

Sharing Memories, Establishing Histories: The Reproduction of the “Village Community” through Practices of Object Deposition in Early Bronze Age Korea

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Abstrak

The Bronze Age in the Korean peninsula witnessed many significant social and economic transformations, one of which was the transition from dispersed/linear settlements to nucleated settlements in the late Early Bronze Age and the concomitant emergence of the “village community.” This paper considers how the notion of the “village community” may have been reproduced through funerary practices of object deposition observed at the late EBA Phase I dolmens of the Yongdam complex, located in Jinan, southern Korea. Firstly, it is suggested that the stone objects deposited in and around the dolmens may have been personal items relevant to the life history of the deceased. Secondly, the ceramic vessel parts deposited around the dolmen burials are seen to have been associated with feasting practices. Finally, the possibility that the stone objects deposited in a deliberately broken and partial state may have been involved in practices of social enchainment is considered. It is argued that these different practices of object deposition mediated the sharing of memories, which in turn contributed to the establishment of community history. The reproduction of community history, it is maintained, would have played an important role in reproducing the notion of the “village community.”