

Perles d'Afrique.

Marie-Françoise Delarozière. Éditions Édisud, La Calade, RN 7, 13090 Aix-en-Provence, France. 1994. 240 pp., 13 b&w figs., 150 color figs., bibliography, index. 370 French Francs (cloth).

In her new book, *Perles d'Afrique*, Marie-Françoise Delarozière fills the reader with wonder with her descriptions of rare and mysterious beads from the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, as well as the more easily recognized beads of European or local manufacture that are found in Africa. Different materials used in Mauritania during the neolithic period—such as shell, ostrich egg shells, fish vertebrae, pottery and various types of stone—are well described. Glass and metal beads of the medieval period are also well documented. Among the more remarkable of the stone beads of these two periods in Mauritania are those of greenish amazonite and blue scorzalite, an extremely rare material. Glass beads are found in great numbers at medieval sites, having been brought there by trans-Saharan caravans. It is probable that some of these beads were locally reshaped to suit the needs of the indigenous population. Ancient beads such as these, found in the sands of the Sahara, are highly collectable, having intrigued researchers and collectors alike throughout the world.

The author also discusses and illustrates prehistoric quartz and carnelian beads from Mali and Niger, terra-cotta bead necklaces from Mali and metal beads from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire. Kenyan beads made of iron and aluminum, and various gold and silver beads are covered as well. As is the case with all the photos in this book, those of beaded objects from Guinea, Togo, Nigeria and Cameroon are superb. The last section of *Perles d'Afrique* offers wonderfully descriptive and romantic stories about beads and bead use in Africa, as told to the author by friends and acquaintances.

Of particular interest is a description of the neolithic carnelian industry that existed in the Oued Tilemsi valley in Mali. Numerous carnelian beadmaking sites have been discovered by Jean and Michel Gausson to the east and northeast of Gao. The raw material came from a mountainous region called Adrar des Iforas which straddles southern Algeria and Mali. Techniques used to

form the stones into beads are described and illustrated on pages 26-32.

Another interesting passage in the book describes two beads found in Côte d'Ivoire, and considered highly desirable and very expensive by Mauritians, Haussas and Senegalese. One is a medieval glass bead with blue spots. The other is a 19th-century Venetian bead with black eyes, locally called "feather" or "eye of the peacock" (p. 82).

Traditional tools and techniques used in fashioning beads from silver, gold, and ebony inlaid with silver are fully described and well illustrated. Gold and gold-plated silver beads from Senegal are also dealt with, as are beads from Mali, Niger and Mauritania which are composed of braided vegetal material and called "Timbuctu gold."

Superbly illustrated with photographs and the author's own watercolors, *Perles d'Afrique* is written with a great amount of love and romantic wonder. The text and illustrations combine to provide the reader with a sense of the magic and reverence with which beads are held in Africa. Even for those who cannot read the French text, this book is a must for collectors and researchers alike. However, it is important to note that the chapters concerned with Mauritania were originally published in Delarozière's first book, *Les Perles de Mauritanie*, which is now out of print. Only those who own her original work can judge whether or not it is worthwhile for them to own *Perles d'Afrique* as well.

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Indian Trade Goods.

Oregon Archaeological Society. P.O. Box 13293, Portland, Oregon 97213. 1993. 48 pp., 50 b&w figs. \$7.50 (paper) postpaid.

This is a new edition of the book of the same title written by veteran trade-goods historian Arthur Woodward and published by the Oregon Archaeological Society in 1965. While the text is essentially Woodward's, it has been thoroughly edited and parts of the text have been reshuffled and others deleted.