, or fire, flint, and red clay into significant oppositional relationships. For example, one of the earliest activities on the site was the burning of some wood on the south-eastern side of the site. The builders then covered the remains of this fire when they created the flint ring. Viewed as a progression then, gray flint replaced burned or burning wood as the dominant symbol on the site, in an act, which brought wood and/or fire, and gray flint into a **temporal (before:after) and stratigraphic (above:below)** relationship. Interestingly, the natural qualities of each of these symbols appear either to mimic or reverse their humanly created temporal and stratigraphic qualities and contexts, suggesting that the way in which these materials were being meaningfully constructed ritually was somehow based upon their fundamental qualities, as might be expected. Fire or wood/charcoal and flint differ most obviously in their longevity (wood, charcoal and fire are either ephemeral, or do not withstand time and weather, and flint would have appeared ever-lasting), and also in their vertical place in the natural landscape, since wood from trees and fire exist above the surface of the ground, and the flints are a natural component of the subsurface landscape. These natural qualities either mimic or reverse the way in which these materials were constructed in the site, suggesting the existence and operation of an **above:below::temporary:permanent** generative scheme.

While not indicated clearly by the builders in either of these two planes, it should also be noted that these symbols also differed in colour (brown/black or red and light gray), which I suggest may have been deliberate also. Charred wood and flint contrast in terms of their dark and light values, and red is also unlike light gray, and moreover, appears elsewhere on the site in an association with this colour. At Burnt Common, an additional symbol appears on the site in the form of the red Late Style Beaker that presumably accompanied the deceased in the flint encircled grave. Some sense then, of the symbolic significance of this pot may indicate what qualities and meanings of both were highlighted and furthered by their association and the mound construction. An investigation of the contextual positions of both symbols within the mound, and, a

consideration of their natural opposed qualities reveals several interesting things. As observed, the red Beaker was deliberately placed in an associative relationship with the body or the person of the deceased, thus establishing some close link between them. The origin of this clay most likely lay in the Sid Valley below the ridge on which the cairn stood, where it was most likely exposed in a drainage. This all contrasts with the gray flint which formed the ring around the body, and around the site, was obtained from the hilltop, instead of a drainage, and would have been perceived as a harder material. These qualities may have been given meaning at any number of levels, but, again, in the context of a funerary rite of passage involving a body, and established categories of living and deceased persons, it would have been easy for the specialists to relate these materials via analogies to the human body, the perceived traits of a deceased person, and the status of the deceased at the completion of the funerary ritual. For example, by means of the ritual, humans may have been constructed and viewed as impermanent, like wood, or fire, or clay, but during the course of their passage from living to fully deceased persons, they might have been seen to become more permanent, like stone, and whiter, or lighter in colour. Their existence in the landscape might also have been expected to change from a place of light above the ground, to a darker one below. The generative scheme, which may have lain at the basis of these "constructions", may be represented by a string of variously related homologous oppositions,

living:dead::wood-fire/stone:above:below::temporary:permanent

Alternatively, it may be represented by the following independent pairs:

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Temporal*	*Stratigraphic*
inside/outside	MSSR/MSSS	wood-fire/stone	wood-fire/stone
dead/living	above/below	temporary/permanent	above/below (reversed)
	?living/dead	above/below (reversed)	red or black/lt. gray
		red or black/lt. gray	?living/dead
		?living/dead	

This loosely consolidated, yet none-the-less effective series of perceived relationships and similarities then, may have also been instrumental in dictating the progression of events, the form of the mound, and the

material used in the rituals at Burnt Common. Only a few suggested meanings have been forwarded for the dominant symbols on the site, and it is difficult without a great deal of additional contextual information to determine just how wide the "fan of referents" for these materials is likely to have been. The association of the red clay with corporeal aspects of the human body (perhaps because of its colour) is possible, as are the dual qualities of the flint, which could refer dually to cremated bone, some imagined hard and white state of the deceased at the end of the rite of passage, or something more sacred or powerful, like the ancestors of the continuity of the community, given its hidden and ritually revealed position in the buried landscape.

6.18 White Cross Ring

Like Farway Rings, and Burnt Common, the builders of White Cross Ring used principals or themes of stratigraphy, enclosure, and horizontal axis to bring the deceased, the mourners, solar symbols, and various items of the buried landscape into relationships of meaningful significance with one another. As at many of the sites already discussed, they enclosed the grave within a light gray flint cairn ring (Figure 5.52), thus separating and separately categorizing the living and the corpse, and further defining their relationship by the qualities of the new spaces they came to occupy, thus creating an **inside:outside::dead:living** pair of related spatial and human states.

The also followed what appears to have been a common tradition of grave alignment by burying the deceased along an **axis** connecting the MSSR and MWSS (Figure 6.1 26; Table 6.1) in a way which connected the deceased with these two solstial alignments. As noted above for Burnt Common, this action may have served to set up a series of homologous oppositions, which were themselves inspired by an underlying cosmology which defined vertical relationships between things, contrasted light and darkness and related both to the states of living and deceased: **above:below::light:dark::living:deceased**.

The use of the red clay in this site has general parallels to its use on Burnt Common – i.e. it was associated with the burial (since it was used to build a mound over the grave pit) and further, stratified under (covered by) the light gray flint central cairn. As noted in the discussion of Burnt Common, the use of both of these materials in this fashion may have served to draw attention to the differences between them and further, encourage speculation or reflection as to their significance, and their particular relevance to the rite. As noted above, the materials naturally contrast in colour, in consistency, or hardness, and their origins in the natural landscape are

distinct, and moreover, may have been significant. In the exercise above that combined their use in the rite with some of these natural features, there was an indication that the builders of that site were creating a set of opposed qualities (depicted below for this site), which may have had some deeper significance to the rite of passage involving the deceased. By so doing, they also were creating, or objectifying parts of an underlying scheme which linked a number of variable qualities in the following fashion:

below:above::red clay:light gray flint::soft:hard.

Arranging these two materials in this particular stratigraphic order could also have been an act inspired by their natural position in the wider landscape, given the fact that the flints were obtained on site (on the ridge), while the clay outcrops deeper in the nearby valley. As implied in the discussion of Burnt Common above, this profile was clearly not capable of being read off in the manner of a textual exegesis. Its significance to those assembled however, may have been no less powerful given the circumstances of the funerary context, the fact that the deceased was buried below the ground, and the presence of the visible body of the deceased. The colour red for instance may have been a liminal colour, with associated symbolically with the corporeal bodies of the living. Its replacement by the harder gray flint may have implied a new status for the deceased after the completion of the ritual, who was likened to the flint in colour or consistency (light gray and/or hard). Similar analogies may have been made with the flesh and bone portion of the human body in ways that linked more corporeal referents of these symbols (flesh:bone) with more sacred or idealized states (living:deceased-ancestor). The valley vs. hilltop quarry locations of these two materials may have also been important within this same perceptual scheme, given the fact that valley settlements were likely, and the hilltops were obviously reserved for the community of the ancestors. Finally, the stratified contexts of the B pits also point to a similar attempt to contrast two different sorts of soils (one containing, and another not containing a flint component in a manner which placed the flinty member above the clay) in the same way, and thus may have also been a product of the same generative scheme which influenced, and was reproduced in the ritual. The series of stone offerings on the site within the cairn ring and on the stripped surface also appear to refer to an association of the dead with stone, as did the initial stripping of the site to reveal a clay w/flints depressed platform on which the subsequent funerary activities would take place. The tradition of knowledge fostered by the ceremonies at White Cross Ring may therefore be encapsulated by the following series of oppositions.

Enclosure	*Axial*	*Stratigraphic/Temporal*
inside/outside	MSSR/MSSS	red clay /light gray stone
dead/living	light/dark	soft/hard
	above/below	below/above
	?living/dead	living/dead
		valley/hilltop

Finally, as at Burnt Common and Farway Cairn, the analogy made between the rite of passage for the deceased and the passage from one part of the solar year to the other via the orientation of the deceased (and perhaps the timing of the burial to one of these events) must have been instrumental in both ensuring the success of the rite, establishing a link between the two opposed states of living and dead, and in making sense of the life:death passage for the mourners.

6.19 Broad Down/Farway reviewed

As mentioned above, the definitive parallels between the appearance of particular symbolic materials or foci at the Beaker sites reviewed above, and the manner in which these materials were highlighted, stratified, and juxtaposed, argue powerfully for a shared tradition of knowledge between the individual groups who built these sites. This tradition was realized somewhat differently in each particular instance of burial due most likely to the differential interpretations of various ritual specialists and builders, and presumably, because of the timing and circumstances of each individual death. All the communities appear to share (like the majority of other communities examined thus far) a demonstrable belief in the separation of the living and the dead in terms of their qualities or form, and in their place of residence in relationship to the local landscape, both buried and topographic (details above). The consistent appearance of the light gray flint at all of the sites argues for its dominant role in their cosmology and by association, the importance of the dead in the on-going lives of the communities. T*his* portion of their cosmology was also linked through the funerary rituals with their dominant view or construction of time, which I have argued elsewhere was cyclical, and which rested both upon a connection between the waxing and waning halves of the solar year, and the contrasts between day and night, so

that each portion of the year or day was probably imbued with associations and meanings relative to the activities and qualities of the living and the dead, which were in part created and renewed at the tombs.

6.20 Court Hill Cairn

At Court Hill cairn, the builders used at least two principal means to make the rites of burial effective and meaningful for the deceased and the community. The earliest of these was the construction of the dry stone wall which separated the living from the burial area by enclosing the deceased, and in the process, created two categories of persons on the site, each with defined spaces: **living:dead::outside:inside.** (Figure 5.54, 5.54.1).

The other was the excavation of the grave itself, which was linked with the enclosure wall in that the boat-like shape of the former pointed towards what appeared by the excavator to be a deliberate gap in the latter. This grave was aligned south to north, as though the deceased was moving in that direction towards the gap in the wall (Figure 6.1 28; Table 6.1). By choosing this alignment, and the shape of the grave, the funerary specialists opposed south and north (and presumably their properties) and moreover, associated the deceased with the northern orientation. As outlined above, the north-south orientation on the site may have been established via the position of the equinoctial sunrise and sunsets, thus giving the northern and southern orientations some significance relative to the movements of the sun. The northern orientation therefore would be an orientation directed towards darkness, since the sun was below the horizon between its set and rise in the west and to the east respectively. By contrast, the southern orientation would be aligned towards the sun in a position above the horizon between these two points. If the above were the case, then the deceased could have been perceived by the mourners as journeying into darkness (and/or into a place below the horizon) or recognized or defined by the qualities embodied by the northern orientation (darkness and a descent below the horizon). The initial stripping of the site might also have been appropriate if some perceived association existed between deceased persons and subsurface contexts. Combining the above, a series of meaningful pairs like the ones below could have formed the basis for the tradition of knowledge which informed the sites builders, and which they unconsciously reproduced by the site's construction through two simple planes of classification.

south:north::light:dark::above:below::?living:deceased

Enclosure	*Axial*
inside/outside	south/north
dead/living	above/below
	light/darkness
	?living/dead or north~dead

The association of the deceased with stone should not go unmentioned. It appears that the initial association (presumably established when the cairn wall was built to surround the deceased) was again repeated with the addition of the second burial, when the later mourners ringed and then buried their inhumed ancestor with a series of stone blocks, in what could have been intended as a renewal or repetition of the initial act of enclosure on the site.

To sum up, the tradition of knowledge furthered on the site through this material, and the grave orientation may have allowed the mourners to renew their belief in the separation of living and dead persons by associating each with a different ritual space, which metaphorically may have related to a different vertical space which was both physically real, and imagined, as well as granting to the deceased a set of traits which may have been best understood by analogies with stone, such as hardness, or a buried position in the landscape.

6.21 The soil and stones of Charmy Down

The actions of the builders of the Charmy Down cemetery indicate to the observer a keen interest in (and phenomenological construction through time of) the nature of the subsurface sediments surrounding their ritual sites. This interest appears to have manifested itself in a separation and artful recombination of the soil and coarse fraction portions of the topsoil with larger, primarily oolite, stony members of the buried landscape during the construction of the funerary mounds. Although this was accomplished rather differently at each site (and similar though reversed techniques may have been used on the nearby site of Landsdown (Appendix 3),

this "constructed" relationship between these components seems to have been the central device by which the builders sought to interpret the new relationships between themselves and their deceased kin. It also made the rites meaningful from the Beaker period (during which time Sites 1 and 2 were built) until later, into the full Bronze Age with the construction and enlargement of Site 6.

6.22 Charmy Down 1 and 2

The creators of Charmy Down 1 and 2 ordered their activities by means of four principals: enclosure, orientation, or axis, stratigraphy, and time. One of their earliest activities was the stripping of the site, which created a raised platform between two exposed lines of lighter limestone parent material. This act served to separate the mourners from the ritual areas, and was complemented by the creation of the oolite boulder wall on Site 2 which enclosed the cremation in it own space. Both these acts would have served to create a spatial division between the mourners and the bodies of their dead on the site, which may also have supported an already existing belief in the categorical and perhaps qualitative distinctiveness of each, which may be represented here as a living:dead pair of oppositions which was perhaps related to an inside:outside distinction in ritual space.

Another early act was the establishment of a dominant axis on the sites through the position of the mounds in relation to each other, and by the orientation of the grave and the corpse in Site 1. This orientation was north/south (Figure 5.63, Figure 6.1 29; Table 6.1), which, as noted above for other sites, could have been established through equinoctial or solstial alignments, thus giving the principal ritual axis some meaning in relation to the sun and its movements around the site. Additionally, the corpse was placed in the grave with its head to the south, on the left side, which indicates it would have faced west. If this position is considered in relation to the movements of the sun, then the juvenile would have been placed facing a sunset position. As noted above for other sites, this construction could have signified several things. For instance, the deceased could have been deliberately placed facing a portion of the horizon associated with the ending of the day, and perhaps darkness, and thus described or conceived of in those terms, or alternatively, the corpse may have been seen as to be a liminal zone between the beginning and the ending of the day – or between a state or place of light and darkness. The sun's position above and below the horizon on these two sides of the site may also have

been significant as well, since the corpse was subsequently buried in the grave and under a cairn. Their actions could then have been inspired (and have served to reproduce) a generative scheme, which revolved around upon one or more oppositional relationships between light and darkness, east, and west horizon positions, and perceived places or zones above and below the horizon or ground surface. The appropriateness of such a scheme to a funerary ritual strongly implies that for this community, the state of death, and perhaps the dual states of life and death were conceptualized through these terms and ideas. An all encompassing series of opposed terms can be forwarded to suggest one possible way in which such a scheme might be described, though it is by no means clear that all the oppositions included below formed part of the actual cognized scheme in the minds of the builders which inspired the placing of the body and the axial orientation on the site.

living:dead: light:darkness::above:below::east:west

As noted in Chapter 5 and above, the builders also used their knowledge of the natural stratigraphy to set up a logical framework of vertical and concentric construction based upon the qualities of the material present in the local landscape (Figures 5.63, 5.63.1). The order and arrangement of materials used for the construction of Site 2 appears to indicate that the mourners saw the buried landscape as consisting of three component parts: the limestone oolite bedrock (which when exposed appeared in the vicinity of the site appeared as a series of large broken pieces of oolite), and the overlying soil which they divided into two categorical components – a stoneless loam, and a coarse fraction consisting of small stony pieces. When the stripping took place on the site, the two separate components of the topsoil were separated from one another and used in separate mounds, each of which were revetted and/or covered by larger oolite boulders. By separating the stone from the topsoil and employing them separately, and then using them in ways differently than the oolite, the builders of the site appear to have been interested in each material's colour value (light vs. dark) hardness, or size, as well as their position in the natural stratigraphy of the region. The apparent rules followed in mound construction involved using the lower oolite parent material for the outer mound revetment, enclosure ring and revetment, and final caps (mimicking the appearance of the site after the initial strip) while the upper materials were placed lower in the mound, in acts which both reversed the materials natural relationship and drew attention to the contrasts between soil and stone in a way that can be depicted as:

soft:hard::above:below::dark:light. This scheme bears some similarity to the one forwarded above which arose from oppositions established in the axial "plane" on the site, that rested upon oppositions between light

and darkness and vertical relationships. This partial link between the two scheme is not surprising, particularly since it appears that both were derived albeit differently in different planes of experience from what were most likely commonly opposed terms and orders. The above suggestions for these opposed terms and orders are depicted below.

Axial	*Stratigraphic/Concentric*
N/S ~W/E	soft/hard
dark/light	topsoil/oolite
below/above	below/above
dead/living	(reversed)
	light:dark

Before discussing further the rationale for choosing these sorts of oppositions for this particular rite of passage, I will turn to the eastern sites, since similar building practices there hint at the existance of the same practical taxonomy applied to the same materials.

6.23 Charmy Down 3-6

Builders of the eastern Charmy Down complex also carefully combined techniques of enclosure and stratigraphy to craft the monuments into works capable of signifying and thus reproducing meaningful principals or concepts. This was accomplished through the manipulation of oolite boulders and slabs, earthy rubble, and stoneless soil during mound construction in ways that placed either earthy rubble or stoneless soil within and below large oolite slabs and boulders (Figure 5.64.1, 5.64.2; Appendix 3). The precedent for this arrangement of materials was initially established by the pre-ritual stripping of soil from the site which served both to reveal the oolite parent material below the turf and topsoil, and simultaneously, enclose and surround a turf and soil platform (where the burials would take place) within a area of exposed limestone. Builders at Sites 4 and 5 then proceeded to enclose cremation pits (or, circular areas of the turf platform later to be used for

cremation deposition) within rings of oolite boulders, creating inside areas within the larger ritual platform that were given over to the dead. A similar sense of enclosure may also have been established by the use of the oolite revetment walls to surround the earthy rubble mound on Site 3 and the second stoneless soil mound on Site 6. Further, larger oolite slabs and boulders were placed over the small mounds of earthy rubble on Sites 3-5 and over both stoneless soil mounds on Site 6, thereby setting up a stratigraphic principal which placed larger oolite components of the buried landscape above earthy ones.

A relationship was thus set up in two distinct, yet related ways between soil and stone in the barrow group in a manner that placed soil and earth elements of the landscape below or within stone. As noted above for Charmy Down 2, these constructions may have arisen as the result of a perceived difference in colour value, hardness or stratigraphic location of the stone and soil components of the mounds. Given this, some sense of the entire potential system of oppositions manifested on the site through the use of these materials may be expressed by the following:

Enclosure	*Stratigraphic*
inside/outside	soil/stone
dead/living	dark/light
	below/above (reversed)
	living/dead
	(reversed)
stoneless soil/oolite boulders-slabs	
earthy rubble/oolite boulders -slabs	
turf-soil platform/exposed oolite	

6.24 Charmy Down reconsidered

What relevance might these contrived arrangements have had in the rite of passage involving the living and the dead? As noted above, it is likely in the context of a funerary ritual, that the qualities of the materials, and perhaps their stratigraphic positions may have been instrumental in the specialists' abilities to make

perceptual links between each of them and the qualities or characteristics (perceived or imagined) of deceased and living persons. Soil and stone differ in terms of their consistency, and their colour values (dark vs. light), and the second lies below the first, so it may have been the case that either of these two qualities were seen as relevant somehow to an understanding of the new status for the deceased after burial. Although it can only be speculative, given that the remains of the dead on Sites 2-5 were cremations (no data exists for the burials in Site 6,) some link between the qualities of cremated bone and the oolite parent material could have been made by the community based upon colour, and the fact that the community of the living dwelt primarily on the turf and topsoil. If such a metaphorical link did exist, it may have inspired both the placing of these cremations below the turf, under layers of soil and earthy rubble and their visible memorialization with oolite, thereby making some statement about their new "states" (dead, one of the ancestors, like stone, light in colour) and places (below the surface, and the living) post-ceremonies. Alternatively, or concurrently, given the ability of such symbolic systems to encompass a large number of autonomous perceptual constructions, the act of stratigraphically reversing the materials may have been seen as an appropriate act to mark the **transition** for the deceased and the community. Indeed, a theme of transition was also highlighted through grave orientation and corpse placement, acts which seemingly referred to seasonal and diurnal shifts between both warm and cold periods of the year, and darkness and light. The different colours of the two materials may therefore also have been meaningful in this sort of perceptual structuring of the cosmos.

6.25 Towards a south-western Bronze Age cosmology

The above site and cemetery reviews have met, I believe, the above stated challenge of exploring the creation and reproduction of particular traditions of knowledge at the community level. Further, the results of the analysis made it possible to begin to address the meaningful content of those traditions in light of the apparent goals and concerns of the communities participating in ancestral and funerary rituals on the peninsula. As demonstrated in the site and cemetery analysis above, the builders of many of these sites created a number of spatio-temporal "planes" within which various symbols were opposed and highlighted, thus forming (and reproducing) particular practical taxonomies through relations of analogy and opposition. Considering the

builders/specialists particular use of symbolic elements drawn from the earth and the cosmos, these planes were clearly not entirely arbitrary constructions, but rather, appear to have been inspired by various phenomenological readings of the surface and buried landscape, the movements of the sun, and the communities' own movements and activities in relations to these. For instance, the circular yellow enclosures on Davidstow Moor acted to separate the living from the dead, but were also mimetic representations of the movement of the sun around, above, and below the immediate circular horizon. The path walked by the living in Cocksbarrow, and the arc of yellow kaolinized granite on Caerloggas Downs III functioned similarly. Additionally, the form of the mounds at Crig-a-Mennis and Carvinak for example, were stratified constructions variously designed to replicate or inverse known vertical and axial relationships between surface and subsurface components of the landscape. This being the case, it ought to be possible to come to some sort of understanding of the principal cosmological constructions which inspired much of the funerary activity on the peninsula, given both the forms of the common series of spatio-temporal classifications planes set up on the sites, and the details of the practical taxonomies planes engendered. Further, given that symbolic systems like the ones objectified on these sites not only condense and unify things, actions, and disparate significata, but also reference opposed poles of meaning or significance (Turner 1967), some addition discussion of the varied qualities of the dominant symbols manipulated in the rites, in terms of their meaningful properties and significations within this generalized cosmology is necessary. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the intent here is not an attempt at totalization, which in any case would be impossible given the contrasting ways that dominant symbols were manipulated to create meaning. Instead, it is to explain why clear ceremonial commonalities within communities and across the peninsula did exist, and the connection this had to the inherent polysemic nature of the symbols employed on the sites.

6.25.1 A spatio-temporal form

The south-western Bronze Age cosmology was comprised of an imagined spatio-temporal form[7], which further, was an outgrowth of a number of themes or ideas rooted in natural processes and human actions. One dimension of this form may be described as cosmic-circular, and is represented in synoptic form in Figure

6.2 in order to encompass the numerous constructions based upon it across the peninsula. Its existence was, in point of fact, a phenomenological construction of the "clockwise" movements of the sun around the horizon, and, its descent and ascent below and above that horizon at certain points. Arcs or portions of the circumference and the points of the sun's ascent and descent at transition times were given local significance by means of a symbolic system of oppositions and analogies based upon qualities of the sun and/or the consequences of its movement during this journey. The dominant symbol mobilized by the mourners in the rituals which drew upon and reproduced this cosmological construction was the sun itself, though various other secondary symbols sharing analogous qualities of light, colour, and heat, and landscape position and movement with the sun were also employed by the builders, such as the yellow kaolinized granite, yellow clay subsoil, fire, enclosure entrance and exit passages, and movements by the mourners. The oppositions engendered by the use of these symbols (in primarily funerary contexts) revolved around common, often linked (according to context) states of light and darkness, dual physical and imagined positions above and below the landscape, and more idealized notions of beginning and ending, or life/birth and death.

This cosmic-circular dimension was but one part of the entire cosmological construction. Another dimension of its form may be described as vertical, and is represented in Figure 6.3 in two synoptic forms, which are intended to encompass both its existence as a phenomenological construction of the vertical relationship between the surface and elements of the natural buried landscape, and, its human re-creation in the mounds themselves often in reversed or jumbled order. In this vertical construction, living things existing on the ground surface, and soil/subsoil/rock components were seen as having significance in terms of their vertical relation to each other, which was further expressed (variably) as a function of (or separately from) the particular attributes of each material, such as its colour value, or consistency. The dominant symbols manipulated by the builders in rituals that drew upon and reproduced this cosmological construction were turf, various brightly or lightly coloured subsoils, and parent material or bedrock components, most notably white quartz, light gray flint, limestone, granite, and slate. The oppositions which arose from the use of these materials revolved around contrasts (sometimes overlapping, sometimes not) between light and darker materials, opaque and shimmering, or shining materials, temporary and more permanent materials, softer and harder materials, surface and buried deposits, between various buried deposits disposed vertically above or below the other, and finally, between the living and the dead, and presumably, the ancestors.[8] Some sense that the living and the dead, or the ancestors

may have occupied separate portions of the vertical cosmological "landscape" (the dead being associated with the below realm while living things dwelt above) may have been fostered by this constructions is indicated by the burial of the dead either in pits, or under earthen deposits, and the consistent ritual association of buried materials like stone and certain subsoils with the deceased (as cairns, offerings, mounds etc.), or at what have been interpreted here as "death" alignments. The practice of interring the dead in shafts, fissures or caves during this period, particularly in Somerset (Chamberlain 1995) may have arisen from this conceptual link between the dead and the subsurface realm.

The cosmological whole also included a temporal dimension that was closely linked with the cosmic-circular one, since it was based upon the same solstial events (Figure 6.4). However, in addition to the interface between the landscape and the cosmos being divided and given significance according to a number of solar events, it was also the passage of time that was divided and meaningfully constructed around these same highpoints of the solar year. The dominant symbols referenced by the mourners in the rituals which drew upon and reproduced this particular dimension of the cosmos were, naturally, the sun itself, and more specifically the events of its rising and setting which occurred on important transition days (solstices and equinoxes) during the year. Also, items and materials that were placed towards alignments or along dominant axes between them may have served to give these dates and the seasons they divided (or occurred within) meaningful significance via metaphorical operations. These symbols mirror the list above, and included, among others, fire (like the fires at the Davidstow Cemetery), enclosure passages (entrances and exits like those on the St. Austell granite and at Crig-a-Mennis), wood (as in the wooden posts at Farway cairn), stone (orthostats on Davidstow Moor and the outer stone arc on Watch Hill), and the bodies and graves of the deceased. Also included may have been fruits, wood, or blossoms that were coming into season, or flower during specific portions of the calendrical year (like the wood and fruits that mourners burned in the Watch Hill ritual pit and later, threw into the ditch as they backfilled it). The oppositions and associations which arose from the use of these human, natural, material, and cosmic symbols in the mounds revolved around contrasts and associations with and between light and darkness, the lengthening of days, or nights, soft and hard, and birth or life and death. Additional meaningful/symbolic contrasts between various portions of the year or day were most likely present (such as an opposition between wet and dry, for example) but since no definitive examples exist of attempts to create such connections, they cannot be properly examined here.

The complexity and seamless nature of this spatio-temporal cosmology is clearly visible in the commonalities (and differences) which exist among the generative schemes inspired by each way of perceiving the "universe", which are detailed above for each site. A selection of these is depicted in the form of individual oppositional pairs below.

Cosmic-circular	*Vertical*	*Temporal.*
light/dark	light/dark	light/dark
above/below	above/below	
birth/death	living/dead	beginning-birth/ending-death
wet/dry	soft/hard	
temporary/permanent	temporary/permanent	
path of mourners/Ø		lengthening of days/nights

6.25.2 A range of meanings

The discussion of a south-western Bronze Age cosmology is not complete without further discussion of two issues. The first is the multivocal nature of the symbols manipulated in the rites, and the way in which these were leant significance on a number of potentially different interpretative levels corresponding to natural, imagined or sacred things and principals. The second issue revolves around the principal themes and ideas (inspired by natural processes and human actions) that lent depth and meaning to the oppositions and analogies forming the "building blocks" of the greater cosmological construction.

Beginning with the first issue, while it is easy to isolate the variable qualities of the materials and objects used in the monuments, and to note their similarities and differences in relation to other highlighted significata, it is more difficult to speculate about the fan of referents these symbols may have had, due to a lack of contextual information from a wide variety of practice contexts. While some attempts above have been made to suggest the kinds of meanings these symbols may have referenced, certain classes of material deserve

additional attention because of their dominant symbolic role in the ceremonies all over the South-West. These symbols are stone, brightly or lightly coloured subsoils, and water.

Stone is a common item found in many forms, and in many contexts among the sites discussed. It occurs as limestone, white quartz, quartz crystals, slate, granite, shale and shillet, natural flint, as several other materials (such as conglomerates), as flint tools, and as a variety of other groundstone or pecked artifacts, and on the sites. As I have demonstrated above, many of these forms were frequently associated with sunset positions, positions of the horizon having qualities of darkness, placed with the dead, used to enclose or cover the dead (as in a cairn ring, small preliminary cairn, or barrow cairn, cap, or curst), included in cairn material, and tossed into ditches or graves as offerings to the deceased. It was frequently and variously opposed to softer, darker, upper, and/or impermanent materials or other symbols in the funerary rituals in ways that highlighted its whiteness, brilliance, below ground context, hardness, and permanence. It also tended to occur as the final mound or cairn material in composite mound sites. Given these characteristics and uses, and the nature of the rituals in which it was employed, a number of suggestions can be forwarded for its range of metaphorical referents in a Bronze Age context. On one level, stones like light gray flint, limestone and quartz may have stood form or have been seen to resemble bone, or cremated remains based upon their shared colour value and hard or brittle nature, and their use in graves and mounds may have been intended to refer to the harder components of the physical body, and to the new form of the deceased after death rituals were complete. Seen as a final mound component, or as associated with sunset positions in the sites, stone may also have been seen to refer to the "state" of the deceased, or of deceased persons after a completed rite of passage in the sense of: "the dead are like stone". Further, highlighting its qualities of permanence and buried or bedrock location in the landscape may have indicated that the symbolic repertoire of stone also encompassed more ephemeral or idealized meaning in line with the continuity and/or permanence of both the ancestral and living communities. The importance of this final metaphorical link may explain the preference for brighter, whiter, or shimmering/reflective materials among the stones used for offerings, body coverings or enclosures, cairn revetments, and mound crusts and caps, since these may have been perceived as sacred (i.e. containing or signifying magical or ancestral powers).[9]

The use of brightly or lightly coloured subsoils also has some place in this discussion of the polysemic nature of dominant funerary symbols, since their use often complements stone in its absence, or occurs along

with it in a stratified construction. Clearly, each of these coloured materials is likely to have had a different set of referents based upon its qualities, and I have suggested what some of those may have been in the above site analysis. As noted in that discussion, ritually established metaphorical relationships between the yellow kaolinized granite at St. Austell, the yellow subsoil on Davidstow Moor, and the sun indicated that this material might have been thought to represent and hold similar properties to the sun. Given that the sun was the focus of their cosmological constructions in both these communities, it is likely that the clay may have signified life, renewal, as well as sacred power given its centrality and particular role in the planes of classification set up by these sites builders. The yellow subsoil mobilized by builders at other sites across the peninsula like Trelen 2, Tregulland, Nancekuke, and Lousey Barrow may have had similar associations given its particular use in the ceremonies.

The use of lighter subsoil components like the gray clay subsoil component at East Putford I may have been seen as representing, (like stone on other sites) a "state" of death, a bone component of the human body, or the permanence and continuity attributed to the communities of living and deceased.

Finally, as a group, the use and/or exposure of some of these materials at the **start** of funerary rites of passage for the deceased on many sites discussed above (e.g. Carvinak, Farway/Broad Down Group, Davidstow III. I, Upton Pyne) and their **temporary** status as signifying elements on others due to being trampled, used as platforms for other activities, and/or being left to harden and weather (e.g. Upton Pyne, Crig-a-Mennis) before being covered with final caps of stone or soil (e.g. Crig-a-Mennis, East Putford I, St. Austell sites) indicates a **liminal,** powerful, or dangerous status for these materials in certain instances. Their below surface qualities (outside or below the realm of the living), and hidden or usually unseen nature might also have been perceived as contributing to this construction (see the mention of the watery contexts for the yellow granite and red clay at St. Austell and Broad Down/Farway below).

The above discussion of stone and shiny objects and their polysemic values leads towards the consideration of another symbol found on many sites, which is the circular ditch around many monuments. Obviously, the excavation of a ditch during barrow construction, while useful for obtaining barrow materials, is not absolutely necessary for mound construction. The ditch therefore was clearly a design element on the sites, and I have suggested above that it may have functioned both to create a sense of enclosure, and/or to reveal buried subsurface materials and their stratigraphic relationship with surface deposits. The ditch may also have

served another purpose in line with one other of its characteristics. Most barrow ditches would have been filled with water, either due to water seeping in during excavation, or after a rain. Some activities related to the ditch at a number of sites appear deliberately designed to take advantage of this feature either by encouraging movement through the water, or over it, as a Crig-a-Mennis or, by deliberately depositing objects into it which shared particular qualities with it, such as white quartz pebbles or quartz crystals (noted at Nancekuke and Tregulland).[10] Other items commonly deposited into ditches on the peninsula include primarily, a variety of other stony materials such as hammerstones, rounded pebbles, broken flints, cupped stones, slate discs, quern fragments and grain rubbers (recovered from Trelen 2, Nancekuke, Crig-a-Mennis, Watch Hill, Lousey Barrow, Tregulland and Davidstow III). Water then, appears to have been significant in this period both as an enclosure feature, and in terms of its association with stone, and/or bright, shimmering items. Additionally, symbols like the yellow kaolinized granite at the St. Austell cemetery, the red clay used at White Cross Ring and Burnt Common, and the white calcareous material deposited above the burial at Chewton Plain 1came either from drainage contexts or springs (Miles 1975:18; Pollard 1967:27; Williams 1947:41). Support for the symbolic significance of water in earlier Bronze Age funerary ceremonies, and its association with stone may also be gained from numerous examples of water-deposited later Bronze Age hoards and single finds, and the well documented association from the Celtic period onwards, of white quartz pebbles with springs and later, holy wells (Rees 1935; Ross 1974). The properties of water then, may have been given meaning in light of similarities it shared with the objects naturally or deliberately associated with it, so that its reflective nature may have signified its power or magical qualities.

An additional role of water in Bronze Age cosmology may be appreciated by concentrating upon its enclosure function. Well documented in the South-West is the frequent practice of locating Bronze Age cemeteries (like stone circles and atypical stone row complexes before them) on upland ridges between drainage heads.[11] Additionally, for most south-western communities during the this period, the sea would have framed the landscape for anyone traveling even 100 miles from their home. Therefore, the realms of the living and the dead may have been seen as surrounded by, or framed within water. I have indicated above that the yellow rings at cemeteries like Davidstow functioned to turn each site into an *imago mundi* – a small imaginary image of the cosmos as phenomenologically constructed. The encirclement of barrows by water filled ditches may

have been intended to perform the same function, thereby turning the sites into small models of the perceived cosmos.

Finally, water may have also had a further significance in line with the east:west, birth:death, sunrise:sunset oppositions created on sites like Crig-a-Mennis, and by the passage at Davidstow I. The mourners entry into the site at Crig-a-Mennis on a sunrise orientation, at an important solstial transition, and through a wet passage may have served to oppose birth and death, and thus balance death with fertility (the quern stone in the Crig-a-Mennis ditch, and on other sites discussed below may also have functioned similarly), indicating that water may have had a series of parallel meanings in line with human birth or life, and fertility which complemented the others discussed.

6.25.3 A dominant theme

This depiction of the south-western Bronze Age cosmology is still incomplete without some discussion of the themes and ideas that ran through it. In other words, what sorts of ideas and beliefs may have connected the oppositions forwarded on the sites in relations of meaning, and further, provided the rationale for the appearance and use of many other symbols on the sites? Bourdieu (1977:125) has pointed out that the meaningful source for many generative schemes is a small number of "logistical and biological practical operators" which in reality are "natural processes culturally constituted in and through ritual practice." I have demonstrated that highly significant to the Bronze Age cosmology is the fact that the high days of the calendar and the important solstial events commemorated by axial orientations and timed rites of passage for the deceased on the sites occurred at important **transition** points between both conditions and periods of light and darkness, or warm and cold period of the year, lighter and darker days of the year, increases and decreases of sunlight, and so on. I further suggested that in the context of a rite of passage for deceased and mourners, these transitions were given meaning relative to a series of oppositions between hard and soft materials, temporary and permanent materials, above and below places, or wet and dry states, all of which could be directly related to conditions and characteristics of living and dead persons. Additionally, these schemes were paralleled in the vertical plane between harder and softer materials and above and below contexts, both of which again were

directly or indirectly related to a life:death opposition. Given this, a central metaphor through which much of the timing, the construction, and symbolic manipulation /juxtaposition on the sites can be explained is one of **transition**, or transformation, and more specifically, transformational relations between these opposed states.

On the one hand of course, these oppositions appear to be celebrated and accentuated in the monuments as states of wet and dry were opposed, hard and soft were opposed, dark and light were opposed, short-lived and permanent were contrasted, and the relations between above and below were stressed. However, in the particular context of transition in these rites of passage, it was the movement or passage from one state to the other that was really being celebrated. For example, as illustrated in the analysis above, during mound construction, many sites began with wooden materials and finished with stone ones (e.g. Farway Cairn, East Putford I, Davidstow XXVI), or began with turf and finished with stone caps or crusts (e.g. Charmy Down sites, Carvinak) (Figure 6.3). Transformations were also expressed through oppositional relationships in the axial planes between significata that were deliberately located on or near transitional sunrise and sunset alignments in the Bronze Age year, or, temporally, so that one kind of object could be seen to be replaced by another over imagined or real time. For example, the smashing of pots, the deposition of ceramic sherds, and the erection of wooden posts were followed by earthen and stony mound materials at sites like Burnt Common Ring, and Carvinak. Stony objects were given to the dead late in the funerary rite (Nancekuke, Watch Hill), and wooden posts and pots aligned on or near "beginning" orientations (equinoctial, midsummer, and midwinter sunrises) were opposed to stony objects at "ending" ones (Caerloggas Downs III, Davidstow V). Finally, graves and bodies were sometimes aligned between these transitional orientations in the axial plane (Broad Down/Farway sites, St. Neot). As indicated in the site review above, the use of certain of these materials like wood and clay to establish these oppositions may have been highly appropriate because of their potential metaphorical relations with human bodies. As noted above in the discussion of Davidstow V (Section 6.10.3), bodies, clay and wood share a range of attributes and further, all undergo similar fates via a transformation by fire, that is, they go from pliable to brittle, soft to hard, and from wet to dry. Further, the mourners' inclusion of querns, grain rubbers, and rubbing stones in the sites in graves, cairn material, and in ditches may be understood as inspired by the same concern with transformation. Querns and rubbers of course, are intimately involved in the final stages of the process by which green corn becomes dry, is ground, and baked into bread, while rubbing stones are used in the burnishing of clay pots before firing. Some cosmological/natural processes which may

then, have been important to the builders and specialists on the peninsula therefore, may have been drying and hardening, both of which occur as a result of both natural and human agencies.

Finally, returning to a point raised above, **reversal** practices involving two major classes of symbols (soil/stones and pots) may also be explained on the sites by illustrating how they may have related perceptually to the transition themes on the sites. In his discussion of thresholds and rite of passage, Bourdieu (1977:130) notes that transition periods of various sorts share many properties with thresholds in that they form a "sacred bond between two spaces" or states where "antagonistic principals of each confront one another and *the world is reversed.*" Deliberate act of reversal then, involving inverting turves in mound construction, inverting the natural profiles between one or more components of the lithosphere, and placing pots upside down may have been deemed as appropriate during a ritual relating to a transition from one state to another.

6.26 From tomb to house

Bradley (1998) has drawn attention to the striking archaeological resemblance between the ruined Bronze Age house and a number of cairn ring variants. His observations in relation to that resemblance are especially pertinent to this work since his concern with charting the long-term development of built forms that "shaped human experience" parallels my own concerns for the much shorter duration of time in the Bronze Age. Having come to some interpretative understanding of the cosmological constructs which may have leant meaning and significance to the funerary rituals of the earlier Bronze Age at the site specific and general levels, a brief inquiry into how aspects of this cosmology were rewritten in new spheres of practice as the relationship between people and the landscape began to change seems necessary to close this work.

To briefly recount, Barrett (1994:147) has suggested that during the latter part of the second millennium in central-southern Britain a "place-bound sense of being" developed, in the sense that the "landscape was viewed from the centre of a domain". Concurrently, the communities of the living and the dead became closer associated spatially (as burials began to appear in the house or near the domestic compound, and houses encroached upon former ancestral territories), and the house, or household, apparently became the centre focus of community activities. I have indicated that a similar process began in the South-West as early as the

18th century BC with the development of early land boundaries, and was well underway by the 16th century BC, using the examples of the Gwithian Cairns, the Trethellan burial, the Brean Down human remains, and Stannon Downs Site 3. At a very basic level, this southern Bronze Age round house is the descendant of a long tradition of ritual building which stretches back into the later Neolithic and includes henges, and stone and timber circles (Bradley 1998). The unbroken continuity of this tradition from ritual to habitation structures occurred via the Bronze Age funerary context where (as argued in Chapter 5) it was reinterpreted and reinvented. The similarity in design between the Bronze Age funerary/ritual structures, and the few earlier houses of the South-West and southern Britain generally indicate the passage of some elements of this tradition between the places given over to rituals involving the dead, and others reserved for the living. For example, at the most general level, the choice of circular construction for the earlier houses replicates the traditional circle design found in the tombs. More specifically, hurdle working, which forms a screen in several funerary sites, appears as a frame for the probable wattle and daub walls in the second house at Gwithian (Megaw 1976). The concentric post structures, which form the skeleton for the pre-mound funerary/ritual structures, find parallels in what have been interpreted (somewhat dubiously) as later Neolithic/Beaker/Early Bronze Age houses in Wessex. Further, the low (4-6 course high and often faced) walls of numerous early ring cairns and cairn rings of the South-West can be matched in Structure 57, the probable Early Bronze Age house at Brean Down (Bell 1990). Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the central or near-central grave/pit in the tombs, finds a parallel in the position of the hearth in early structures like the Phase II structural component at Gwithian Site XV.

Such similarities support a position that considers the relationship between the forms of funerary/ritual structure and house as a function of the operation of some sort of homology. To clarify, among the members of Bronze Age communities, the tombs and the earlier Bronze Age houses might have represented, or stood for one another, since each was a very similar product of the same generative schemes (examined in greater detail below), albeit operating in different contexts/discourses. Given such understandings, it might have been possible in the earlier period for ritual participants to consider the tombs as "houses of the dead" but I believe this is somewhat unlikely for two reasons. Given the comparatively late appearance of formal, well-constructed dwellings during the earlier period under survey here, the existence of a homologous relationship between the two forms is therefore only likely to have entailed operational consequences and meaningful conceptualizations in one direction. That is, the houses of the early and later periods were constructed using designs and sets of

concepts that had their genesis in the public, emotionally charged, and laborious funerary constructions. [12] Consequently, the house was unlikely to have been used and perceived as a dominant symbol early on, but only assumed the role after social practice became embedded in a different set of spatio-temporal relations.[13] Given that little can be said about the houses of the earlier period, it may be more profitable to continue this discussion with some examples of later Bronze Age houses of the South-West.

I have already observed in Chapters 4 and 5 that a good deal of similarity in appearance and activities existed between the funerary structures of the earlier south-western Bronze Age, and the houses of the later. There is some support in the archaeological literature (e.g. Parker Pearson and Richards 1997; Richards 1990 1996) for suggesting that for some Bronze Age communities, the house (like the various ceremonial enclosures of the later Neolithic, and the pre-mound structures examined above) may have represented and objectified the perceived cosmos (Eliade 1952:58). When comparing the forms of both funerary structure and later house, a list of formal similarities is insufficient, since it does not entirely address the way in which the symbolic construction of, and activities within, the houses were products of generative schemes and cosmological constructs which structured both ritual action and habitus. One way of considering how the house tomb homology was actualized in the later period is by considering how the house somehow appropriated functions, or embodied principals that were earlier objectified in the funerary monuments/sphere. This happened in two ways. The first is the most straightforward and concerns the way in which the house literally became a "tomb", i.e. a repository for the remains of the deceased. This occurred in at least two structures on the peninsula (Trethellan House 222 and the Unit 5b structure on Brean Down), and at other sites in southern Britain. The second way in which the houses of the later period began to resemble the tomb occurred as both the structure of the house and the activities within it became the means by which the spatio-temporal and thematic elements of the Earlier Bronze Age cosmology were objectified and reproduced.

As I suggested in Chapter 5, a slow evolution from monuments incorporating solstial alignments in pre-mound rituals to a greater emphasis on sequential visits to the sites and associated structural changes to the monument began in the South-West after the introduction of urn burial and the beginning of boundary construction and land division in the uplands. It was at this time that a shift occurred between the predominance of axial planes of classifications on the sites, to a greater reliance on stratigraphic ones, as timely mound visits to the tomb became part of the way in which living-dead relationships, and thus the continuity of particular lines

of inheritance and their links to the land and resources were underscored. Rather than being abandoned however, the axial plane of classification, and the cosmic-circular dimension of the cosmology that inspired it were rewritten in the slowly developing domestic realm of practice as communities began to create more permanent dwelling enclosures for the living which fossilized axial and concentric principals through their construction and occupation.

I have already mentioned the structural similarities between the Stannon tombs and the houses in the nearby settlement (Chapter 5), and to this can be added the preference particular sunny or sunrise eastern and southern entrance orientations in the settlements of Brean Down (Bell 1990), Trethellan (Nowakowski 1991), Holne Moor (Fleming 1988), Poldowrain (Smith and Harris 1972), Shaugh Moor (Wainwright and Smith 1980), Trevisker House (ApSimon and Greenfield 1972), Stannon Down (Mercer 1970), at the Gwithian Phase II house (Megaw 1976), and Dean Moor (Fox 1957). Further, the careful manner in which a number of south-western Middle Bronze Age houses were abandoned and dismantled bears some similarities to the temporal processes of closure at the tombs. For example, the posts at Gwithian House 2 were removed and deliberately blocked with shillet, and quartz, stones and cassiterite pebbles (all stony deposits) after being burnt in place (ApSimon and Greenfield 1972). On the south-east side of the Trethellan farmstead, posts were removed, postholes and pits were backfilled or blocked while others were cut off at their bases, and objects were buried in pits (Nowakowski 1991). At Trevisker, ditches were deliberately infilled, and artifactual deposits not unlike those found in barrow ditches (pebbles, potsherds and lithics) were placed into them. All of these activities can be paralleled at various funerary sites, suggesting that the end of the use life of a house required a similar series of transition rituals, perhaps appropriate to the changing circumstances of a community's dwelling pattern.

Another way in which the house embodied principles central to the Bronze Age cosmology earlier defined in the tombs, is through the activities that were carried out in it. These activities could have furthered the oppositions earlier highlighted in the tombs based upon the ways artifacts were crafted, deposited, and used. Earlier I suggested that the south-western Bronze Age cosmology was could be characterized by a focus upon natural and humanly aided transformative processes, such as drying and hardening and burying (or going from above to below), which in turn were objectified in the qualities of a number of specific symbolic objects (e.g. various types of stone, wood, clay/ceramic).

A cursory examination of the Middle Bronze house and compounds indicates that identical and related materials to those described above were not only present in these contexts, but were also treated in similar ways, indicating some continuity of the generative schemes structuring action in these new contexts of practice, and a maintained focus on transformation. For example, pots were deliberately buried in near-central pits in houses and ditches at Trethellan and Trevisker in ways analogous to their incorporation (and the incorporation of cremated remains) at the funerary sites (i.e. in lined, sealed or stone covered pits). Fireboxes with cist-like constructions occupied central positions in the structures at Trethellan (as graves/cists do in mounds). Further, there is some indication that this notion of transformation incorporating the body and several items of material culture was also applied to another type of object in the house, namely bread. Bread, of course is the end product of a long process of drying and further transformation by fire through which green grain and wet dough become dry and hard. Bread ovens were found near the central fires at Trethellan, and one oven in House 2222 was set into an ashy deposit directly overlying the inhumation burial. The appearance of bread ovens in Houses 2222 and 2001 is similar to the fireboxes, both of which bear similarities in size and design to the burial cists. Another set of items directly related to the making of bread, are also found in abundance in the houses across the peninsula. These are querns and grain rubbers, which were deliberately deposited by their owners by being placed into pits, and tossed into ditches in ways that paralleled their earlier funerary treatment. For example, at Trethellan, 7 stone grain rubbers were buried at the base of a pit, and hidden under a saddle quern. Several other querns, one burnt and shattered, were buried in pits at the site, as well as some additional rubbing stones. At Trevisker, rubbing stones were used as posthole packing, as a deliberate deposit in one pit. At the Stannon Down settlement, querns and granite grain rubbers were built into house walls, and in the Shaugh Moor settlement, fifty percent of the querns recovered had been built into house walls or porches, along with numerous grain rubbers. Inhabitants also placed rubbing or burnishing stones in identical contexts (ditches, house walls and porches) at Trevisker and Shaugh Moor.

As noted above, the ability to refer to important transformations which connect wet and dry things, hard and soft things and things above and below the surface things was clearly furthered by these actions, indicating that by the Middle and Later Bronze Age, the house was becoming the central context in which the generative schemes comprising the south-western tradition of knowledge was reproduced and objectified.

6.27 Comparisons and contrasts

As I indicated in the introduction to this work, one of the aims of my encounter with south-western Bronze Age funerary practices was to consider some alternative aspects of ceremonial burial with the intention of augmenting the existing body of knowledge concerning this topic (encapsulated by Barrett 1988; 1989; 1990b; 1994; Garwood 10990; Mizoguchi 1992; 1994; Thomas 1991b). Given the fact that this project has been inevitably structured by these prior readings of Bronze Age funerary practices, some comments on the relation of this project to those interpretations may served to close this work. In this thesis I have attempted to extend the perception of the Bronze Age funerary monuments beyond its currently theorized integral role in the reformulation of socio-political relations between the living, by considering its crucial role in the reproduction of meaningful traditions of knowledge which structured perception and provided ways of conceptualizing and maintaining the world and the things within it. In the process, various observations have been made which may encourage a reconceptualization of the general trends identified in current interpretations of the period that I would briefly like to review.

As noted at various points during the Chapter 5 data analysis, the general progression of funerary practice identified in the current formulations for the period which begins with grave reopening, and continues with sequential burial and cemetery or site "topography", elaborate mound construction, the growing importance of cremation, and eventually, the decline of ceremonial burial involving elaborate monumental forms can also be identified in the South-West. Graves for example, were reopened at Try, and Davidstow Moor XXVI, and additional human remains were inserted, in acts which presumably creating specific relationships between people. However, while the importance of the individual, or individual burial in structuring conceptions of personhood and identity in the Beaker period should not be denied, there is an indication first, that the body's identity may have been of equal or less importance than its use as a symbol for structuring perception based first upon the evidence for skeletal selection, and second, the suggestion of temporary burial, and third, in light of the deliberate solstial orientations referenced by the body at sites in the Broad Down Farway Group, and related delays of secondary interment ceremonies to await important calendrical transitions, as at Cocksbarrow. Also the role of the monument cannot be discounted in Beaker

funerary ritual, as it was clearly an integral part of a process by which the funerary rites of passage were made meaningful to the mourners, and generative schemes were created and reproduced, as evidenced by sites like Carvinak.

There is certainly some sense that genealogies were being created and renewed, and distinctions between the living were presumably being reinforced in the development of cemeteries like Charmy Down and at sites like Chewton Plain 4, where the establishment of particular spatial relationships between individuals and barrows may have created funerary "topographies", and large platform monuments provided stages upon which the relations among the living, and between the living and the dead were verbalized and cemented, as at Davidstow I . However, our understanding of the role of the mound in the later period can be extended from these conceptions by seeing large and elaborate mound construction not only as a device used in invoking references to the past by individuals with certain political agendas, but additionally, as a way in which the rites of passage for both the deceased and the mourners were intricately linked with one another in a symbolic and timely way. In this context the decline of the pre-mound structures can be better understood by seeing them first, replaced by not only large, but elaborate mound forms which created and reproduced changes in the way time was structured during the second millennium and second, gradually reinvented as a part of the domestic habitus.

While sites like Davidstow I, Crig-a-Mennis, Nancekuke, and Treligga I reveal the growing importance of the pyre in the Early Bronze Age as public location where the rite of passage involving the deceased and the mourners was publicly played out, a deeper understanding of the increasing importance of the pyre during the early to mid-second millennium period may perhaps be gained by a consideration of the symbolic significance attached to transformation by fire, which as I have suggested, became an increasingly fundamental element in later Bronze Age cosmology. Further, while the pyre should surely be seen as having allowed greater participation of the community in the rites of passage for the deceased, it is evident from the participatory evidence at many sites, and their public and deliberate spatio-temporal staging, that all Beaker and Bronze Age funerary rituals involving monuments were public events, and that the interpretative stress shifted instead from an overwhelming emphasis on the timelessness of the diurnal and seasonal renewal of life and death, to a timely rite of passage involving both the deceased and the mourners equally.

Finally, the observation that throughout time, the mound itself, instead of specific individuals, became the focus for subsequent burials during the later Early Bronzer Age, is also evidenced by the later burials Carvinak, Try, and Markham Lane, and is likely due to the gradual decline of the pivotal role of barrows/cairns in the structuration of knowledge in the because of the growing importance of the domestic built environment.

6.28 Conclusion

Barth (1978:30) has noted that the "form and contents of ... ritual tradition [are] the outcome of an intermittent conversation between ritual experts and their audiences". This statement is most appropriate for headlining the conclusion to this work, since it is both a worthy description of the way in which the tradition of knowledge in the Bronze Age South-West was most likely produced (given the fact that mound burial was not conducted with any regularity, or under the auspices of a controlling authority) and, it also explains and justifies the particular research methodology adopted. The particular "intermittency" of Bronze Age ceremonial or monumental burial had the effect of yielding what initially appeared to me at the outset of the study as a jumbled plethora of practices, materials, interment forms, and mound structures – in short, a **disorder** within a larger order of practice. The results of the above study, I believe, indicate the merit in an investigation of disorder through a departure from long-established conventions of generalized description and analysis. Further, defining the object of analysis as a **tradition of knowledge**, as opposed to a type of burial, or monument, focused my investigation on the meaningful or signifying aspects of these ceremonies.

The investigation of disorder and meaning on the peninsula enabled a redefinition of the funerary sites included in the study from a series of monument **typologies** (often associated with particular culture groups or artifacts), to a series of **activities**, each of which contributed in an important and ongoing way to the development of the monuments. The initial results of this action-centered analysis indicated several important things about the details and development of ceremonial burial on the peninsula. First, it appears that builders and ritual specialists employed of a number of common themes or principles (initially defined as enclosure/separation, colour and texture, stratigraphy, and time) within their variable use of a wide collection of different material. These principles influenced both the construction of the sites, and also controlled movement

and perception in relation to them. Second, it further appears that the use of these devices may have had great importance in providing a meaningful framework for conceptualizing the rites of passage taking place on the sites by either relating them to repetitive and thus timeless solar cycles, or by providing some other metaphor for the life-death transition in the natural landscape. Third, the practice-centered approach revealed that that over time, activities at the sites progressed from greater attention towards pre-mound rituals (and the existence of long liminal period between death and final burial) towards more timed structural alternations at the sites, cremations, fires, and fewer examples of bone selection and deliberate skeletal curation. Moreover, this change appeared to have occurred as the earliest settlements and land divisions appeared on the peninsula, and was thus interpreted as relating to an important change in the way communities organized their activities in relation to the landscape and consequently, their timely cycle of rights and responsibilities to their kin and ancestors.

The more in-depth investigations in this chapter began with the premise that during the earlier Bronze Age, the construction of funerary monuments constituted the most important and effective way in which local and regional meaningful traditions of knowledge were both objectified and reproduced. This stands to reason not only because of their visibility, but because their construction and use in facilitating rites of passage across the peninsula involved a large labour investment and active participation by community members, and further, likely brought together distant kin and exchange partners to significant locales in the landscape that were imbued with long-term significance.

An examination of the variability within the overall similarity of these ceremonies and monuments indicated that on each site, builders and specialists established an overlapping and finite number of classification "planes" which closely paralleled the themes or principles identified in the initial assessment of the sites. These planes enabled certain stratigraphic, temporal, enclosure, axial and circumferal relationships to be established between objects, persons, and other significata based upon their range of attributes or qualities. These significata functioned as lesser or more dominant symbols on the sites, and included a wide variety of items from the cosmos, the landscape and the human sphere of practice, including the sun, and its passage around, above, and below the horizon, as well as rocks, subsoil and turf, (and especially, sediments having a high value or hue properties), wood, charcoal, ceramics, artifactual offerings, and the remains of the deceased. Their relationships with one another were either analogic/metaphorical or oppositional, and encompassed a range of states or qualities, such as darkness, brightness, wetness, below ground, death, hardness, softness,

dryness, lightness, impermanency, permanency, inside, and outside. Importantly, the particular way in which each of these oppositions was created, and the material used to create them varied to a greater or lesser degree between every site, but were most similar within cemeteries. Outside these, general regions having similar local lithologies also shared similar oppositional relationships between significata. Additionally, some single sites were very unique. This paralleled the observations of the earlier analysis, which indicated site-specific distinctions in mound construction and ritual, greater similarities between sites within cemeteries, and fewer similarities in specifics at the large scale.

A number of parallels between the oppositions and analogies highlighted between "planes" of spatio-temporal classification on individual sites existed. Further, these allowed other, more indirect, links to be established between different opposed or metaphorically related terms between different "planes,"[14] indicating that the sites were instrumental in the reproduction and crafting of complex practical taxonomies, or generative schemes. These taxonomies formed the building blocks for perception and knowledge across the peninsula by establishing relations between: light and dark things and states, regions and things above and below the ground surface and horizon, hard and softer materials, temporary and permanent significata, wet and dry materials and states, and living and dead states. Importantly, these states and conditions were related to significant solar transition points (equinoxes, solstices and north-south cardinal directions) in the landscape and during the year.

The inspiration, both for the taxonomies, and for the myriad classificatory regimes mobilized by the builders on the sites, is likely to have been a multi-dimensional cosmological construction, whose general form and principle themes were shared by the inhabitants of the region, though in details, it likely varied between communities and regions. The form of the cosmology was rooted in the phenomenological construction (by different communities) of the cosmic-circular horizon, the vertical relationships among living and non-living components of the biosphere and lithosphere, and the passage of time diurnally and seasonally (determined by the yearly solar cycle). Further, a central idea or theme running through these constructions was transformation, which was observed in a series of natural processes or humanly initiated actions which involved a change from one commonly identified state to another (e.g. drying, whitening, hardening, going below, coming up/above, going down/below) in a number of different cosmic and practice contexts (e.g. movements of the sun, change of the seasons, firing, cremating, baking, burial, agriculture).

Ceremonial burial on the peninsula therefore involved two things. First, it consisted of the construction of an *imago mundi* – an imagined world, as the funerary/ritual monument itself became a reproduction of the imagined cosmos or universe, since almost every aspect of it (from its construction, to the way it was occupied and moved through, to the way in which significata were manipulated within it), simultaneously objectified and reproduced a series of cosmological themes and constructions. Second within this imagined world, movements between well-recognized but opposed states or principles axially, temporally, stratigraphically, and symbolically (through the use of particular significata) were ritually highlighted. The intent of these numerous acts was nothing short of a ritual mediation between (or unifications of) these opposed principles so as to acknowledge and ensure the seamless transition from day to night, rise to set, winter to spring, longer nights to longer days etc. Most importantly however, by celebrating **funerary rites of passage** at the sites on important solstial transitions, or referencing these important passage days and time in the monuments, the changing status of the deceased could be ensured within the larger transformation taking place, and the continuity of the living community renewed. Further, appropriate respect for, or acknowledgement of, the larger cosmic transition was also accomplished by performing rites appropriate to them at the correct times.

Barrett (1984:50) has referred to the dual nature of the funerary rite, which can be seen as involving both the establishment of the ideal totality of the living community, and the transformation from life to death. In this thesis I have tried to show the ways in which the funerary rituals of the Bronze Age facilitated the conceptualization of this transition, and ultimately the constitution of society, and the cosmos by their role in the reproduction and transformation of systems of knowledge.

NOTES

[1] Features which respected two directions simultaneously (such as graves or multiple feature alignments near the centre of a site) are recorded as two observations in Figure 6.1. In the case of narrow entrances which spanned less than 15 degrees, the exact centre of each entrance was recorded, while wider entrances were recorded as two different alignments, since the terminus of one end of a post circle, for example, often appeared to align on or very near an important solstial azimuth, as already observed in Chapter 5.

[2] Alignments 2a, 20, 19 and 17d all lie over 15 degrees from any of the ideal alignment azimuths. These were omitted from the analysis since, unlike the other alignments, it could not be confidently assumed by their position that they related to one of the 8(4) azimuths in particular.

[3] The classic example of a dominant symbol being the Ndembu milk tree (Turner 1967), which is thought to stand for among other things, motherhood, a novice at the *Nkang'a* ceremony, the principal of matriliny, and women's breasts.

[4] Some support for this particular interpretation can be found in the stone wood opposition recently observed for the later Neolithic in Southern Britain, objectified by the opposed stone and wood henge sites on the Salisbury Plain and in the Avebury region (Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina 1998a,b).

The complex and enduring nature of this wood:stone opposition on the peninsula is further revealed in the name of a standing stone on the Goonhilly Downs: The Dry Tree, which has served as a parish boundary focal point since the first century AD (Smith 1984). Further examples of this opposition can be found elsewhere in Chapter 6.

[5] The significance and ramifications of the subsoil~sun above:below analogy and stratigraphic opposition are not as well defined at Davidstow III as they are somewhat later at the nearby, site of Davidstow I, where the ritual exegesis on the subsoil~sun analogy appears somewhat more "clarified" through the initial turf strip.

[6] If associations between these objects and the human body were being made at the site, such analogies would have been strengthened by the pits, capstones, and mounds which enclosed or covered these significata, all of which had the identical appearance of funerary pits and cairns for the dead in the Davidstow Cemetery at large (Appendix 3).

[7] The nature of such spatio-temporal cosmologies has been both examined and presented in a case study by Hugh-Jones (1979) in a discussion of the perceptual cosmological constructions among indigenous Columbians. The term "horizontal" to describe the cosmic-concentric portion of the south-western Bronze Age "universe" is adopted from her work.

[8] As noted in this section, and demonstrated in a number of site descriptions earlier in this chapter, and in Chapter 5, a common technique during mound construction involved the stratigraphic reversal, within the mounds, of surrounding natural profiles. Many of these materials exhibited contrasting attributes, and from this the builders and specialists could have set up meaningful oppositions of the kind forwarded above. It is also possible that the mere act of reversal was of equal significance to the actual qualities (attributes and stratigraphic position) of the materials reversed, given the importance of **transitions** between human, imagined and cosmic states or processes to these communities (evidenced by the attention towards solstial and equinoctial alignments and dates at the site, inspired by the cosmic-circular and temporal dimensions of their cosmology). The use of techniques of reversal in the sites, and its relevance to highlighting pertinent transitions and ensuring successive passage rites for deceased and solar "seasons" is discussed in further detail below.

[9] For instance, at Treligga 1 and 7, I suggested that the significance of quartz for the builders may have been derived from its particular position as vein quartz with respect to slate and sandstone. Quartz then, could have been seen as a special or sacred component of the bedrock, because it contrasted with its surrounding matrix in

a number of symbolically important ways: in its colour value (dark gray vs. white), in hardness, structure (angular and hard vs. soft and platy) and translucence or brightness (light vs. dark).

[10] In a forthcoming paper Keates (2001) notes the common practice of placing "luminous things into luminous contexts" during Copper Age carved stelae related rituals on the Western European mainland.

[11] Along these lines, Tilley (1996) has also illustrated the way in which meaningful associations could have been created between rock, water, and the ceremonial/ancestral monuments of the later Neolithic on Bodmin Moor, and Richards (1996) has published a similar interpretation to that forwarded here for the significance of water enclosures in Neolithic Orkney.

[12] This interpretation could conceivably be challenged by George Smith's (1984:25) interesting observation that the steep conical mound forms of the earlier Bronze Age (which were revetted by, or overlay low stone walls or posts, exemplified by the Trelen 2 construction) may have been designed to appear like house roofs.

[13] Brück's (1999) discussion of mobility and settlement during the earlier Bronze Age has great bearing on this point.

[14] For example, at East Putford I the homologous opposed states of light:dark::above:below which were set up in an axial "plane" by the orientation of the wooden burial enclosure were paralleled in the stratigraphic and temporal "planes" by the contextual relationships between the turf and the gray subsoil, which were, further linked by the construction of the mound to the opposed states of permanency and impermanency by the contextual use of wood and earthen components/soil opposition. This pair then, indirectly referred back to the movement of the sun above and below the horizon, as it moved between zones of upper impermanent things (wood, humans) to lower more permanent things (soils, subsoils), which had been in fact, ritually reversed during barrow construction.