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Reviews and End Matter

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BOOK REVIEWS

The History of Beads: From 100,000 B.C. to the Present, Revised and Expanded Edition.

Lois Sherr Dubin. Abrams, 115 West 18th Street, New York, NY 10011. 2009. 396 pp., 475 color figs., foldout timeline, index. ISBN 978-0-8109-5174-7. \$75.00 (hard cover).

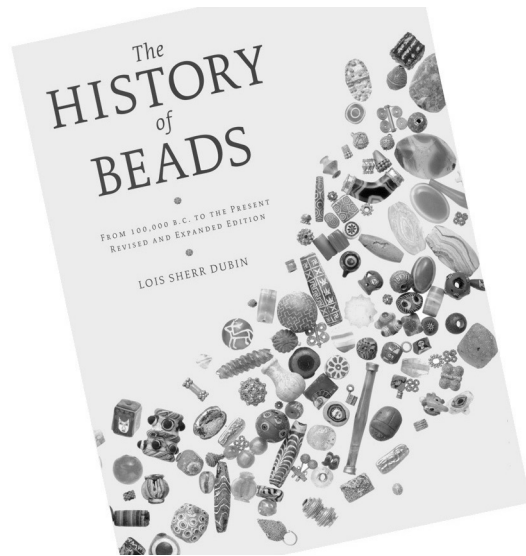
The Worldwide History of Beads.

Lois Sherr Dubin. Thames and Hudson, 181A High Holborn, London WC1V 7QX. 2010. 396 pp., 475 color figs., foldout timeline, index. ISBN 978-0-500-51500-6. £39.95 (hard cover).

This book, with the title *The History of Beads: From 30,000 B.C. to the Present* and 364 pages in length, came out in 1987, published by Thames and Hudson in the UK and by Abrams in the USA. A “Concise Edition” came out in 1995, published by Thames and Hudson; this was a paperback costing £12.95, with 136 pages and the important pioneering Timeline. Now, some 23 years later, a second, revised edition has come out. The title for the North American edition is *The History of Beads: From 100,000 B.C. to the Present, Revised and Expanded Edition*, while the UK edition is simply entitled *The Worldwide History of Beads*. Aside from spelling differences (American vs. British), the text is identical in both.

The new edition is 30 pages longer than the first but, until we get to page 317 and the chapter on “Contemporary: Europe and North America,” the pagination and the chapter headings are the same within both editions. The subject matter is treated partly by theme and partly by chronology or region. We start with “Introduction” and “The Beginnings” before going on to “Antiquity: From Neolithic times to the Roman Empire” and “Europe: The Late Roman Empire to the Renaissance.” The following three chapters deal with “Prayer Beads,” “The World of Islam,” and “The Age of European Expansion.” Seven chapters follow that deal with beads on a regional framework: “Africa,” “The Far East: China, Korea, and Japan,” “India,” “Central Asia,” “Southeast Asia and the South Pacific,” “Middle and South America,” and “North America.” After that, Lois Dubin takes up special themes with “The Special Beads: Amber and Pearls,” “The Magical Eye Bead,” and “Contemporary:

Europe and North America,” the last chapter focusing on the great explosion of craft beadmaking that began in the latter part of the 20th century. Bead shapes, the Timeline chart with its key and glossary, notes, and a bibliography make up the rest of the book. The notes, incidentally, often give important information that got omitted from the main body of text, as well as references.



The most obvious change in the second edition lies in the maps that come with each chapter; these are now in color, and consequently are much easier to follow. Indeed, an increased use of color is evident in that 70 illustrations in grayscale were replaced with images in color, and 200 new photographs were taken for the new edition. The author is well served in both editions by photographer Kiyoshi Togashi whose pictures are of a consistently high quality. It is a bonus for the serious bead reader that Dubin is meticulous in giving dimensions in all her captions. Most captions are close to the illustration concerned but there are many cases where one has to flip pages backwards or forwards to read them and a caption may even be split over two pages. Those on pages 247-250 are an extreme example of this.

There are some errors to point out. On pages 79, 82, and 85, the Tibetan double thunderbolt *dorje* is misspelt *djore*, an error that is repeated from the first edition. The double-page spread of beads traded in Africa is given

as being in the collection of the British Museum at the Museum of Mankind, London, although the Museum of Mankind as a separate entity closed in 1997. There is a case of proofreading carelessness on p. 258 where the caption for fig. 267a is given as a drawing of a pattern on a bead; this was present in the first edition, absent in the second. The caption should have read "Detail of birdman rock carvings." In my view, the line detail drawing in the first edition is more informative than the photographic image that was retained. Photographic images are often inferior to line drawings, as can be seen by comparing the bead forms illustrated in Horace Beck's classic publication with those on pp. 362-363. In the chapter on amber and pearl, there is still no mention of the Dominican Republic, a major source of amber.

In Africa, my area of special interest, there are surprising gaps and errors. When it comes to ancient beads, the map facing p. 20 shows the sites of Grotte des Pigeons, Haua Fteah, and Enkapune, but does not show that of Blombos Cave in South Africa, which has even older beads, although the name of the site is squeezed into the extreme bottom left of the Timeline. The site of Mapungubwe in South Africa is incorrectly listed as a tribe in the Index, with no mention of the "garden roller" beads or the connection with the Indo-Pacific bead trade from eastern India and further east except in a footnote that gives no credit to Claire Davison's work on bead analysis or the work of Peter Francis, Jr. There is no mention of the finely worked straw beads made in Mali as an alternative to filigree gold, though the Timeline shows (incorrectly) such a bead as made in Ashanti, Ghana (no. 1246). It might have been worth mentioning the great development of beadmaking and beadworking as a means of generating cash among women, especially in eastern and southern Africa.

Throughout the second edition, there was an effort to adhere to the pagination of the first edition. The final section, "Contemporary: Europe and North America," was much expanded (from 14 pages to 45) and rightly so in view of the great number of artists creating glass beads and beadwork. Beads made of plastic, especially polymer clay (Fimo), are featured; also paper as shown in the picture of a group of women in Oaxaca, Mexico (p. 325). Unsurprisingly, nearly all of the examples illustrated originate in North America and a great many pictures illustrate seed beads used to form ornaments of great complexity, which might put them outside the scope of a book on beads.

There are quite a few small typos throughout the text and captions. In the Bibliography there seems to be no

consistency in listing book titles, which may or may not be italicized. More titles originate in North America than Europe, which is normal for a book produced in the USA, but causes some surprising omissions.

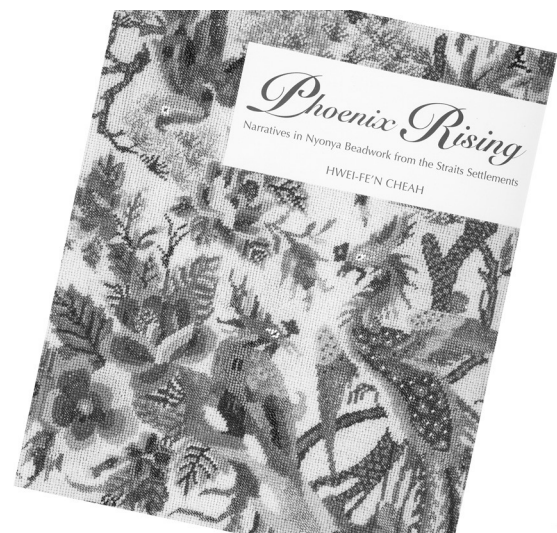
To sum up, even with its omissions and irritating captions and typos, the first edition was a landmark publication in the field of bead studies and the revised edition with enhanced illustrations and Timeline is worth adding to the bookshelf.

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Phoenix Rising: Narratives in Nyonya Beadwork from the Straits Settlements.

Hwei-Fe'n Cheah. NUS Press, National University of Singapore, AS3-01-02, 3 Arts Link, Singapore 117569. 2010. xvi + 384 pp., 206 color figs., 22 B&W figs., glossary, index. ISBN 978-9971-69-468-5. \$55.00US (paper cover).

Hwei-Fe'n Cheah has written extensively on the beadwork and embroidery of the Nyonyas of the Straits Settlements and Netherlands Indies. *Phoenix Rising* is the culmination of these efforts to build a picture of Nyonya fiber arts and to place that work in a larger cultural context, both regional and worldwide. She builds on earlier work by Ho Wing Meng and Eng-Lee Seok Chee.



Cheah sees her book as having three interlocking parts, each examining one significant aspect of Nyonya beadwork. “I refer to these as narratives to acknowledge that each is a partial and reconstructed history of Nyonya beadwork retold through a particular lens: its social role, its development through time and space, and its significance in the present” (p. 17).

One important aspect of her book is the creation of a chronology of Nyonya beadwork. For this she finds inspiration in M.A. Dhaky who worked toward a dating system for Indian embroideries. Pieces with known provenance and articles inscribed with dates were used by him as “anchors” and, characterized by the types of motifs and chromatic range of beads used at different periods, he came up with a fairly well-defined chronological trend, leavened with the knowledge that beads and motifs can be reused at later times. Cheah followed a similar path, focussing on pieces with good provenance, museum accession dates, and analysis of newspaper used as backing. She notes that imagery changed over time, and the types of beads used, variations in cloth backings and needlework cloth, slipper styles, and changes in wedding customs all contributed to what she felt was a reasonable chronology reflected in the captions of the figures in her chronology chapter.

Nyonya beadwork uses tiny glass seed beads, generally less than 1.5 mm, and can be incredibly detailed. In early pieces, animals and flowers swarm in profusion in pieces both embroidered and netted. While the origin of netting in Nyonya beadwork is uncertain, it is beautifully worked and impressively detailed for a technique that doesn’t easily lend itself to curved and ornate lines. Other pieces are embroidered on velvet and often coupled with metallic threads and sequins. Familiar Chinese design elements such as dragons, peonies, phoenixes, and sometimes figures from Chinese astrology all tumble together in densely clustered tableaux.

The early part of the 20th century is represented by a mingling of traditional styles and, increasingly, new designs and the use of petit-point stitch. As women began wearing lighter colors, so too did lighter colors become more predominant in beadwork backgrounds. Netted and couched-stitch beadwork gradually fell out of favor and petit-point became more dominant. Roses displaced the peony and Western needlework images like dogs and flower girls began appearing, followed in the 1930s by cartoon characters. Wedding fashion changed sufficiently so that elaborately beaded wedding gear was no longer in style. With beadwork uncoupled from heavily symbolic design elements, European designs and those of popular culture surged in popularity. In the 1950s, as the Straits and Southeast Asia recovered from the economic devastation of

World War II, in which many Peranakans lost much of their wealth in tribute to the Japanese, women became an essential part of the work force, completing the trend toward making beadwork a hobby, not a lifestyle, and freeing women from the isolation of the home where needlework flourished.

Phoenix Rising relays detailed information about the manufacture of rocailles, charlottes, hex-cuts, and faceted or knurled metal seed beads and corrects Ho Wing Meng’s bead terminology error; i.e., having referred to seed beads with a single facet as being caused by “accidental effects of the polishing” (see Ho 1987:45). On the issue of cultural influences, Cheah notes there are disagreements, Ho seeing a Minangkabau influence on wedding ornaments, while both Eng-Lee and Joo Ee Khoo associate Nyonya beadwork with that of Europeans. She acknowledges Valerie Hector’s ongoing studies of the beadwork of mainland China and how elements from that work might also have influenced Nyonya designs.

Regarding beadwork techniques, while the images of pieces in progress in the chapter “Toward a Chronology of Nyonya Beadwork” are clear and useful and the image of the netted beadwork laid over a drawing of flowers increases one’s respect for the skill of the Nyonyas who transformed flat line drawings on paper into colorful pictorial netted beadwork, I would like to have seen an appendix of beadwork diagrams and text, showing the stringing used to make the netted works, especially given that in her review of Ho’s book, Cheah (2008:85) herself takes issue with his technical descriptions, noting their unclear threading patterns and lack of relevance to Malay and Chinese pieces she had examined. While it can be difficult to know for certain how pieces are constructed, careful noting of the placement of knots, observation of how the threads move over beads at the edges of pieces, the use of a loupe and strong light to determine passage of thread visible through transparent beads, and a painstaking following of threads through a piece, coupled most importantly with actually working the technical description with beads and thread to see if one’s theories are correct, can oftentimes make sense of method and allow for reasonably accurate transcription.

My greatest concern is Cheah’s use of the term “lane stitch,” described as “where two or more beads are fastened to the fabric base with a single stitch.” The term lane stitch refers most commonly to American Indian beadwork of the Northern Plains and Columbia River Plateau and is a stitch in which a number of beads (more than two) are strung before the carrying thread returns through the ground and the overall effect is one of numerous rows of beads at least four to ten beads in length, *all parallel to each other with straight edges*, hence use of the word “lane” to define the stitch. The predecessor term for this was “lazy” or “lazy

squaw” stitch, the negative connotations of which prompted the suggested renaming to “lane stitch” by Bill Holm. An illustration of the “lazy stitch” shows equally numbered beads in rows with even edges (Orchard 1975:151), which style of beading does not appear to be present in Peranakan beadwork. Cheah’s source material (Van Horn 2006:60) shows a number of parallel rows of four beads, which groups of rows are worked at 90° angles to each other to create a basket-weave pattern, an unusual use of the lane stitch. Examination of a photograph sent to me by Cheah upon query does not show an appreciable number of parallel rows of similar length and, instead, shows a stitch perhaps best described as a random fill-in stitch. In any case, it is not lane stitch and it’s unfortunate that this term is now associated in print with Nyonya beadwork.

Phoenix Rising is lavishly illustrated with over 200 photographs showing a diversity of forms from slippers, wallets, purses, belts, and ceremonial accouterments such as headdresses, collars, handkerchiefs (*sapu tangan*), and shoulder pieces (*sangkot bahu*) to items associated with the wedding chamber such as mattress panels, mirror covers, pillow ends, and curtain ties. Several period photographs show people wearing many of the items pictured in the book and often they are named individuals, rather than anonymous stand-ins for the larger culture, increasing the sense of the personal that Cheah’s book warmly conveys with its frequent reference to oral and family histories. Her exploration of the nature of the bead trade in and around the Straits is enlightening and her dissection of Peranakan Chinese culture, its place at the heart of 19th-century international trade in Southeast Asia, and our peek into the daily lives of its women who left no written histories of their own is engrossing. *Phoenix Rising*’s flaws are few and the contribution Cheah makes to the study of this material is extensive, both broad and deep.

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Heidi Munan and Freya Martin (eds.). Craffhub, No. 96 Main Bazaar, First Floor, 93000 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. 2010. i-vi + 120 pp., 48 color figs., 17 B&W figs. \$40.00 postpaid (paper cover). To order, contact craffhub@gmail.com

This publication contains the papers presented at the Borneo International Beads Conference held in Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia, 9-10 October 2010. The *Journal* was available at the conference and the organizers need to be congratulated for the photos as well as the speedy production of the *Journal*. In fact, they should be congratulated on the overall excellence of their first International Conference.



The presentations can be divided into three main categories:

1. Improving the quality (and, in turn, marketability) of local beadmaking;
2. Bead culture, past and present, in Borneo; and
3. Bead culture in Southeast Asia outside Borneo.

Improving the Quality of Local Beadmaking

The article by Nor Azmah Ad Kadir et al. focuses on the technical development of the ceramic bead industry in Lawas, Sarawak. The Ministry of Rural and Regional Development under the One Village One Product programme enabled a group of local villagers, living near a good source of local clay, to improve the quality of their clay beads and glazing as well as to increase their production capacity.

Yekti Kusmartono, the author of “Jatim Beads: From Trash to Treasure,” writes about the skills of Indonesian glass beadmakers who use recycled glass to make very good copies of Venetian and other beads valued by the people of Borneo. As a result, there is now a thriving cottage industry in East Java and Yekti has developed a fashion bead-stringing group which produces elegant necklaces and earrings.

Reita Rahim tells how, in spite of misfortune (loss of land) and the arrival of cheap plastic and glass beads, the indigenous minorities, the Orang Asal of Peninsular Malaysia and the Rungus of Kudat, Sabah, have revived the making and selling of organic beads. This is partly due to eco-conscious buyers wishing to buy natural products uncontaminated by chemicals and a wish to buy from fair-trade sellers. Ms Rahim began The Indigenous Peoples’ Stall (Gerai OA) in 2004 to aid Orang Asal communities in revitalizing and marketing their craft heritage. Through interviews with elders and craftspeople, she has documented the traditional knowledge of what powers an organic bead might have. Valuable information, including tables, tells us of the various seeds, stems, roots, shells, bones, teeth, and tusks that are, or have been, used to make beads. The Orang Asal people have a great love of ornamentation. They have started to include plastic, bought or recycled, as well as other materials into their ornamentation.

Bead Culture, Past and Present, in Borneo

“Bead Culture Today” by Heidi Munan, one of the principal bead experts of Sarawak, provides a condensed history of the origins and value of heirloom beads. As a long-time resident of Sarawak, her local knowledge adds interest to her stories and her hopes for future bead industries.

The paper by Eileen Paya Foong and Terry Justin Dit, entitled “Importance of Preserving Memories,” tells a fascinating personal story about important old beads owned by one Dayak family. It is an historical look at marriage practices and slavery in Kayan and Kenyah communities.

Ipoi Datan, an archaeologist and Director of the Sarawak Museum, presents an overview of sites in Sarawak where beads have been found. Good descriptions of the types of bead excavated, including beads from animal bone and teeth, are given but the writer assumes the reader understands concepts like “late Neolithic” but the use of calendar years may have been easier for non-archaeologists.

Together, these articles provide a great overview of the beads of Sarawak.

Bead Culture in Southeast Asia Outside Borneo

Cheah Hwei-Fe’n, an Australian academic, has written about the Chinese influence on Nyonya beadwork. Various techniques used to produce the amazingly colourful household articles made from small seed beads are described. A discussion of the design influences in various areas shows the possibility of western influence. It is disappointing that there is not more discussion of the size of the beads used as I think some were very small and may have been the same beads used in European beaded bags of the 19th century. Finally, the article describes the changes happening in present-day Nyonya beading.

David B. Baradas’s article “Bead Culture of the Philippines” alone makes the *Journal* worth purchasing. One of the important trading influences was the mining of gold in the Philippines and many gold beads have been found in archaeological sites. The indigenous bead culture of northern Luzon, especially of the Kalingas (but also the Gaddang, Isneg, Ifugao, Bontocs, and Illonogot), is described in great detail from past to present. A similar description of the mountain people of Mindanao tells us about the different religions, languages, and uses of beads in these cultures. The description of western research in the Philippines also is very informative.

Jamey Allen, who has international expertise in glass and other beads, covers the larger area of Island Southeast Asia. He discusses the difficulties in dating beads, the history of glass in these regions, and the value of specific beads to the people of particular areas: Formosa, Java/Indonesia, the Philippines, and Palau. The appendix on origins of heirloom beads is particularly informative.

Overall, participants of the Borneo International Beads Conference came away with a much better understanding of

the bead culture of Borneo and the broader Southeast Asian region. The *Journal* captures this information and makes it available as a foundation for future researchers.

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Heidi Munan and Freya Martin (eds.). Craithub, No. 96 Main Bazaar, First Floor, 93000 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. 2011. i-vi + 196 pp., 80 color figs., 32 B&W figs. \$40.00 postpaid (paper cover). To order, contact craithub@gmail.com

One might expect a bead conference held in Borneo to concentrate on Borneo or, at most, Southeast Asia, but 40% of the talks at the Borneo International Beads Conference 2011 held in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, concerned beads and beadwork of the rest of the world. Many talks described beads and beadwork and their use and meaning in the context of the particular cultural group under discussion. This is a necessary first step as many of these groups are not widely known outside their country. Some talks also analyzed political and philosophical reasons for the interest or lack of interest and the understanding of beads and beadwork of indigenous cultures and how and why that is beginning to change. If this volume is read through and taken as a whole, one comes away with an intense appreciation of people's boundless ability to express abstract ideas in the physical world with beautiful objects. Peter Francis had it right: "It is all about the people." The following articles comprise the *Journal*.

The Significance of Beads in Kayan-Kenyah Customary Law (Adet Kayan-Kenyah 1994), by Henry Anyi Ajang and Anthonius L. Sindang

The authors present an excellent introduction to beads and their use among the Kayan and Kenyah peoples of Sarawak. They migrated from Kalimantan to Sarawak in the 18th century. Beads came from the Chinese and Bruneian Malays traveling up river to their lands to trade. Beads were scarce and so were valuable, being kept as heirlooms passed down the matrilineal line.

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The use of beads and other items in social and ritual activities was an oral tradition for centuries and is complex and precise. The traditions were codified in 1994 as the Adet Kayan-Kenyah (Kayan-Kenyah Customary Law). The Kayan/Kenyah people have three social strata. The authors list what gifts are required for engagements and marriage according to the class of the individuals. Two tables list the types of beads and other items that must be offered to the offended party for breaches of taboos such as adultery or incest.



Rapid development in Sarawak often means cemeteries are affected and the deceased must be exhumed and reburied. This is a spiritually dangerous job for the diggers. The 1994 Adet has codified the restititional articles that must be provided to each digger which include a bead bracelet made with very specific beads. These strengthen the person's spirit and protect it from misfortune.

Beaded Wedding Baskets of Southwestern Sumatra, by Peggy and Arthur Astarita

Beautifully beaded covered baskets are used in weddings and ceremonies celebrating rites of passage in southwestern Sumatra to present gifts to the celebrant. Dowry items are carried in these baskets in a procession to the ceremony site. The gift is removed, the basket returned to the owner and carefully stored until needed again. Unfortunately it is likely these baskets are no longer made and their use in ceremonies is less common than in the past.

Varying in size, the baskets are constructed of woven rattan and covered with cloth with beads stitched through the fabric and rattan. Additional embellishments include cowrie shells and occasional metal medallions. Corner stops of Rudraksha seeds seat the top into the bottom of the basket. The basket is then coated with a tree sap which imparts a patina, creates a tight feel, and protects the materials from wear. When not in use, the basket is wrapped in a *tampan*, a sacred cloth made with four colors for spiritual protection, and stored in a plain rattan basket. Baskets are passed down in the family.

Other beaded items were also made and used in ceremonies: curtain tie backs for the wedding bed, food covers, pedicure pillows, stuffed hanging decorations, umbrellas, slippers, and banners, all of similar construction as the baskets.

Art on a String from Arnhem Land, by Louise Hamby

The women of Australia's Arnhem Land have been making necklaces for centuries and continue to do so not only because it is a continuation of tradition and provides some economic benefit for their families, but because they enjoy it. Hamby presents reasons why necklaces made from organic materials have been neglected on many levels by non-Aboriginals which include a lack of exposure of threaded objects to a wide audience and a general ignorance of Aboriginal material culture. Another factor is a lack of identification of the maker when sold in the marketplace and their products are often lumped in a basket in a shop. This is beginning to change and art advisors in Aboriginal art centers are starting to label each piece. Furthermore, there have been many exhibitions of Aboriginal art throughout Australia since the late 1980s and Hamby provides a good review of these. She also discusses the individual artists and their particular style of necklaces.

In constructing necklaces for personal use, the string is hand spun from various materials such as plant and bark fiber, possum fur, human hair, and yarn. It is labor intensive. For necklaces to be sold, nylon fishing line is used as it is readily available, often with manufactured clasps. Large seeds, grass stems, shells, shark vertebrae, and feathers were and are used. Metal sewing needles allow much smaller seeds to be used as it is impossible to make holes or thread these seeds without them.

Melanau Bead Culture, by Hat Bin Hoklai

The small portion of the Melanau population which is pagan, the Melanau Likou, continues the traditional use of

the beads that were once ubiquitous among all Melanau. Beads provided protection from malevolent spirits and supernatural powers, denoted wealth and status within the community, and also served to adorn sun hats and the hems of dresses. Most Melanau are now Muslim and the use of beads has been greatly restricted.

It is during weddings that beads are still commonly used by all Melanau. Banded agate and blue Vaseline glass beads are tied onto the wrist of the bride by the mother-in-law and worn for three days. The number of beads varies according to the rank of the bride. Once a child was born, it was given a wristlet of beads to protect it from spiritual dangers. Later it wore a wristlet of light blue beads to maintain health. The village midwife would regularly massage a nursing mother and her baby with a locally made ointment to prevent postpartum depression, arthritis, and migraines. This had to be paid for with brass beads, never money.

After a death, immediate family wear blue beads on their wrist for protection. The deceased has yellow beads tied around the head to set the mouth in a seemingly position. Beads were formerly used as grave gifts but this is now rarely done to thwart grave robbers.

Ornaments of the Dead among the Nagas, by Alok Kumar Kanungo

The origin of the Naga and their migration to the Naga Hills in northeastern India and neighboring Myanmar is not yet fully understood. It has been proposed that they may have ancient connections with Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Southeast Asia because they share some similar cultural practices such as death rituals and platform burials. The author believes that, despite intense cultural pressures from Sanskritization and Westernization, customs associated with death are extremely slow to change because death carries high emotional value and is tied to deeply held afterlife beliefs. The study of death rituals, burial practices, and grave goods may identify persisting ancient traditions that might help determine the origins of the Naga.

Head and body ornaments, often very elaborate, are worn by all Naga groups. The particular style of jewelry worn is earned (it is not just decoration) and is a marker of status. It is not known how beads entered Nagaland prior to contact with missionaries in the 19th century. Nowadays beads come from other parts of India. The main components are shell (conch and cowrie), glass beads of varying sizes, carnelian, brass, boar's tusks, and bone.

Curiously little has been studied about ornaments buried with the Naga. Nineteenth-century ethnographers describe burial practices in some detail but do not mention any

ornaments. Burial sites dating from 4460 B.C. to ca. A.D. 1650 have produced only a few copper wristlets. Kanungo proposes several possibilities to account for the fact that the Naga, all of whom wear large amounts of beads and ornaments, include few with their dead. Perhaps, since beads and carnelians are trade items coming very long distances, it was only in the mid-19th century when Westerners arrived that these materials became available in any quantity. For the Naga groups where only the skull of the deceased was kept after a platform burial decomposed, the head ornaments did accompany the skull when it was stored in a ceramic vessel. The body ornaments may have been taken away at the time the skull was removed. Women's ornaments are typically inherited by daughters so they would not form grave goods.

Something for Everyone: Haudenosaunee Souvenir Beadwork, by Karlis Karklins

The Haudenosaunee, the Six Nations Iroquois of upstate New York, United States, and southern Ontario, Canada, have been using glass beads since the late 1500s. Initially used to embellish their own clothing and possessions, towards the end of the 18th century the Haudenosaunee began to use beads to produce various souvenir items, a tradition that continues to the present day. The beadwork was traditionally made by women and appealed primarily to women. It was sold at major tourist attractions such as Niagara Falls as well as fairs and other events in the region. These souvenirs were popular and prized. It is estimated that some 200,000 pieces have been produced over the past two centuries. Their popularity declined during the Depression and after World War II but recently there has been a resurgence of interest in them by both Haudenosaunee beadworkers and beadwork collectors around the world.

Haudenosaunee beadwork is unique in that the decoration is raised or bows above the surface. The six major categories of Haudenosaunee souvenir beadwork are pincushions, wall hangings, three-dimensional purses, flat purses, garments, and miscellaneous items. The pincushions are made of cloth and stuffed with various materials. There are 15 forms with the most common being hearts and lobed hearts. Wall hangings have a foundation of cardboard or thick paper covered with cloth. Picture frames, horseshoes, and wall pockets for brushes, matches, scissors, ties, watches, and letters are common. The purses and pouches are in two styles: three dimensional and flat. The latter, in several forms, have a black velvet covering reinforced with cardboard or newspaper and are ornamented on both sides with ornate beaded floral designs. Moccasins and several forms of caps comprise the garments group while the

miscellaneous category includes such objects as card cases, mats, valences, and emeries in the form of strawberries.

Beads and Heritage: Sarawak Museum Beads Collection, by Tazudin Mohtar

The Sarawak Museum, founded in 1891, is one of the finest natural history and ethnography museums in Southeast Asia. The museum is overseen by the Sarawak Museum Department which is responsible for the protection and preservation of Sarawak's diverse ethnic heritage. The core of the museum's bead and beadwork collection is comprised of the items acquired by Hugh Brooke Low during the latter part of the 19th century and by the Reverend Hudson Southwell in the 1960s. The materials reveal the diversity of the indigenous cultures and help us understand the character of Sarawak.

"Blue Beads to Trade with the Natives:" A Case Study, by Heidi Munan

Blue beads have long had wide appeal among various cultures, including those of Borneo. The reason for this popularity is uncertain but it is likely that the first beads brought for trade to people far from the source of production were blue. Centuries later beads in many colors became available but the oldest, original, or venerable beads are blue. Along with ceramics and textiles, stone and glass beads were brought to Borneo by Arabian, European, and Chinese traders.

The production of beads for export in China probably began during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). In 1372, sea trade was forbidden outside China and craftsmen, likely including beadmakers, left China and emigrated to ports in Southeast Asia to set up workshops. In 1608, an East India Company employee wrote about blue glass beads made by Chinese artisans in West Java specifically for export to Sukadana, then an important trading center on the southwest coast of Borneo. Another East India Company employee wrote of a Chinese beadmaker producing beads in Sukadana. Glass or beadmaking sites in Southeast Asia are difficult to locate and identify as they could have been small; a hearth, bellows, and a thatched roof would suffice. Once abandoned, the jungle would quickly reclaim them.

A distinctive blue barrel bead is found universally in Borneo but not equally valued by all groups nor are they concerned where the beads came from. Each variant of the blue barrel has a name and ranking. It is likely the preponderance of blue barrel heirloom beads were made by

Chinese artisans in West Java specifically for the Borneo market. Most blue barrel beads in Borneo are made of lead glass. Chemical analysis may be of limited use to pinpoint the origin of the beads as they were made of any recyclable material at hand. A bead may have been made in West Java or Borneo, but the glass could have come from almost anywhere.

Speaking with New Voices: South African Beadwork, the Global Market, and Reinvention of Culture, by Eleanor Preston-Whyte

This article discusses the evolution of Zulu beadwork production and marketing from the 1960s to the present. Other native crafts parallel this evolution. Since apartheid ended there has been a resurgence of pride among the Zulu in their material culture and they wear and use traditional costumes and beadwork proudly. As one man said: “Traditional Zulu dress identifies me as a good South African.”

Beadwork in complex design and color combinations was and continues to be made for their personal use and indicates social status and life stage. In KwaZulu-Natal, however, with its high unemployment rates, the production of beadwork for sale provides important income. Two groups transport the beadwork from rural homesteads to market: itinerant local traders and agents of craft development projects. The itinerant traders buy crafts directly from the artisans and sell them to permanent stall holders at markets along main roads. Their aim is to make a profit. Craft development projects are run by missionaries or philanthropic organizations with the aim to better the lives of artisans’ families. In their own way, both middlemen bring important advice to the artisans on adapting wares for the ever-changing tourist market.

Work sold in South Africa at roadside markets developed from one or two thatched-roof stalls on the main coastal roads with local sellers offering food and crafts to locals and travelers into permanent buildings with parking lots at large intersections. Currently on offer are small pieces of jewelry, including Zulu love letters, and dolls which might be Ndebele as well as imitation KwaZulu-Natal beadwork made in China.

High-quality beadwork is sold at the African Arts Centre in Durban. In the past each piece was vetted by the Centre’s staff, providing a learning experience for the maker both artistically and technically. One beadworker, Sizakhele Mchunu, began a new genre of bead sculpture: beaded figures depicting everyday life. The idea spread to other

beadworkers and has evolved such that artists are identified and the sculptures sold to collectors.

Karoh: A Sacred and Secular Symbol of Identity among the Lotud, by Patricia Regis and Judeth John Baptist

The Lotud live north of Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Sabah, the northern Malaysian state on Borneo. Many are now Christian and Muslim, but a significant number continue ancestral traditions. The Lotud believe beads were brought from Brunei by their ancestors. Beads have mystical powers and each piece of jewelry possesses a specific supernatural guardian. The power increases over time and when the beads are worn, it is infused into the wearer. Beads express the Lotud’s concept of health, wealth, status, and beauty. For those who perform religious rituals they also establish a “transformative link between the secular and spiritual realms and bring the person into the presence of the supreme deities.” Beads also comprise bride wealth, adorn traditional attire, and serve as currency or collateral and also as capital assets that are passed on as inheritance. They are also used to settle disputes or provide restitution and to invoke supreme deities during certain ceremonies.

Of the three major varieties of strung bead assemblages, the *karoh* is the most esteemed and culturally linked with the Lotud. Often multi stranded, the *karoh* incorporate various small colored glass beads, carnelians, and two or more silver or gilded cones called *ki’uluh* (“possesses a head”). The cones are embossed or engraved and named after the maker. They are strung next to a round bead at the wide end and small silver or gilded rings at the narrow one. The cone is hollow and has a wood or beeswax core to maintain the shape.

Final Thoughts

These proceedings will be of interest and are highly recommended to researchers, collectors, and aficionados of beads and beadwork, but the articles are likely too specialized and detailed for the casual reader. Inevitably in these types of publications, more maps and photographs are desirable. As a bead may have different names in different parts of the world, where several types of beads are named, be it in English or Bahasa Malaysian, it would be most helpful to have labeled photographs of the beads. For example, the name of the “pyjama bead” common in Borneo unfortunately does not conjure in the mind a multicolored, longitudinally striped, black bead. Together with the 2010 proceedings and in anticipation of those of the 2013 conference, an important body of information is being

built up on the place of beads in Southeast Asian and other indigenous cultures and on the pressures in these cultures that are causing change in their use.

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African Dolls/Afrikanische Puppen: The Dulger-Collection.

Frank Jolles. Arnoldsche Art Publishers, Liststrasse 9, D-70180 Stuttgart, Germany. 2010. 176 pp., 166 color figs., 5 B&W figs. ISBN 978-3-89790-336-4. \$70.00 (hard cover).

This bilingual (English and German) book examines in detail 93 Zulu dolls that date to the second half of the 20th century. They were all collected by the author, Frank Jolles, in the 1980s and now form the Dulger-Collection housed in the J. & E. von Portheim Foundation ethnographic museum in Heidelberg, Germany. The oldest dolls in the collection are traditional ones that were used by Zulu girls during courtship; the remainder were made for sale in the tourist trade. Professor Jolles traces the roots of the dolls and their evolution into trade objects along with the historical, social, and economic conditions that led to their development.



The book begins with an introduction by Stefan Eisenhofer in which he provides the background to the

collection and its path to the Dulger-Collection. Jolles then explains how the political situation in apartheid South Africa (in which men moved to the cities to work, leaving women and children in rural areas in relative poverty) led to the commercialization of crafts as a means for rural women to generate income. He also tracks changes the doll makers made to create figures that would appeal to buyers who were mainly urban whites and tourists from abroad. For example, eyes were added whereas traditional doll's faces were featureless. Advice of culture brokers led some women to the making of bead sculptures which were meant for display and were entirely divorced from the cultural roots of their makers. Other women, such as those from KwaLatha, Keate's Drift (a map forms the inside cover of the book), determined that customers were interested in Zulu history, culture, and society so the dolls they made were based on traditional models and carried content. As Jolles collected he interviewed the makers and recorded full information about each figure or group of interacting figures (for example an *isangoma* [diviner] and her apprentice). As Jolles points out (p. 20): "To a greater or lesser extent, all of the dolls in this collection participate in interactive social relationships." Details incorporated in the figures identify their sex, clan, age, marital status, and social relationships.

Jolles next examines the historical function of dolls in Zulu society beginning with clay dolls that fall into two categories: those for (and made by) boys, which are mainly toy cattle, and human figures made for girls by their mothers. He then moves on to discuss dolls made of cloth and beads, including explanations of possible meanings of some of the beaded patterns. He notes how the first changes that moved away from traditional courtship dolls occurred in headdress styles and the addition of eyes. The next developments included adding legs, arms, and various items of clothing along with miniaturized beadwork pieces, thus transforming the dolls from the abstract symbolic forms of courtship dolls to realistic figures which sometimes were constructed in sizes far larger than the traditional prototypes. Eventually some accurately detailed figures, which Jolles calls "character dolls," were actual depictions of particular people.

The plates section is made up of a full page image of each doll or group of dolls. They are grouped by type: traditional courtship dolls; maize-cob based rag dolls made by young girls as toys; cob cattle; clay dolls; transitional dolls which still retain basic features of the traditional courtship dolls; transitional developed dolls which still

retain some traditional features; and “character dolls,” independent creations depicting people from Zulu society without reference to courtship dolls. It is followed by what may be the most useful section of the book for researchers. It provides full descriptions of each doll including information Jolles gathered while collecting the dolls and is filled with a wealth of detail about Zulu dress, beadwork, and behavior. An appendix adds further information about these subjects. Observant Zulu beadwork enthusiasts working on identifying pieces from this period and region will be able to use the descriptive section of the text to identify some beadwork styles and the areas they came from. For example, the traditional doll in Plate 36 is described as having an “*umemulo* [‘coming of age ceremony’] hairstyle called *ufezela*, ‘scorpion,’ on account of the similarity to the curved tail of the scorpion.... The red, white and black beadwork motif and white apron with pointed chrome studs suggest an origin in the Upper Umvoti district just south of Msinga” (p. 133).

This book is a highly valuable resource for researchers interested in mid- to late-20th-century Zulu dolls from the Tugela region along with associated dress, customs, and beadwork.

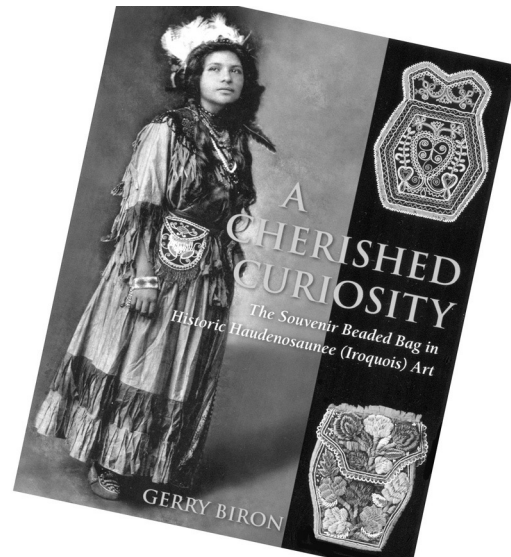
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Cherished Curiosity.

Gerry Biron. Self published, P.O. Box 250, Saxtons River, VT 05154-0250. 2012. i-vii + 184 pp., 158 color figs. ISBN 978-0-9785414-1-5. \$34.95 (cloth).

For years, in times when the focus of attention was firmly placed on Native American beadwork arts of the Great Plains and other cultural areas, the attractively designed beadwork purses made in the North American Northeast went largely unappreciated and were widely dismissed as kitsch “souvenir art,” devoid of any great ethnographic or even artistic value. Not only were these purses vastly underappreciated, they were also very much misunderstood, being routinely dated by authors, museums, collectors, and auction houses as several decades later than their actual date of manufacture by the various Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) groups of New York state and eastern Canada. To

a large extent, some of the myths and misinformation have persisted. Gerry Biron’s new book, *A Cherished Curiosity*, goes a long way to setting the record straight.



Divided into five main chapters and lavishly illustrated in full color with examples of early Haudenosaunee purses and related ephemera from Biron’s own private collection, the book is beautifully designed and visually appealing.

The opening chapter provides an introduction to the emerging tourist market, and European or Euro-American demand for exotic souvenirs of travels in the American Northeast, discussing the establishment of Niagara Falls as a locus for the sale of a whole range of Indian-made curios expressly designed for the non-Native market. To the honeymooners and other visitors to the falls, these objects were at once exotic and fashionable, giving rise to a fascination for anything “Indian.” Reacting to this demand, a number of repositories of Indian goods sprang up, especially following the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, an event which gave rise to a population surge in western New York state and opening regions further west to settlement.

The chapter is illustrated with a number of interesting period views of stores such as Mason’s Indian Bazaar, the Six Nations Indian Store, and Dean’s Metamora Indian Depot, all purveyors of beadwork and decorated bark articles at Niagara Falls for the early tourist market.

The second chapter examines traditional design motifs found on the earliest Haudenosaunee purses, including the double-curve, celestial dome (sky dome), heart motif, and other recurrent imagery inspired by indigenous cosmology and flora.

Chapter Three examines the so-called “Classic period” of Haudenosaunee souvenir purses, produced from around 1800 until the 1840s. Beginning with purses beaded on hide and evolving into versions made using trade materials such as woolen cloth and silk ribbon edging, these earliest purses were applied with a range of designs from the Haudenosaunee repertoire, typically including diamonds, sun symbols, double-curves, and zigzags on a background of red, black, or navy woolen cloth. A few documented examples are illustrated, including an example from the collections of New York State Museum, collected by Dennis Doyle from an Indian in Albany, New York, in 1807.

As Haudenosaunee beadworkers became more and more experienced and more savvy in terms of the marketing of their artwork, their beadwork designs became increasingly sophisticated. Some specimens produced during the late Classic period employ larger areas of solid beadwork decoration in their designs. Also presented in this chapter are unusual hybrid purses combining Huron-Wendat style moosehair embroidery with Haudenosaunee style beadwork, reflecting the complex cultural interaction between different neighboring nations in the 19th century, amongst other mitigating factors.

In Chapter Four, the author analyzes the factors that led to the adoption, from the late 1840s and for a few decades thereafter, of polychrome floral designs on purses and other fancy articles of beadwork. This transition from predominantly indigenous imagery to European-influenced floral forms may have been prompted by the 19th-century fashion for Berlin woolwork and beaded versions thereof, whereby two-tone shading was employed to create a three-dimensional effect. Paper patterns were placed beneath the beadwork to serve as templates and heighten the iridescent effect of the more translucent bead colors. Of the tens of thousands of these floral-decorated purses that must have been made, each one was unique in terms of design, a tribute to the inventiveness of their makers.

Instrumental in the development of the Haudenosaunee floral beadwork style was a young Tonawanda Seneca woman named Caroline Parker. A highly accomplished needleworker, Caroline produced a number of pieces collected in 1849 by Lewis Henry Morgan for the eventual New York State Museum in Albany. Several pieces in the distinctive “Parker” style she almost certainly played a part in developing are illustrated in this section of the book.

The mid-19th century trend for ladies’ purses as a fashion accessory is brought to life by the inclusion of early portraits and other photographic material featuring European or Euro-American ladies in contemporary dress, holding their highly prized Indian beadwork purses. At the

end of this chapter Biron studies Tuscarora novelties in the raised beadwork technique, including box-shaped fist purses amongst other styles of bag, many of which are inscribed “Niagara Falls” in beads. Also showcased is the work of one modern-day sewer, Rosemary Rickard-Hill, who continues the Tuscarora beadworking tradition to the present day.

Chapter Five goes on to examine the distinctive early style of purses made by the Mohawks in the vicinity of Montreal, Quebec, an active 19th-century center of commerce. Exhibiting a keen flair for enterprise, the Mohawks of Kahnawake especially took advantage of their location and went on to produce large quantities of raised beadwork for the commercial market, many of the pieces bearing novel inscriptions designed to appeal to European buyers.

Also described here is the small community of Akwesasne Mohawks engaged in the production of raised beadwork souvenirs in the Greenwich Village area of New York City around the turn of the 19th century, led by Chief Dibo (Longfeather). This Mohawk colony, numbering approximately 40 individuals, went virtually unreported until, in 1900, a local newspaper article revealed their presence and creative activity.

Finally, in an appendix, the author takes a look at the host of Indian “medicine shows,” Wild West shows, Indian entertainers, and fraternal organizations such as the Improved Order of Redmen, and the role they all played in the development and marketing of Haudenosaunee raised beadwork.

Gerry Biron is an artist, collector, researcher, and author of *Made of Thunder, Made of Glass*, which also treats the subject of northeastern Native beadwork. His latest book is a well-designed hard-cover publication, with an attractive dust jacket featuring the Seneca woman Goldie Jamison Conklin wearing a beaded purse with stylized curvilinear designs.

Readers with an interest in northeastern beadwork in particular or indigenous arts in general will certainly want to add a copy of this volume to their bookshelves. As the print run is relatively small – only 1,500 copies – be sure to grab a copy while stocks last. I can guarantee you will not be disappointed!

A Cherished Curiosity represents the culmination of many years of dedicated interest in northeastern Native souvenir art and reflects the author’s devotion to his subject. It also highlights the artistic beauty and historic complexity of Haudenosaunee beadwork made for the souvenir trade. No longer can their souvenir beadwork unashamedly be relegated to the category of mass-produced kitsch,

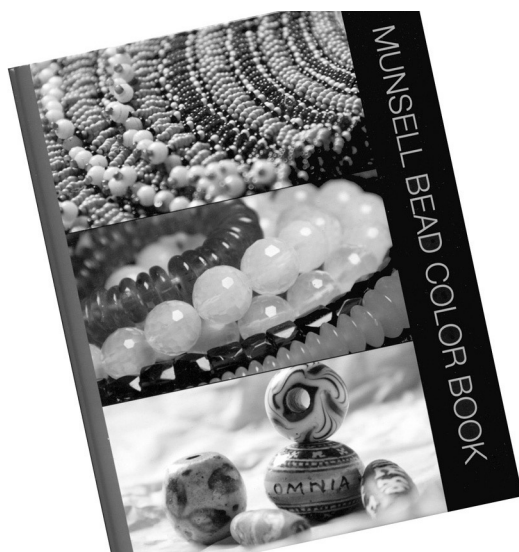
commoditized tourist craftwork. We have now moved on to a greater level of understanding of this culturally precious, aesthetically delightful, and most deeply cherished of curiosities.

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Munsell Bead Color Book.

Munsell Color. X-rite, 4300 44th Street, Grand Rapids, MI 49512. 2012. Ring binder, 5 pp., 5 color chip pages. Item no. M50145B. \$157.00 (hard cover).

A.H. Munsell (1858-1918) was a painter and professor of art who is best known for having devised and developed the color notation system that bears his name. After his death, his son and other interested experts further developed and refined the system, and a number of publications are available under the Munsell name, including the *Munsell Soil Color Chart* which is used by geologists, archaeologists, and others. Other charts, dealing with rock, food, and plant colors have been printed, and the latest of these is the *Munsell Bead Color Book*, created in response to the needs of the many researchers in the world of bead studies.



The full *Munsell Book of Color* book costs US\$945, so this smaller book represents a considerable saving in both

dollars and bulk. Prepared with the assistance of the Society of Bead Researchers and its officers Alice Scherer, Karlis Karklins, and Laurie Burgess, it comes as a colorful ring binder measuring 8 by 6.5 in., with five loose-leaf pages of explanatory text and diagrams in black and white plus five pages of color chips with their names and codes on five facing pages. There are 176 glossy color chips which represent the colors that have thus far been recorded by North American archaeologists. The colors are arranged in spectral order, starting with the reds and ending with neutral values (white, gray, and black). When denoting colors, the Munsell code should be included after the name as some names apply to two Munsell color chips.

The color names are not drawn from the Inter-Society Color Council–National Bureau of Standards system as stated on p. 4, but from the 1950 *Descriptive Color Names Dictionary* produced by the Container Corporation of America, Chicago. The color chip pages have a circular hole 10 mm in diameter below each chip, a useful feature that facilitates the determination of the color of beads incorporated into beadwork or some other fabric. There are guidelines regarding the best light to view the beads, notes on cleaning dirty or patinated beads, and information about how to determine whether the glass is opaque, translucent, or transparent.

The introductory pages end with an explanation, including two diagrams, of the Munsell notation system: hue (color, listed in the order of spectrum colors), value (depth of color), and chroma (Greek for color and a measure of color purity). The inside front cover has a color image of the chroma scale of values above a color wheel of the hues which may make it easier for a beginner to understand the Munsell color system.

The *Munsell Bead Color Book* will prove useful to all who need to accurately record bead colors, whether they are archaeologists, ethnologists, museologists, or collectors. Munsell Color and the Society of Bead Researchers are to be congratulated on their initiative in creating this useful research tool and making it available to a worldwide audience.

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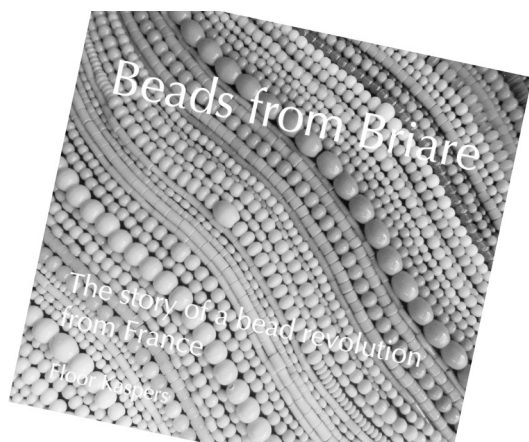
Beads from Briare.

Floor Kaspers. Marblings Publishing, Amsterdam. 2011. 74 pp., 6 B&W figs., 78 color figs. ISBN 978-9-49131-100-0. \$22.95 (paper cover); \$1.99 (Ebook, Apple iPad format <http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/2602875as>)

At the beginning of *Beads from Briare: The Story of a Bead Revolution from France*, the author points out:

Most people tend to think of the intricate millefiori beads from Venice, or the drop shaped colourful beads from Bohemia, when they think of trade beads. However, when you look at the volume of beads that was made, plain beads made up the greatest part of them.... And it was exactly with these beads, that the French entrepreneur Jean-Luc Bapterosses made his success (pp. 10-11).

This book is successful because it not only delves into a subject which is not well known but also because the author has relied on her own observations rather than only citing other published research. The beads produced by Bapterosses in Briare, France, interest us because they appear in quantity among many types of beads in the African trade and elsewhere, and when Floor Kaspers became interested in them and first visited Briare in 2010 (the location of the Bapterosses factory and museum), she was allowed to visit the factory dump site. Here she found a wide array of discarded items including buttons, beads, tiles, and broken or malformed products which she categorized and which gave her a good idea of the factory's output, possibly dating back to as early as the mid-19th century, when Bapterosses set up production in Briare.



Beginning with the patent history, the book summarizes the unique chemistry and technology that created the

“revolution” mentioned in the book’s subtitle. This explains the slightly raised “band” around the center of many of the beads that makes them so identifiable, in their most common form. And indeed the bead’s unique placement between glass and ceramic adds to its interest.

Chapter 1 summarizes the scope of beads as trade items and their geographical range. The next chapter outlines the techniques used to produce most glass beads, both individually and in quantity (this helps us to better understand why certain beads cannot have been made by the Prosser method). Chapter 3 focuses specifically on “Prosser” beads which were made by a particular technique wherein finely ground ingredients moistened with milk were compressed in molds and then placed in furnaces to fuse the components. The author lists the characteristics that define a “Prosser” bead.

In Chapter 4 – which concerns the beads made at the Bapterosses factory in Briare – Floor Kaspers cites various documents including technical patents, eyewitness accounts, photos, postcards, and factory and company trade records, and presents a useful timeline for the company from 1813 to 1996. The company museum in Briare holds a collection of its products, though whoever did the displays was not the most informed scholar so not all the exhibits are reliably catalogued, and some items are wrongly ascribed. The author is diplomatic rather than critical on this matter.

Chapter 5 examines and lists the wide range of opaque beads Bapterosses developed and produced, from cylinders and spheres to pendant shapes resembling popular beads of other materials, coral, twigs, ovals, variegated layered colors resembling agate-like stripes, interlocking zigzag shapes, and a garish form with an oily-looking luster finish. Some beads exhibit colored designs applied to the surface prior to being fired. Chapter 6 concentrates on industrial rivalry with competitors in Bohemia and includes images of a number of sample cards from these companies which help us recognize how rapidly beadmaking methods were copied elsewhere.

Beads from Briare is well written and the paper version is a handy size with quality photographs mostly in beautiful color. It is also available in an EBook format for a very affordable price, a great trend which we hope is continued by other authors. The book is recommended to everyone who wants to know more about Prosser – or more correctly – Bapterosses beads.

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