

intended market. However, this feature limits the scholastic value of some of the original observations made by Francis. This is most apparent in areas where he attempts to draw together general observations concerning the age, distribution and role of beads in specific cultural settings. Expansion on how some of these conclusions were reached would have been helpful. More detailed discussions on topics such as the ethnographic use of beads, *akori* and African bead production are extensively (and more critically) dealt with in other publications — by Francis and others.

At a more pragmatic level, the dot matrix printing is poor quality (particularly in “Heirlooms of the Hills”) and the computer-generated illustrations are wanting. In “Heirlooms of the Hills,” the small locator maps lack any text and one must refer to a larger map at the front of the monograph. The photographs provide good supplementary illustrations but are not outstanding. Given the technology available for desk top publishing, these features will undoubtedly be rendered much more effective in future publications.

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#### *Early Contact Glass Trade Beads in Alaska.*

**Polly G. Miller.** *The Bead Society of Central Florida*, 121 Larkspur Drive, Altamonte Springs, FL 32701. 1994. viii + 44 pp., 10 color figs., 49 b&w figs. \$15.00 (paper) + \$1.15 postage in the U.S.

Miller places her work in “the new genre of bead research,” evidently because of its primary focus on beads as artifacts for the interpretation of history. She abjures classification schemes or technical descriptions in *Early Contact Glass Trade Beads in Alaska*, choosing instead to sketch the commercial and political factors that influenced the flow of Chinese and European beads to the Alaskan frontier from 1741 through the late 19th century. Referring to various recent exhibitions and archaeological projects, the

author suggests that Alaska is emerging as a laboratory for collaborative studies between bead researchers, historians, anthropologists and archaeologists.

The story is a complex one, conveyed with economy (there are only 36 pages of text) in a semi-popular style that makes up in verve for what it lacks in academic polish. After establishing that China, rather than Venice, was the main source for 18th-century beads brought to Alaska by Russian, British and American vessels, Miller reviews historical and archaeological research on glass production in China during the Qing (Manchu) dynasty (A.D. 1644-1911 ). While glass had been made in China since the first millennium B.C., the bead industries centered in Canton and Boshan developed largely in response to the external market provided by Western trading concerns. Chinese beads exported through Canton supplied the booming British and American sea otter trades on the Northwest Coast, while Russian fur merchants (and after 1799, the Russian American Company) purchased their American trade wares at Kiakhta on the Chinese border. Siberian trade fairs supplied a secondary Native trade in Chinese beads across Bering Strait.

By the latter half of the 19th century, however, European beads had almost completely replaced Chinese beads in Alaska, except for heirloom examples. These new varieties were imported in large quantities by American whalers and fur trade companies. As Miller points out, this shift in supply is readily apparent on beaded garments obtained by E.W. Nelson and other American museum collectors in the post-1867 American Period. Her exposition on this topic is less clear and inclusive, however, than the earlier analysis of the Chinese trade. There is no discussion of the Venetian or Bohemian bead industries, for example, although evidence for an early Dutch component in the Alaskan trade is examined in some detail. Citing a lack of documentary evidence, she discounts the influx of European beads that is likely to have occurred as a result of the 1839 supply agreement between the Russian American and Hudson’s Bay companies, 30 years prior to the Alaska Purchase. Archaeological collections from Native villages and Russian trade posts (the reviewer’s current research) suggest that European beads did

begin to predominate around this time, including new faceted, tubular, and tiny seed varieties.

This quibble actually underlines one of Miller's main points, however: there are many interesting questions about beads that demand an interdisciplinary approach. I would add that little questions about beads — and other types of historical artifacts as well — can open up broader and more compelling issues. As more specific historical data on changing bead sources are developed, archaeologists will be better able to interpret Native trade patterns in the historic period, and to refine the use of bead typologies as a tool for dating sites. These results will enable new work on the effects of European contact on Native Alaskan cultures, social interaction and exchange between indigenous groups, and even patterns of population decline and village abandonment.

*Early Contact Glass Trade Beads in Alaska* is primarily useful as an overview and introduction to a particular area of historical and material culture research. The trade-offs for the monograph's low cost are poor production values, including numerous typos, unusual punctuation, odd type fonts, and really awful printing of the small black and white figures that decorate the margins of the text. References to supporting literature are fairly extensive, although an editor should have seen to it that some standard and more easily decipherable citation format was used.

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*Gougad-Pateraenneu: Old Talisman Necklaces from Brittany, France.*

**Marie-José Opper and Howard Opper.** *The Bead Society of Greater Washington, Monograph Series 1.* 1993. The Bead Society of Greater Washington, P.O. Box 70036, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20813-0036. 18 pp., 21 b&w figs., bibliography. \$6.00 (paper).

This is the first volume in what will apparently be a series of monographs in an inexpensively produced and reasonably priced format which will bring various types of beads and bead-related subjects to a wide audience. This first volume concerns the strands of beads, some old and ancient, some of more recent manufacture, which were assembled and treasured in a particular area of France: the Morbihan region of southern Brittany.

Britanny, like Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Cornwall, was one of the last areas of Europe where Celtic-speaking peoples lived before and after the Roman expansion in northern Europe. Indeed, the local name for these treasured beads is a Celtic-dialect name meaning "necklace of blessed beads." The title of the book spells the name as "Gougad-Pateraenneu," and various different dialectic versions of this name have been used in Brittany. I have always known and seen these beads labelled as "Gougad-Pateranneau," and this was the spelling used by Horace Beck in his volume on *The Magical Properties of Beads* (Beck 1976:33, figs. 14-16), and also in the *Master Index of the Bead Journal* (The Bead Society 1981:13). There is a string of beads labelled thus in Horace Beck's collection at the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge, England. Perhaps this more familiar version of the name is a gallicization, as the French word *anneau* means "ring" (and, hence, "bead"), but it is not mentioned as an alternative by the authors.

I had a sense of *déjà vu* reading this book. Not often is one privileged to review a book whose subject matter is unusual and fascinating in itself, but also totally familiar because you have actually seen most of the beads which are being described. I made regular visits as an archaeologist to the Quiberon peninsula in Morbihan in the late 1970s and early 1980s, where most of the known strands are in museums and exhibits. Being familiar with something does not make one an expert on it, and one of the qualities of this volume is that it is a well-researched academic piece bringing together the work of many others who have studied these beads and presenting it in a very readable synthesis for everyone, including myself.

The people of the Morbihan region considered their beads to have great talismanic properties, and used to hand them down through the generations, although this seems to have almost died out in the