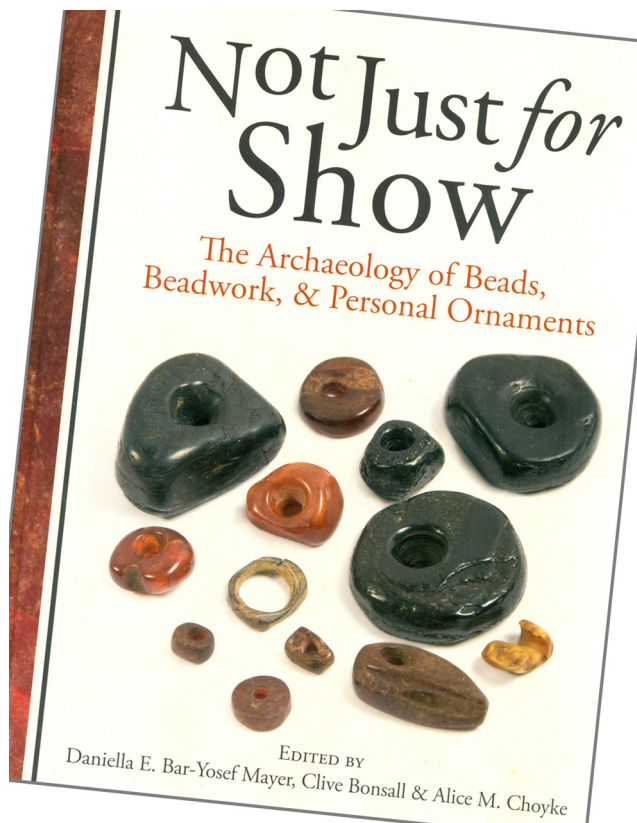


BOOK REVIEWS

Not Just for Show: The Archaeology of Beads, Beadwork and Personal Ornaments.

Daniella E. Bar-Yosef Mayer, Clive Bonsall, and Alice M. Choyke (eds.). Oxbow Books, Oxford and Philadelphia. 2017. 224 pp., 97 figs. ISBN-13: 978-1785706929; ISBN-10: 1785706926. £48 (hard cover).

This excellent volume is an outgrowth of a session with the same name at the 78th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology held in Honolulu in 2013. It includes five of the papers presented supplemented by another six, plus an introduction to the volume by Alice M. Choyke and Daniella E. Bar-Yosef Mayer. The 11 articles are grouped into four sections: Socio-Cultural Reflections, Audio and Visual Social Cues, Methodological Approaches, and Experimentation and Technology.



Five papers comprise the **Socio-Cultural Reflections** section. “Traditions and Change in Scaphopod Shell Beads in Northern Australia from the Pleistocene to the Recent Past,” by Jane Balme and Sue O’Connor, reveals that beads composed of *Conus* and scaphopod (tusk) shells have been found in the oldest archaeological contexts in northern Australia, some dating back to at least 35,000 cal BP. This article discusses the archaeological contexts and chronology of these beads, with emphasis on the scaphopod specimens, as well as their uses in antiquity and in relatively recent times. Attention is also paid to how the use and value of the beads changed not only through time but also as the beads moved inland from the coast.

“Magdalenian ‘Beadwork Time’ in the Paris Basin (France): Correlation between Personal Ornaments and the Function of Archaeological Sites,” by Caroline Peschaux, Grégory Debout, Olivier Bignon-Lau, and Pierre Bodu, reveals that the production of beads among hunter-gatherer peoples at the end of the Paleolithic period in the region of what is now Paris was a seasonal activity. Data derived from 16 occupations dating from the Upper Magdalenian suggest that “Beadwork Time” principally took place between the winter and spring, with autumn being an especially poor time.

“Personal Adornment and Personhood among the Last Mesolithic Foragers of the Danube Gorges in the Central Balkans and Beyond,” by Emanuela Cristiani and Dušan Borić, examines how the inhabitants of the Late Mesolithic site of Vlasac in Serbia produced and utilized perforated gastropods and carp pharyngeal teeth as ornaments. This study has provided insight into how the social identities and personhood of these people were constructed.

In “Ornamental Shell Beads as Markers of Exchange in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B of the Southern Levant,” Ashton Spatz postulates that beads from the Red and Mediterranean seas arrived in the Southern Levant by down-the-line exchange. While the Red Sea provided both beads and shell for their manufacture, the Mediterranean region primarily furnished completed objects.

“Games, Exchange, and Stone: Hunter-Gatherer Beads at Home,” by Emily Mueller Epstein, employs the life-history or *chaine opératoire* approach to the interpretation

of a group of marine-shell, bone, and stone beads recovered from a Late Archaic site in southeastern Oregon which is within the Great Basin region. Coupling the archaeological data with ethnographic data collected during the first half of the 20th century has revealed that the beads could have been employed in several socio-cultural contexts and not just as ornaments.

The **Audio and Visual Social Cues** section is comprised of three articles. “The Natufian Audio-Visual Bone Pendants from Hayonim Cave,” by Dana Shaham and Anna Belfer-Cohen, proposes that a group of 52 pendants found in pairs about the pelvis of a young female burial in northern Israel were affixed to a belt or other object to provide a rhythmic sound while dancing. The feasibility of this interpretation is examined using a musicological perspective.

“Bead Biographies from Neolithic Burial Contexts: Contributions from the Microscope,” by Annelou van Gijn, investigates the changes that took place in funerary rites during the Dutch Middle and Late Neolithic (between 3750 and 2000 cal BC), including how amber, jet, and bone beads were perceived and used. Microscopic examination of the beads revealed evidence of repairs, how they were worn, and the degree of wear. Coupled with their archaeological context and associated grave goods, this permitted the formulation of “bead biographies” that reveal a bead’s life history.

In “The Tutankhamun Beadwork, an Introduction to Archaeological Beadwork Analysis,” Jolanda E.M.F. Bos presents a three-tier system for recording Ancient Egyptian beadwork based on the finds in the tomb of Tutankhamun who reigned during the 18th dynasty. It involves providing an overall description of the object, and then determining the techniques and patterns used in its construction. A beaded tunic from the tomb is used as a case study. While this system was developed to record Egyptian beadwork, it may be used to describe and interpret archaeological beadwork from any part of the world.

The first of two articles in the **Methodological Approaches** section is “A Mother-of-Pearl Shell Pendant from Nexpa, Morelos,” by Adrián Velázquez-Castro, Patricia Ochoa-Castillo, Norma Valentín-Maldonado, and Belem Zúñiga-Arellano. The authors reveal that a thorough analysis of a shell pectoral from an Early Formative period site in southern Mexico that depicts two lizards carved in relief has allowed the species of both the shell and the lizards to be determined, as well as the techniques used to produce the object. Its cultural affiliation is also discussed, as are the exchange networks that distributed such prestige goods.

In the second paper, “Detailing the Bead Maker: Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) of Steatite Disk Beads from Prehistoric Napa Valley, California,” Tsim D. Schneider and Lori D. Hager employ recently developed RTI technology to produce three-dimensional images of a group of 29 steatite beads which clearly reveal traces of the manufacturing process. These traces were quite varied considering the relatively small sample size, suggesting that the beads were made by craft specialists and non-specialists alike.

The **Experimentation and Technology** section contains two papers. “Experimental Replication of Stone, Bone and Shell Beads from Early Neolithic Sites in Southeast Europe,” by Maria Gurova and Clive Bonsall, comes to the rather obvious conclusion that disc beads made of materials with a hardness less than 5 on the Mohs scale (e.g., bone, shell, limestone) are easier to drill than those with a hardness of 5.5 and above (e.g., amazonite and nephrite). The fact that those involved in the project had little or no experience in beadmaking but were able to produce decent replicas of Neolithic disc beads suggests that while beads of the harder materials were likely the domain of specialists, fashioning beads from softer materials could have been a common household activity.

“The Reproduction of Small Prehistoric Tusk Shell Beads,” by Greg Campbell, uses replication experimentation to demonstrate how very short (1-3 mm) tusk-shell (dentalium) beads were made during the Epipaleolithic of the Levant.

Covering a wide range of topics, *Not Just for Show* will be a valuable addition to the research library of anyone interested in beads and beadwork. Available in hard cover as well as an ebook, it is highly recommended.

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The Art & Tradition of Beadwork.

Marsha C. Bol. Gibbs Smith, P.O. Box 667, Layton, UT 84041. 2018. 256 pp., 560 color and B&W figs., index. ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-3179-8. \$75.00 (hardcover).

Like *Beadwork: A World Guide* by Caroline Crabtree and Pamela Stallebrass (2002), *The Art & Tradition of*