

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 Britanny. 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

present day so that many strands can be seen in local museums, such as those at Carnac and Quiberon. It is not known how long these beads have been collected in this way, but one of the most amazing facts the monograph reveals is that the strands contain beads from various periods, the oldest being neolithic stone beads which were probably found on some of the ancient sites which litter the Quiberon peninsula. Others include types of Celtic glass beads which occur throughout northwestern Europe, along with identifiable Roman, Phoenician, Egyptian, Anglo-Saxon and post-medieval European glass, semi-precious stone and amber. The authors tell us about the traditions, uses and magical properties associated with these beads, and each material and its associated traditions is considered separately. Beads referred to in the text are illustrated in stippled black and white drawings which, unfortunately, do not convey the same impact to the reader as good black and white or color photographs.

Some of the more unusual beads in Gougad-Pateranneau strands are amber glass "man-in-the-moon"-type beads with crescent and star motifs, although various other beads have "astrological" symbols such as crescent moons. These were considered especially potent in reinforcing the talismanic properties of the necklaces and, considering that many archaeologists and other scholars have seen astronomical significance in the great megalithic monuments of the Morbihan district, such as stone circles and the avenues of standing stones at Carnac, it would not be surprising if these types of beads have also been part of local oral traditions, myths, superstitions and beliefs for

thousands of years. Certainly, funerary monuments such as the megalithic chambered tombs have produced stone beads like those which survive in talisman strings.

The monograph is short, being only 18 one-sided pages long. Some of this space is taken up by poor reproductions of postcards depicting local Bretons ca. 1900, some with the black and white drawings, and some with empty white space. Yet, notwithstanding this brevity, the information is sound and important, and there is a good bibliography. Every scholar of beads should buy a copy of this book for its information and its readability. It is hoped that future volumes in the series will aim for a slightly better use of layout space, and weigh up the advantages of a higher cost to provide some good photographs, perhaps even some in color.

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