

ON BEING RIGOROUSLY CONSISTENT: COMMENTS ON A PAPER BY M. PILAR PRIETO-MARTÍNEZ

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The paper by M. Pilar Prieto-Martínez certainly introduces a new quality into the discussion on the significance of Bell Beakers not only in Jutland but also in the whole northern province. It contains many groundbreaking concepts on both analytical and interpretation levels, making it an attractive object of discussion for years to come in forums other than this. The richness of the paper makes it necessary, consistent with the convention adopted here, to limit oneself to selected questions. I shall focus on two. The first is of a methodological nature, while the second – somewhat more general – is related to the way Bell Beakers are defined by the researcher.

Prieto-Martínez – a resident of Spain – has broken with a certain tradition of presenting settlement materials dating to the Late Neolithic in southern Scandinavia. I met this tradition myself in December 1996 when, through the kindness of John Simonsen, I was able to look into the boxes stored in the Skive Museum containing materials from several settlements of this type located on the Limfjord. I concentrated then on materials from the settlement in Tastum (Simonsen 1983), which can be considered an example of the publication standards then. The publications were primarily qualitative in nature: they listed individual categories of spectacular finds without giving any quantities, except for a total number of sherds. Moreover, characteristic fragments were discussed chiefly in the case of vessels bearing spectacular ornaments (in this very case bearing rich Bell Beaker ornaments). Lip rims and bottoms were only mentioned and only rarely were any data at all provided on undecorated belly fragments, always making up the highest percentage of

examined collections. The manufacturing technology of pottery was usually not analysed. This kind of publication standard was used for the settlement at Myrhøj, a crucial locality for Jutland's prehistory (cf. Jensen 1972, 90–108, esp. list on p. 90), and other settlements: Diverhøj (Asingh 1987, 148, 150–152), Fur (Jensen 1972, 109, 1986, 173), Hemmed Plantation (Boas 1986, 322, 1991, 131–132), Mortens Sande 2 (Liversage 1987, 112–113) or Lodbjerg (Liversage 2003, 41–45).

Owing to Prieto-Martínez's work, we have a more comprehensive picture of the nature of Bell Beaker ceramic records. Her effort to analyse the pottery, and not only that bearing spectacular ornaments, thoroughly and exhaustively merits praise. To do that she developed a comprehensive model (fig. 5), covering also technological issues such as the choice and coarseness of temper or the conditions of firing. This part of the paper under review raises Jutland Bell Beaker ceramic record analysis to new heights. It has brought out the great formal richness of undecorated pottery and that ornamented in a non-Beaker style, showing links to local traditions. Attention had already been drawn to the latter aspect by Liversage (2003) in his conception of the typochronology of Danish Bell Beaker materials. The embedding of the tradition in the local substrate is observed across the Bell Beaker northern province (Czebreszuk 2001, 116–141). However, for Prieto-Martínez this stage of the analysis is purely preparatory as she focuses mainly on bringing out the functional-social senses that are inherent in different pottery attributes. In principle, I believe she is right.

The other question I shall focus on here is the problem of defining Danish Bell Beaker. Prieto-Martínez does not elaborate on the question. What she does, however, is to include a map and a list of sites that she believes to belong to local Bell Beaker (fig. 2). The question, however, cannot be ignored,

because it touches on matters of fundamental importance. The choice what we believe to be a Bell Beaker find (and put on a map of finds) and what we do not (and leave out of the map) involves profound consequences, disclosing our opinion on the nature of Bell Beaker in Jutland and its place in the cultural transformations taking place in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age in this part of Europe. Hence, the list of Bell Beaker sites drawn up as it is in the work reviewed is *meaningful*. I shall take the liberty of elaborating on the question below.

Prieto-Martínez represents a methodological approach characteristic especially of archaeology as practised in English-speaking and Scandinavian countries. She is less interested in the historical aspect (changes through time) and more in social issues (what was the significance of a studied fragment of material culture in the form of pottery for the society). The way she discusses these issues is very inspiring. Specifically, the discussion provides a good example how skilfully to link archaeological data collected at a single settlement (site Bjergene VI is a case in point here) with questions about the structure of a society. The proposal put forward in the paper under review will certainly be an important voice in relevant discussions. It must have been these general assumptions that made Prieto-Martínez place sites of a strictly limited typological description on the list of Bell Beaker localities. These are by and large features of the Myrhøj type related above all to metopic ornaments. However, there are many examples of other sites, which may be discussed in the context of questions analysed here, but have not found their way to Prieto-Martínez's list. By way of example, the following sites can be named: Bodbjerg Ditch (investigations carried out in 1976 and 1983, Liversage pers. comm.), Broholm (Lomborg 1977, 26), Emmelev Mark (Boas 1986, 322), Feldum (Schroeder 1951, Taf. 12:5, Glob 1952, 54), Frammerslev (Glob 1945, 97, fig. 61, 1952, 57), Frederiksgave (Glob 1945, 88, 1952, 61), Gåbense Fægegård (Becker 1936, 165–166,

fig. 26, Glob 1952, 54), Hjerpsted (Glob 1952, 54), Hovergårde (Jensen 1986, 171), Kirke Helsing (Rosenberg 1929, 222; Glob 1945, 88, 1952, 61), Kvolsted (Glob 1952, 57), Orebygård (Becker 1936, 153, Glob 1952, 54), Pismølle (Boas 1986, 322), Tøstrup (Boas pers. comm.) and Tudergård (Glob 1952, 60). These sites frequently contain materials from the stylistic grey area between Bell Beaker and the SGC (zone and metopic ornaments on K3 beakers according to Glob) or Bell Beaker and later groups (LN II) (barbed-wire type ornaments). Whether we include such materials in Bell Beaker or not is not only a typological decision. It is crucial for models attempting to determine the degree Bell Beakers are embedded in the regional course of cultural transformations. The models, in turn, affect the ways of reconstructing the social role of pottery bearing Beaker-style ornaments. Hence, an apparently trivial problem, i.e. drawing up a list of sites of a given cultural unit, is seen to reveal its far-reaching consequences for the scale of interpretation models adopted. Perhaps, in this case, we are dealing with a reverse situation? Perhaps, the list is a *consequence* of a hypothesis adopted earlier about the social role of Bell Beakers? For Prieto-Martínez has adopted an implied assumption that Bell Beaker is the Bell Beaker *culture* standing clearly apart from the local SGC. In her conception, there existed two separate societies: an earlier and more 'traditionalist' community (SGC), and a later and 'progressive' one (Bell Beaker Culture). On my part, I believe that another model is also plausible, one where the investigated area was settled by one community (Czebreszuk 2001, 2003), exhibiting ever greater internal differentiation. With time, some of its members began using more and more ostensibly different sets of material culture (first SGC style, later that of the BBC) to demonstrate their claims to more prestigious social positions (nascent higher class). The case of rich settlement known from Bjergene VI does not exclude such an explanation.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the author on her greatly inspiring work. In particular, she is to be admired for simple rigorous consistency in completing the plan outlined in the introduction. Internal logic, no redundant paragraphs out a well-thought-out whole do Prieto-Martínez credit. No discussion of Bell Beaker, not only in central Europe, is possible any longer without her work. Congratulations.

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THE NORTHERN CONNECTION: BELL BEAKER CULTURE INFLUENCES NORTH OF SKAGERAK

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The increasing appreciation of the influential part played by the Bell Beaker Culture (BBC) in the formation and development of the Scandinavian Late Neolithic (SLN) has been a feature of Scandinavian archaeology for close on forty years, or at least since J. A. Jensen's excavation of the Myrhøj site in the early 1970s, the work of scholars such as Helle Vandkilde (1996) and the several participants in the Thy project forming important signposts along the road (cf. also Rasmussen 1990). Today, some scholars seem inclined to view the SLN as