

presenting bead photographs and captions. It shows four varieties of bicones, three oblates, two spheroids, and three barrels.

Each photo segment is a generous multi-page gallery of large, stunning bead images followed by thorough discussion of each and every bead by Allen, with intermittent comments and observations from Steinberg. The presentation is perfect. The visuals are absolutely commanding and the accompanying text is satisfying from both an academic standpoint from Allen and an artistic perspective from Steinberg.

The 29-page illustrated glossary of names, terms, and beadmaking techniques is invaluable, especially for the novice bead enthusiast. The knowledge found here can be used in many areas of bead collecting and research, even though the glossary is at the same time custom-built for this book. It makes the book approachable and provocative for any collector level.

In his acknowledgments, Steinberg graciously thanks the individuals by name who have offered him the beads in his collection. These are mostly African dealers from The Gambia who have made a living traveling between Africa and the United States for many years. My only regret is that no attempt seems to have been made to interview some of these people in order to learn the place of these beads in the family histories of which they were a part.

Allen explains that the primary objective of the book is to present old powder-glass beads in a manner that reveals their innate beauty and provides some context for their manufacture and importance to West African people. *Wild Beads of Africa* certainly accomplishes this goal. Thanks to this contribution, I feel that more collectors of African art as well as bead collectors will discover a greater appreciation for the beauty of old powder-glass beads.

Joyce Holloway
www.beadcollector.net
Petaluma, CA
joyceh@beadcollector.net

A Bag Worth a Pony: The Art of the Ojibwe Bandolier Bag

Marcia G. Anderson. Minnesota Historical Society Press, Saint Paul. 2017. 266 pp., 300 color and b&w figs., appendices, index. ISBN 978-1-68134-029-6. \$34.95 (soft cover).

Richly decorated bandolier bags were made and used by the Native nations of the Great Lakes region, notably the widely scattered Ojibwe (Anishnabe) peoples of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ontario, but also by neighboring tribes such as the Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), and Menominee.

Usually worn by men for ceremonial dances, the *gashkibidaagan* (plural *gashkibidaaganag*), as this style of beaded bag is called in the Ojibwe language, consists of a large rectangular cloth bag or panel with a broad shoulder strap. They were often worn in pairs, the straps crossing each other. Early examples, generally smaller in scale, were constructed on a heddle loom with a woven front panel and strap decorated with complex geometric designs. Later bags were made using the couched overlay (spot stitch or appliqué) technique, employing floral motifs in varying levels of complexity.



These most-impressive of impressive bags were produced in very large numbers, and the sheer volume of surviving examples represents a huge artistic achievement of the Native peoples of the region. So popular were they amongst the Great Lakes nations that they were traded with Plains tribes for horses and other trade items, hence the book's main title.

Just like the beaded bags that form the focus of this magnificent new study, Marcia G. Anderson's book has

clearly been a labour of love, presenting research carried out over several decades.

An introductory chapter discusses the history of the Great-Lakes-style bandolier bag with its origins in a variety of earlier styles of hide pouches, some with applied quillwork decoration, their form perhaps inspired by European military bags and pouches with straps.

The second chapter analyzes the different forms of construction and styles of decoration of the *gashkibidaagan*, including details of the main front panel, usually incorporating the bag compartment, the opening of which may sometimes be reduced to a small pocket at the top, though on some later examples being just a decorated panel serving no actual function other than as a decorative accessory.

Also described is the treatment of the strap which may sometimes consist of two separate halves, though it is frequently sewn together as a single, continuous band. The various styles of woven tabs or bead-strung fringe decoration used along the lower edge of the main panel are also discussed.

The choices of materials available to the Ojibwe makers of *gashkibidaaganag* are also studied here, including a range of textile fabrics: woolen cloth, velvet, plain or printed cotton, bias binding for edgings, wool yarn for tassels, as well as the choice of glass seed beads, faceted *Sprengperlen*, and other beads obtained through trading outlets.

Chapter 3 discusses the rich repertoire of beadwork designs used, some traditional and age-old in origin, others influenced by designs from other tribes or the non-Native world. Geometric compositions and repeated linear border designs such as zigzags and so-called “otter tracks” were important traditional motifs to the Ojibwe, with origins in twined fiber bags, and these forms of decoration persisted well into the 20th century, while even early-style woven bandolier bags sometimes borrowed from European textile design sources such as patchwork quilts. Bold floral motifs as used on the later, larger *gashkibidaaganag* were routinely observed by Native beadwork artists from the local flora, including vines, tendrils, American white water lily, bunchberry, and broad-leaf arrowhead.

Further chapters deal with the subject of bandolier bags in historic photographs, a great many examples of which are illustrated. Also dealt with is the marketing of Ojibwe beadwork by local businesses of the day, including trading posts, curio stores, county fairs, and expositions.

The author goes on to present a series of reminiscences about *gashkibidaaganag* and their role in indigenous Native communities, and the efforts of specific collectors, entrepreneurs, and trading post owners to collect, preserve, and even document these magnificent beaded artworks from a range of Minnesota Ojibwe reservations: Grand Portage, Leech Lakes, Mille Lacs, Red Lake, and White Earth. Included in this section are examples of bandoliers by contemporary makers including Maude Kegg and Batiste Sam (Mille Lacs), Melvin Losh (Leech Lake), and Ellen Olson and Marcie McIntire (Grand Portage). In this respect, the art of making *gashkibidaaganag* is very much an ongoing Ojibwe tradition and looks set to continue well into the future.

This extraordinary 266-page publication is impeccably well researched and lavishly illustrated throughout with a wealth of color images of some of the finest extant beaded bandolier bags in museum and private collections, as well as a mass of historic photos of bags in use, both indigenous and non-Native.

Richard Green
Birmingham, England
United Kingdom
many_roads1@yahoo.co.uk

Ancient Egyptian Beads.

Nai Xia. Springer-Verlag, Berlin and Heidelberg, 2014. xiii + 174 pp., 20 B&W plates. ISBN 978-3-642-54867-3. \$129.00 (hard cover).

Although this work was published in 2014, its inception dates back to 1938 when Nai Xia, a Ph.D. student from China, saw the research potential in the ancient Egyptian beads housed at the University College London and chose this as his dissertation project. When UCL was closed at the onset of World War II, Nai Xia returned to China and completed his dissertation there in 1943. He received his degree in 1946. The dissertation then sat on a library shelf until two UCL directors – seeing its research potential – began the task of editing and retyping it for publication. That finally happened 70 years after its completion. Thus, the material is dated in varying degrees but still remains the principal work on ancient Egyptian beads and pendants.

Following a Foreword and Preface which provide a background to this work, the book is divided into four parts: