

BOOK REVIEWS

Contact in the 16th Century: Networks Among Fishers, Foragers and Farmers.

Brad Loewen and Claude Chapdelaine (eds.). Mercury Series Archaeology Paper 176. University of Ottawa Press, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. 2016. 296 pp., 98 figs., index. Paper ISBN: 978-0-7766-2360-3; PDF ISBN: 978-0-7766-2361-0. CAN \$69.95 (paper); CAN \$54.99 (PDF eBook).

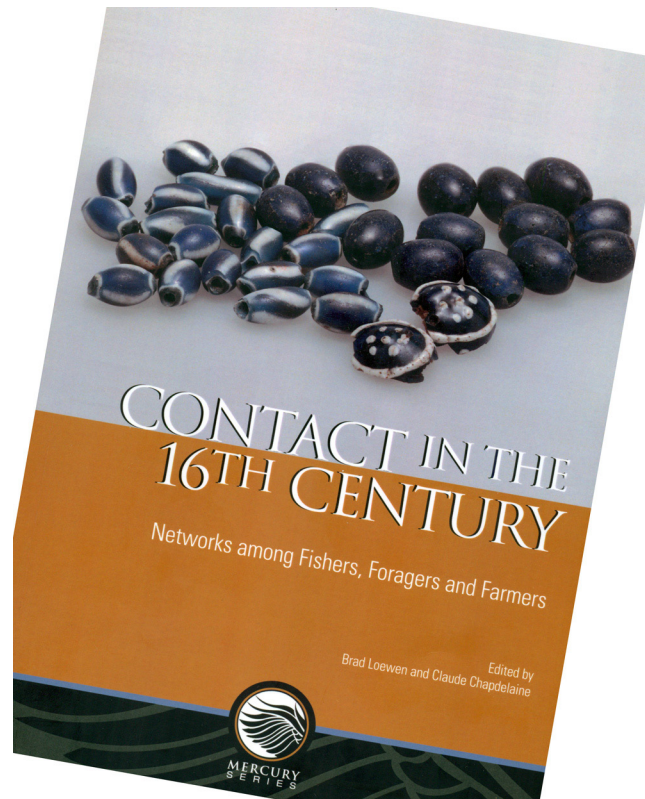
The editors have assembled a superb collection of 12 papers detailing what is known of 16th-century European-Native American/First Nations contact. The book is divided into three geographic regions: The Gulf of Saint Lawrence, The Fluvial Networks, and The Lower Great Lakes. The goal is to see how interaction played out between Europeans and native fishers, foragers, and farmers in these regions. The title is a little misleading as many of the authors also consider contact in the 17th and even early 18th centuries, but these inclusions only enhance the value of the volume.

Readers of *Beads* will not be surprised to find that much of the evidence for contact is in the form of glass beads. While other categories of European artifacts are also covered (especially iron tools and copper and brass objects), this review will focus on the beads.

Seven of the 12 papers deal specifically with glass beads, which are illustrated in 22 high-quality color plates. Other chapters focus on history instead of archaeological remains, European ceramics, and native artifacts.

The first chapter, by Lisa Rankin and Amanda Crompton, covers contact between Inuit and Europeans in Southern Labrador. Sixteenth-century sites contain primarily iron goods (often nails). It is not until the early 17th century that glass beads are documented at Inuit sites in the area (2 beads from the Huntingdon Island 5 site, House 2). One bead is a faceted charlotte, a type known from Spanish contact sites in the Southeast (e.g., St. Catherines Island, Georgia) and other areas, while the other is a common turquoise blue bead. House 5 contained 18th-century trade goods. House 1 at the Pigeon Cove site dates to the early to mid-18th century and includes a raspberry bead (not a “melon” as identified by the authors).

Vincent Delmas focuses on tracing 16th-century beads around the Gulf and into the Saint Lawrence Valley. He



presents the bead data for the important Red Bay site. Red Bay clearly has some 16th-century beads, but I believe that Delmas goes to great lengths to force some later beads into the 16th century. In his discussion of the Petit Mecatina site, he specifies 45 beads that may date to the 16th century. The most diagnostic of these, several gooseberry beads, are not illustrated. The other potential 16th-century beads are primarily monochrome beads. Delmas relies on a bead chronology developed by Keith Little. Dr. Little believed that a series of archaeological sites in Alabama could be connected with the Tristan de Luna expedition of 1559-1561. Subsequent and ongoing excavations by John Worth at the Luna landing site in Pensacola, Florida, show that Luna was not trading the heat-rounded beads thought by Little to date to the 1560s. It is now apparent that the Little chronology needs revision. I would have no trouble assigning all of the beads illustrated in Delmas' figure 4.5 to the 18th century. I believe it would help several of the authors of this volume

to consult more 18th-century monographs, beginning with Jeffrey Brain's *Tunica Treasure*. On the other hand, the sections on Beads from Native Burial Sites in Acadia and Sixteenth-Century Beads from the Saint Lawrence Valley are very valuable contributions. But perhaps the most important contribution of this chapter is the analysis of beads from the 1583 Venetian shipwreck at Gnalic, Croatia (a detailed table and one color plate). This sample of beads will be an important touchstone for constructing bead chronologies.

Michel Plourde looks at archaeological sites in the Saint Lawrence Estuary between 1500 and 1650. In this chapter, he analyzes and illustrates beads from the important Tadoussac site, dating them to the late 16th and early 17th centuries. He also includes small collections from other sites in the region. Plourde finds it difficult to find many 16th-century beads in the region. He concludes that the small number of 16th-century beads indicates that contacts between Basques and seal hunters were "casual."

Claude Chapdelaine reviews evidence of contact in the Middle and Upper Saint Lawrence Valley. He notes that archaeological data from this region are extremely limited, but does illustrate and analyze eight beads from the Royarnois site. Working with Loewen, and again relying on the outdated Little chronology for Spanish beads in the southeastern United States, they assign the beads to the 16th century. I would suggest that they consult 18th-century site reports. Aside from this site, other 16th-century sites in the region produce few, if any, trade goods. The author concludes, "Of the seven villages assigned to the sixteenth century in our study area, not a single one has convincing evidence of trade with Europeans or of receiving gifts from other tribes" (p. 163).

Using both historical and archaeological evidence, Moreau, Guindon, and Langevin provide a convincing argument for a northern route between the Saguenay and Georgian Bay. The beads assigned to the 16th century from the Chicoutimi and Berube sites provide convincing assemblages, including blue beads with white stripes, faceted chevrons, oval gooseberries, and faceted garnet beads.

Martin Cooper looks at 16th-century Neutral exchange. The Neutral were a confederacy made up of several tribes, and Cooper suggests that trade should be studied at least on the tribal level, not the confederacy level. Cooper further notes that trade routes were often controlled by families or even individuals. Although some iron and European copper show up in the first half of the 16th century, it is not until the late 16th century that European goods show up in quantity. Nueva Cadiz and chevron beads occur on multiple sites in the area, and Cooper explores the idea presented by David Pendergast that early European materials arrived

via a southerly route from the Susquehannocks along with mid-Atlantic marine shell instead of up the St. Lawrence Valley. Late 16th-century sites produce the distinctive frit-cored beads and Basque kettles suggesting trade up the St. Lawrence at this time. European objects are rare in villages, but much more common in graves. Cooper concludes that European objects were obtained through Native middlemen.

The final chapter in the volume, *Sixteenth Century Beads: New Data, New Directions*, by Brad Loewen, combines the bead data from the other chapters. The author notes that the present volume greatly increases our knowledge of 16th-century beads, yielding a sample of 742 "probable or possible" examples. Again, I would suggest caution on many of the "possible" beads. Loewen identifies two supply networks: "one based in northern France and aimed at Acadia and the Tadoussac region beginning in 1559, the other based in the Basque Country of France and aimed at Tadoussac only between 1581 and 1599." Loewen tackles the difficult problem of "Spanish" beads in the northeast, providing an updated list of sites producing such types as Nueva Cadiz beads. His analysis suggests that there may have been two or more avenues of introduction of these types.

Several authors describe faceted chevron beads with four layers. I would note that such beads are not found on Spanish contact sites in the southeastern United States. Perhaps these are French products?

It is exciting to see some of the authors increasingly relying on the chemical analysis of beads. Some of the authors (Delmas and Plourde, for example) look at the ratio of blue to white beads in collections as a possible chronological indicator. While this is an interesting approach, I am sure that all of the authors are aware of the potential problems with small sample sizes, tribal color preferences, etc. I would advocate the use of more chronologically diagnostic "index fossil" bead types when possible, but unfortunately such beads are often lacking on these very early contact sites. As archaeologists, we are forced to use whatever data and types of analysis we can.

This is a beautifully produced volume with excellent color plates of the artifacts, color maps, and no production problems that I found. It is highly recommended for the specialist, but its technical nature and high price might make it less appealing to people with a more general interest in glass beads.

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