

The

# MARGARETOLOGIST

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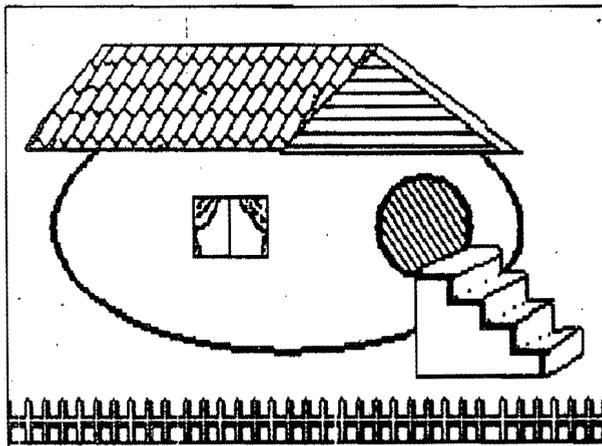
Journal of the Center for Bead Research

1992

**Like our new look? Read about it on page 2.**

## Open House at the Center 23 August 1992

For our local friends and neighbors, we hold an open house every few years to add our part to the arts and entertainment of this beautiful Adirondack resort. This year's theme was **BEADMAKER, BEADMAKER**, featuring modern American clay and glass beadmakers and powder-glass beadmaking in West Africa. On the right is our Open Bead-House logo used on our program.



## BEAD FAKING ALERT!

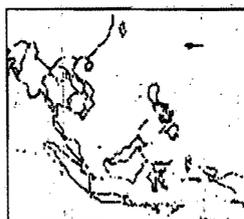
Two beads sent to the Center for identification are not what they are supposed to be. Sold (expensively) as "very old Venetian trade beads" in especially good condition, they are lamp-wound beads with black bases and added decorations. One is a large ellipsoid with a rosette in the center of a red-on-white dot surrounded by six blue-on-white dots and combed floral designs at the ends. These are sometimes called "French Ambassador beads," though there is no evidence for that term having any historical meaning. The others are biconical in shape and have large white dots with three black dots inside looking something like a face. Those on one end of the bead also have two white lines crossing under them, an unusual design perhaps best called "skull and crossbones." The beads are very well made and in good condition.

However, our investigation showed the beads to be

something else. They are made of lead glass, the yellow fluoresces orange under a black light, the red is a copper red (not gold red, which makes a pink color against white) and the beads have thick pale pink yellow perforation deposits. Their surfaces are not shiny, but have been made matte by dipping them in hydrofluoric acid, evident in the uneven patches of this matte surface on some of the beads.

As we do not know the history of the beads, we are not accusing anyone of fraud, but they are evidently new products. They are unlike known Indian, Chinese, or Japanese beads or glass, and may be made in the United States or Europe.

Beware. Look closely before you leap.



## Bead and Culture Tour of Southeast Asia

January - February 1993

Details on Page 12

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## Through the Eye of a Needle

Surprised at our new look? In the last issue's supplement you were asked to give us your ideas about the future of the *MARGARETOLOGIST*. The replies

were not as numerous as I had hoped for, but those of you who were kind enough to reply did with welcome and thoughtful answers. The majority said that they were not interested in a different format. They liked the *MARGARETOLOGIST* the way it was. They were afraid that if it were "jazzed up" it would lose its "soul," and be less informative and less useful than it has been. I was pleased with this support, though I was not sure I entirely agreed. In any case, the pledge has always been to bring you the latest, factual information on beads from around the world, and that pledge is maintained.

Yet here we are with a new format. It was, ironically, not as a result of your responses. What happened was this. I had been working with a laptop computer, which I took around the world with me in 1990-92. It held up well. It seemed to thrive on getting kicked in buses from Bali, dropping out of rickshaws in India and broiling in the tropics. We returned and it regained its place on my desk. For a while everything was fine. Then the little machine got bored and died.

Fix it? Well, you know how hard that can be. There was really no alternative but to buy a new computer. I could have gone for a cheap model as prices are at their lowest ever right now, but if I had to change I figured I might as well upgrade. That included adding lots of power and the software to improve our capabilities significantly. It is taking a lot of work to get it all properly functioning, but I am convinced a better product will be the result. It will not only affect the *MARGARETOLOGIST*, but all of our publications as well. You can judge for yourself.

However, I am still waiting to hear from many of you about how you envision our future. There are still things to be considered. Please think about these questions and let us know what you would suggest:

1. Should we accept advertising? Would you be interested in advertising?

2. Should we raise our rates (they have not been raised for seven years)?

3. Should we change to an annual fee instead of the two-year structure we now have?

I eagerly await your responses.

**Calendar**

1992 -

1994

*January-February 1992: Excavations at Arikamedu, India.*

*March 21-24 Trade Beads in the Americas Conference, Santa Fe, NM.*

*August 23: Open House at the Center. Featured exhibit: Beadmaker, Beadmaker*

**27 October - November 2: Lecture, Beginner and Advanced Workshops for Bead-designers, Boston Area.**

**17 November - 16 December: Bead Training Workshop, SPAFA/University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.**

**23 January 1993 - 12 February 1993: Beads and Culture Tour of Southeast Asia (the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia).**

**February - March: Research in India.**

**3-5 April: Lecture and Bead Identification Seminar for Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.**

**7 April: Lecture, Bead Society of Los Angeles.**

**April - May: Research in Mexico, Central America.**

**27 September: Lecture, New Mexico Bead Society.**

**29 September - 3 October: Lecture for Young President's Organization, Santa Fe.**

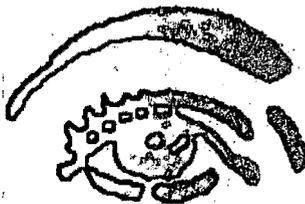
**November: Bead and Culture Tour of West Africa.**

**December 1993 - January 1994: Research in Nigeria.**

**February 1994: Glass Beadmaking and Trade Conference, San Antonio.**

*[Note: Dates in italics have passed as of writing; those in plain type are tentative.]*

**1994 Conference: Glass Beadmaking, San Antonio TX**



*Feature Story...***HEIRLOOM BEADS**

Everyone has heard of "Heirloom Beads", but what does the term mean? It seems a silly question, since we all know what heirlooms are. Most Americans think of them as something inherited from Aunt Emma or Uncle Joe and kept because they are old, perhaps of some value and remind us of them. The heirlooms of each family may be different and there are no special rules or laws governing them. I call these "informal heirlooms."

This is not what heirlooms mean to everyone. In many societies, along with a few other goods, beads

*In many societies beads  
are part of the social  
fabric*

are kept not out of sentimentality but because of their vital functions within the group. They are part of the social fabric and intimately woven into the lives of the people. I call them "formal heirlooms," and it is these we want to look at here.

As far as I can tell, there has never been a study of formal heirlooms, and certainly none on heirloom beads as a group. The Center's latest publication, *HEIRLOOMS OF THE HILLS*, is the first work on this topic. It considers heirloom beads among fourteen groups in Southeast Asia. These people are often called "hill people" because they live in mountain regions, isolated from the mainstream of their respective countries. Of the fourteen groups, five are in the Philippines (the Kalinga, Bontoc, Ifugao and Gad-dang of northern Luzon and the T'boli of Mindanao), three in Sarawak and Kalimantan on Borneo (the Kelebit, Kayan and Bidayah), three in Indonesia (the Toraja of Suluwesi and the upper and lower classes of Timor and neighboring islands), and one each in Myanmar or Burma (the Chin), Taiwan (the Paiwan) and Thailand (the Akha).

These groups were chosen because of personal acquaintance or good information on them. The list is representative (but not exhaustive) of Southeast Asian societies that value heirloom beads. The few

other such groups are mostly in Mindanao in the southern Philippines, which requires more study.

For each group the origin and dates of their beads, how they function in the society and how they are inherited are considered. The results are only summarized here. Patrons and Supporters will receive *HEIRLOOMS OF THE HILLS*; those with an interest in these beads will want the book for themselves. After summarizing the conclusions drawn from Southeast Asia, we shall look at five groups in other regions (South Africa, West Africa and Mexico) to see how their heirloom beads compare.

**THE USE OF HEIRLOOM BEADS**

Beads serve many purposes, and heirloom beads are regarded as particularly important. They are decorative. They have magical, ritual and ceremonial connotations. They denote wealth, status and other personal positions. They function as semi-currencies, stores of wealth, promises of payment or to repay debt. A primary function is as social markers.

Beads identify their owners and differentiate them from neighbors. Among the four neighboring groups in northern Luzon only carnelian beads are common to all. There is no way to mistake a Bontoc woman with carnelian and white marble beads on her head from a Kalinga with her multistrand necklaces of mostly European beads, an Ifugao with single strands of old Chinese beads or a Gad-dang with a few large beads and everything else decorated in red, yellow, black and white "seed" beads. The Kelebit and Kayan of Sarawak are also neighbors, but the former insist on monochrome stone and glass and the latter on decorated beads. The Akha of Thailand, the Paiwan of Taiwan and the T'boli of Mindanao are known to all around them by their beads.

Beads also distinguish members within a group, usually along class lines. In Timor and neighboring islands all heirloom beads are called Mutisalah. Only members of royal families wear or even touch the most valued ones, the wound Chinese coil beads, called Mutiraja. Commoners must be content with Mutitanah and Mutibatta, drawn Indo-Pacific beads. (See the last issue for details and page 12 for an

update.) The ownership of fine Pumtek beads by the Chin of Myanmar is a mark of status. The beads of the Bidayah of Sarawak are for magic; their ownership marks a man or woman as a healer.

### THE FORMATION OF BEAD COLLECTIONS

Forming and maintaining bead collections vary from group to group. Different processes used to build a collection of heirloom beads reveal some attitudes of the people towards them. These processes can sometimes be deduced simply by studying the beads them-

#### *There are curators and splitters, open-ended and closed collections.*

selves.

One difference is between "curators" and "splitters." Curators (who keep and care for something) pass beads down to a single heir, usually the oldest daughter. The collection is preserved, and strands often consist of only one bead type. Most Southeast Asian groups are curators, but four are splitters, sharing their beads among several heirs. The Ifugao of the Philippines tread a middle path. The oldest child inherits the beads. If a daughter, she usually keeps them, but they may (and sons often do) elect to parcel them out among their siblings. It is likely that some groups that are now curators were once splitters, such as the Paiwan of Taiwan and the Kalinga of the Philippines.

Another difference is whether collections are open-ended or closed. In the former, new beads can be added, but usually only after a bead is no longer available on the market. In a closed collection no new beads can be added. Half of our groups were judged to have open-ended collections, and the other half closed ones, some valuing only one or two types of beads. Several groups with closed collections must have once had open-ended ones, judging from the variety of their beads.

There is obviously quite a variety in the way beads are used and collections are formed. The only apparent connection between them is that splitters most often maintain open-ended collections. This makes sense, else in a few generations no one would have enough beads to make up a strand.

### THE ORIGIN OF HEIRLOOMING

An intriguing question remains: the "why?" of heirloom beads. Under what circumstances did people begin keeping them? In some cases it may be when the people felt a need to identify themselves as a distinct ethnic group, during a period of crises when they viewed their society as threatened and used beads to distinguish themselves. The oldest beads in some collections correspond to such a period or just before (it takes time for a bead to become an heirloom; probably three to five generations). In northern Luzon the Ifugao have the oldest beads, matching those in archaeological sites of the 15th to 16th century; they were the first to feel the incursions of the Spanish. The Kalinga were affected much later; their oldest beads are only from the 17th century. The oldest beads of the Toraja and the Paiwan date to the period of Dutch penetration and Chinese colonization of the island.

This does not fit every case. The Kayan have long been bead traders and their men traditionally go to the coast to work for a few years. The Akha probably brought their oldest beads with them from China. The elite of Timor likely got their Mutiraja because they controlled the sandalwood trade with the Chinese. The relationship between the Chin and the now-gone Pyu, who made Pumtek beads, is not known.

The variety reflects the variety of people. Clearly, understanding heirloom beads will help us better understand the histories of the people who have them.

### HEIRLOOM BEADS ELSEWHERE

With the study of heirloom beads in Southeast Asia as a background, we now examine similar beads in other parts of the world. Again, they were chosen because of personal knowledge and/or sufficient in-

#### *With the information from Southeast Asia, we can compare heirloom bead use elsewhere in the world.*

formation on them. Five groups are considered here. They are located in South Africa (the Venda of the Transvaal, with the neighboring Lovedu and Pedi

having the same beads), Ghana (the Asante of central Ghana and the Ewe of the southeast) and Mexico (the Mixtec of San Pedro Quiatoni and the Mixe of Mixistlán, both in Oaxaca). We have discussed most of these before, the Ghanaian ones in *MARGARETOLOGIST* 3(1) and 3(2) and the Mexican ones in 1(4):7-9. We shall be brief with them here, concentrating on their heirloom aspect. With the Venda beads, we shall be more detailed.

### The Asante and Ewe of Ghana

Old, valued beads are heirlooms among several groups in Ghana, among them the Asante and the Ewe. Most are handed down through the female line, while a few pass through the royal male lines as

***In Ghana, heirloom beads  
may belong to families or  
be part of the royal treasury.***

part of the "stool regalia". The important beads of the latter are the Bodom of the Asante and the Aku-so of the Ewe, both old powder-glass beads. Among the Ewe they are signs of hard work and success and therefore wealth and diligence. Kumekpor [1970-1:106] has remarked "These beads are considered 'precious, hardly found nowadays and more often than not owned not by individuals but by families as heirlooms transmitted from mother to daughter throughout succeeding generations". Quarm [1989:48-9], speaking of Ghana in general has said, "Beads preserve the history of individual families, clans and stools through the process of inheritance.... [among royalty] they form an embodiment of the history of the stool...."

### San Pedro Quiatoni and Mixistlán of Oaxaca, Mexico

The beads worn in these villages have been mentioned by several writers. Those of San Pedro Quiatoni are Venetian lamp-wound beads and long, unique pendants, which might have been made by an early glass industry in Mexico. The women of Mixistlán wear multi-strand necklaces weighing up to two kilograms. While there are some European beads on them, most are wound white glass beads

imported from China via the Manila Galleons.

In each village the beads are passed down from mother to daughter. While these are the outstanding heirloom beads in Oaxaca, they are by no means the only ones. In fact, there is great diversity among the villages of Oaxaca in both jewelry and dress. It is easy to tell the women of one village from another by recognizing her distinctive costume, including beads.

### The Venda of the Transvaal, South Africa

To the Venda, beads are not especially important except for the "Beads of the Water," used in ceremonies connected with ancestor worship and as marks of rank. They are passed down from mother to daughter and are considered to be very old, brought by the migrating Venda across the Limpopo River around 1700. They are small beads, about 2.5 mm in diameter and from 1.0 to 4.0 mm in length. They are semi-translucent and usually various shades of blue; green, gray and some other colors are also part of the group. All authors agree they are drawn beads, but their flat ends have caused much discussion; they are also wedge shaped so they fit nicely together on a strand.



Beads of the Water, after Davison 1972

Much has been written about them [Caton-Thompson 1931:128; Beck 1931:238; Dicke 1936:405-9; Van Riet Lowe 1937; Schofield 1958:189-90; Davison 1972:114-45; Davison and Clark 1976]. -Caton-Thompson said she found some in the lowest levels at Great Zimbabwe. Beck said there were no such beads at Dhlo Dhlo, a site abandoned about 1700, but the only difference was the Dhlo Dhlo beads do not have flat ends.

Dicke gave an outlandish account of these beads, assuming that most drawn beads are cut while the glass is hot and these were cut while the glass was cold. He also believed he saw the same beads from ancient Carthage, which Davison strongly denied. Davison and Davison and Clark furnish us with the

most information. Glass analyses of heirloom beads and those from Dhló Dhló show them to be very similar. The beads from Dhló Dhló are Indo-Pacific beads. Two things inhibited the authors from identifying these two groups: the flat ends of the Beads of the Water and the variety of colors of the Indo-Pacific beads, not matched in the Beads of the Water.

Though I have not seen Beads of the Water, every-

***Everything points to ... the  
Beads of the Water being  
altered Indo-Pacific beads.***

thing points to a rather simple explanation. They are Indo-Pacific beads, imported north of the Limpopo, in what is now Zimbabwe, before 1700. When the Venda and their relatives migrated southwards they brought them and afterwards altered them by grinding the edges flat (the profiles are actually slightly rounded). That must have been a lot of work with such small beads, and the ousting of Indo-Pacific beads by European beads contributed to their status. Davison thought the flat ends might be due to wear, but this is unlikely and we now know that the altering of beads is very common, as we have seen in Ghana [*MARGARETOLOGIST* 3(1):7-8] and elsewhere [*MARGARETOLOGIST* 4(2):6-7] including the Philippines (page 11 this issue).

### SUMMARY

The heirloom beads from outside Southeast Asia remind us of those within Southeast Asia. This is because:

1. In each case the beads are formal heirlooms, part of the social fabric of the people and not mere personal mementa.

2. The beads are highly valued and carry social meanings. Those of the Asante, Ewe and Venda represent the histories of the people and are used to distinguish social classes within the ethnic groups.

3. The beads of San Pedro Quiatoni and Mixistlán are used to distinguish the members of one village from their neighbors, as part of a system of such distinctions in which both jewelry and clothing play a key role.

4. The collections of the Venda are closed. The others are more open, with those of the Asante and

Ewe perhaps still being open; it appears that those of the Mexican villages have been closed for about a century.

5. We do not have sufficient information on inheritance patterns to decide if these groups are "curators" or "splitters", but one might guess that personal collections in Ghana are split among heirs (royal collections are curated), while those in South Africa and Mexico pass to single heirs.

6. The Venda themselves confirm heirloom collecting began with a "crises" in their history. They report that they brought the beads when they migrated south, and the indications are that they were (laboriously) altered some time afterwards.

This work is preliminary because it is pioneering. We cannot claim to have all the answers, but the evidence suggests we are on the right track in exploring this fascinating aspect of beads. By testing the hypotheses generated from our study of Southeast Asian beads against heirloom beads elsewhere in the world, we have confirmed that many of the same mechanisms are at work wherever heirloom beads are valued.

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## WHERE IS SITE X?

Our readers know that one of the most complex and important stories we have worked on for years concerns the most ubiquitous trade bead of the ancient world. These are neither chevrons nor millefiories, but the plain monochrome drawn glass Indo-Pacific beads.

Arikamedu, India, is the oldest known place where they were made. In the first or second century some of its beadmakers settled in Southeast Asia and at Mantai, Sri Lanka. Mantai was abandoned in the tenth century; the Southeast Asian branch ceased production in the 12th century. But the beads were still being made. The Portuguese J. Lavanha said in 1593, "[These beads] are made in India at Negapatam [Nagapattinam], whence they are brought to Mozambique." [Theal 1898:303] Besides, the industry survives in the village of Papanaidupet, Andhra Pradesh, India.

### *Indo-Pacific beads were being made in India, but where?*

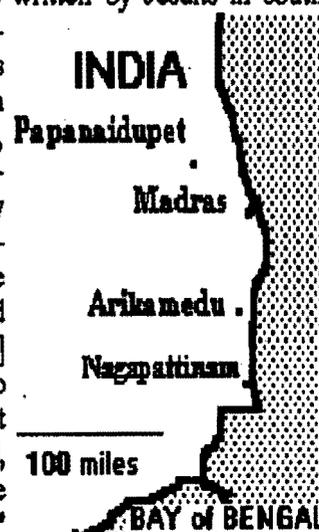
It had been assumed that Arikamedu (and bead-making in India) was abandoned about the third century, beadmaking resuming when the beadmakers of Mantai returned in the tenth century. But where? Lavanha was only half right. Though bought in Nagapattinam, the beads were not made there. In 1988 I conducted a thorough surface survey of old Nagapattinam with two friends. We found lots of medieval imported ceramics and a European clay pipe, but no evidence of glassworking, much less beadmaking. The beads must have been made somewhere else nearby. I called it Site X.

An exciting thing about bead research is that problems are often solved in the most unusual way. Moreover, this often helps solve other problems.

The recent excavations at Arikamedu (see last issue) suggest that it was occupied much longer than anyone had thought. The ceramics date to at least the 14th century. It was abandoned by 1765 when Le Gentil described ruins there and said the people of nearby

Virampattinam were robbing the bricks [Fauchaux 1945:1-2]. How long had the ruins stood before being despoiled? No one knows, but the beads might help tell us.

Could the beadmakers have gone directly from Arikamedu to Papanaidupet sometime after the 14th century? Only if Papanaidupet were old enough. There is no oral history of the founding of the industry that I could uncover in several visits there. The name of the village means "new Naidupet" (Naidu is a common Tamil name; "pet" means "village"). However, among letters written by Jesuits in south India collected by Samuel Purchas in 1625 this passage appears: "Simon Sa writes from Meliapor, the twentieth of November, 1598. amongst many other things of Paparagiu, which in one house kept three hundred Brachmans [Brahmans] and gave hospitalitie to the Pilgrims which went to, or came from Tripiti, a famous Idoll three miles from Chandegrin." [Purchas 1905:219]



(Spelling and punctuation as in the original.) [Purchas 1905:219]

What? You say you are not as excited as I am by this? O.K., let me explain. Meliapor is Madras. Chandegrin is Chanradgiri, once an important city. The "Idoll" three miles away is the temple at Tirupati (Tripiti). Paparagiu must be Papanaidupet, about a day's walk from Tirupati. This means Papanaidupet is not so new. It must have been there at least by 1598, within shooting distance of the abandonment of Arikamedu.

### *Bead research not only answers bead problems, but helps solve other problems as well.*

Arikamedu is a modern archaeologists' name. Next to Arikamedu is Virampattinam, which preserves the old name, going back at least to the early centuries A.D. of Virai [Mahadevan 1970] ("pattinam" means port). Next to Papanaidupet is Guddimallam (or Gudur), with good glass sand. Guddimallam is an old place, with temple inscriptions dating to at least the 1050s [Rangacharya 1985:496]; it was once called Vippirambudu; "bedu"

means place; can Vira change to Vippira? It seems plausible, but I cannot be sure yet. It is an area for further work.

All this may help date Arikamedu. Recall that the Portuguese bought Indo-Pacific beads at Nagapattinam. Had beadmaking moved to Papanaidupet by then, they certainly would have bought them at St. George (Mylapur, Madras), where the Portuguese had a flourishing trading station much closer to Papanaidupet than Nagapattinam (see map, page 7). This strongly suggests that Arikamedu (which is very close to Nagapattinam) was still occupied and making beads at the end of the 16th century, and abandoned between 1593 and 1765.

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**BOOK UPDATE:** Our next books: *Heirlooms of the Hills* (Southeast Asia) and *Where Beads Are Loved* (Ghana, West Africa) begin our Beads and People Series, with four pages of full color plates.

Patrons and Supporters are receiving *Heirlooms of the Hills* with this issue; *Where Beads Are Loved* will be out in early 1993. We believe you will greatly enjoy both.

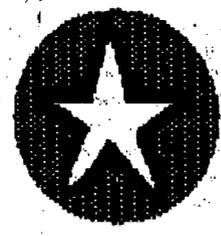
## Thoroughly Modern Millefiori: A Chronological Breakthrough?

Venetian millefiori or mosaic beads have long been favorites of collectors in the U.S. and abroad. These handsome beads pour onto the world market from West Africa in huge numbers. It had once been thought that they were produced for centuries, but a consensus has emerged [Francis 1988:28; DeCorse 1989:49; Picard and Picard 1991:4] that they were produced only in the late 19th and during the 20th centuries.

Allen (1982) reported a mystery about them: there were several ways to make the fancy canes which decorate them. In addition to monochrome canes, he identified cased (layered) canes, composite and molded ones. I do not use "composite" because its meaning is so broad, preferring "bundled" to describe canes made by joining monochrome glass rods to build up a pattern. The patterns of many bundled canes duplicate those made by casing or molding. The bundled canes are scarcer than the other types, maybe by one to ten, but why were there two ways of making fancy mosaic canes? Were there different companies, different places or a time difference between the methods? For a long time we did not know, but now an answer seems at hand.



Bundled Cane



Molded Cane

A recent book by Picard and Picard [1991] holds the key, but you will not find it mentioned there. The lavish book pictures nearly 3000 mosaic or millefiori beads in full color and at least full size. Most were bought by the Picards for their business, but

more than 800 come from the sample cards of the J.F. Sick & Co. in the Royal Tropical Institute of Amsterdam. The Picards have studied this collection and worked out what appears to be a reasonable chronological order for them (p. 4).

It is a shame that they did not picture the beads in this order, because if they had, a striking pattern would have emerged. It was only revealed by tallying the data spread through the book. But it is significant.

Simply put, the vast majority of beads made before World War I have bundled fancy canes, while the vast majority afterwards (1920-31) do not. The figures speak for themselves: of 350 beads before the war, 311 (88.9%) had bundled canes, while only 24 (6.9%) had molded or cased ones. After 1920, of 298 beads only 29 (9.7%) had bundled canes, while 203 (64.1%) had molded and 65 (22.1%) had cased ones. Bundled canes were being phased out after 1920. In 1920-25 there were 19, in 1926-28 there were 10, six of which were placed sparingly on white cores, and in 1929-31 there were none.

Was the selection skewed to produce this effect? There is no reason to accuse the Picards of doing so on purpose, and the chances of it being accidental are extremely low, given the lopsided figures. The Venetians must have made fancy canes for mosaic/millefiori beads differently before and after World War I.

Now the question is why? Casing and molding are techniques the Venetians have been practicing from at least the 15th century (cased beads include the common green hearts; chevrons are examples of molded patterns). They must be more efficient to make than bundled canes. Why were fancy canes ever made by the bundled method? Well, with one mystery solved, another is opened. Stay tuned.

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## Short Features

### THE AMBER CHAMBER

Are six tons of intricately carved antique amber about to reemerge after a half century of obscurity? Maybe, though none would reach the world markets. It is all of one piece, a full sized "amber room," complete with wall panels, busts, statues, candelabra and all the trimmings.

Commissioned by Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia, only selected clear amber was chosen to line a small room in his palace at Konigsberg, installed in 1709. In 1716 he gave the room to Tsar Peter of Russia, who did nothing with it. After his death it was installed in the Winter Palace in 1725. Thirty years later the Empress Elizabeth had it set up in the Catherine Palace at Pushkin (Tsarskoe Selo), where some mirrors and mosaic panels were added so it would be somewhat larger than the original.

All was fine until World War II. As the Germans approached Leningrad (again St. Petersburg) the room was dismantled, crated and buried, but the Germans found it and restored it to the old palace in Konigsberg. The precious cargo was again dismantled and crated in April 1945 as the Russians approached Konigsberg. It has never been seen since.

For years many looked for the amber room. It was



Amber Room  
Detail

once thought to be in Konigsberg, but attention is now focused on Weimer. In November 1991 Boris Yeltsin announced, "We know where it is." It is thought to be under the central square of the city, perhaps with other art treasures and perhaps also with grisly reminders of the worst of Nazi rule. Now that Weimer is in united Germany and there is re-approachment between Germany and Russia, we may soon know if the amber room is really there. An American company has offered to pay for its exhumation in exchange for TV rights.

If so, it will be restored in all its former glory, described by a British ambassador to Russia as "the eighth wonder of the world." Then we shall know what it really looks like; all we have now are poor black and white photos. But, what will happen to the decade long work of craftsmen under the famed Russian jeweler Boris Blinov to replicate the amber room?

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## SOME MODERN BEADMAKERS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

### 1. Stone Beadmakers in Indonesia

The location of semiprecious stones and industries which once made beads has been a complex task. Archaeologists shrugged when I asked where stones were found. Geologists concentrate on oil. O.T.C. Sukoco of Tiasky Emms, one of the largest stone beadmakers of the country, was more helpful, but understandably vague about his precise sources.

In addition to the Sukabumi/Bogor region of Java, long known to furnish agates, three other areas were visited last year. One is Pacitan, East Java. The Pasoka river provides agate, amethyst, carnelian and other quartz stones, but the industry is small and new (since 1950). When the beadmaker we interviewed insisted that the carnelian was naturally red I expressed surprise, explaining how the Indians and Germans heat stones with iron to make them red. Only as we were leaving did he confess to the archaeologist who had taken me there, that he did, indeed, bake the stones to redden them. He wanted to keep it a secret, but I guess he realized the word was out. Interestingly, polishing in Pacitan is done by rubbing the stones against bamboo.

Another source, including petrified wood, is Maja (once called Kalimaya), south of Banten, West Java. It once bore gold, the Dutch had gun flints made there, and it is now the source of Indonesian opal. I am promised a visit next time, and hope to learn if it

was an ancient source of stones. The third place was Padang, North Sumatra. Ring cabochons are made of petrified wood and variegated agates from the Barisan mountains. It is said there was once jade there, and Chinese traders came to buy it, but the sources have run out.

### 2. Glass Beadmaking in Java

The largest new glass bead industry in the world hums along in Plumbon Gombang, East Java. Solekan worked in a light bulb factory in nearby Jombang. When he retired in 1976 he experimented making ring cabochons, soon turning to beads. By 1991 some 200 to 250 people of the village were occupied in this industry.

Scrap glass is bought from a plate maker in Surabaya, much of it white opal glass. Shards are melted with a blow torch; powder glass from Surabaya is mixed in for colors. A worker takes about a pound (half a kg) on an iron punty (rod), grabs the other end with pincers and pulls as far as he can, producing a cane about two meters (yards) long. These are broken up for other workers to wind beads at small gas lamps. The separator is asbestos; I warned Sudarto (son of the late Solekan) about this and suggested alternatives. The beads are strung into necklaces, prayer strands and bracelets by the children.

The beads are attractive, in a wide range of colors, sizes and shapes. The most popular decoration is combed multicolored canes. When I asked where the best markets were, the staff of the Trowulan Museum who took me there were surprised to hear Japan then Saudi Arabia. I explained that Mecca was a traditional bead market, and Sudarto told us of a man from the next village who returned from his pilgrimage and proudly showed off his new prayer strand. "Yes," Sudarto said, "we make them in our village."

### 3. Clay Beadmaking in Thailand

One of the most delightful trips I have ever made to a bead industry was to Ban Dan Kwian south of Nakon Ratchasima (Korat) Thailand. Kwian means cart and the village was once an important carriage stop, honored by the large open-air carriage museum there. The village has an ancient Mon pottery-making tradition, using the local brown clay. Over 20

years ago Sudarat, an art student from Korat fascinated by ceramics, first made beads from the clay. They were worn by the Carabao and the Caravan, local pop groups. As they became popular, so did the beads. Soon many of the 2000 potters were making beads, too, and when a highway was built south from Korat, shops were set up to sell ceramics of all kinds to all comers.

Beadmaking is simplicity itself. Aside from the dark brown clay, white clay is bought from the north and commercial colors added; black is made by putting coconut oil on the surface before firing. Most beads are shaped by hand, though some are formed in acrylic punched-out molds. Long needles pierce them. Patterns are added with whatever is at hand: plastic brushes, leather punches, files, etc. The beads are covered and fired on small charcoal braziers. Some have incised designs which after firing are filled with liquid plaster, later colored with magic markers, and afterwards sprayed with varnish. It may sound simple (and it is), but the beads are delightful and cheap. I tested a necklace by wearing it for a month in the hot tropics and even to shower. The design has worn, but still looks good.

### BEAD ALTERING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

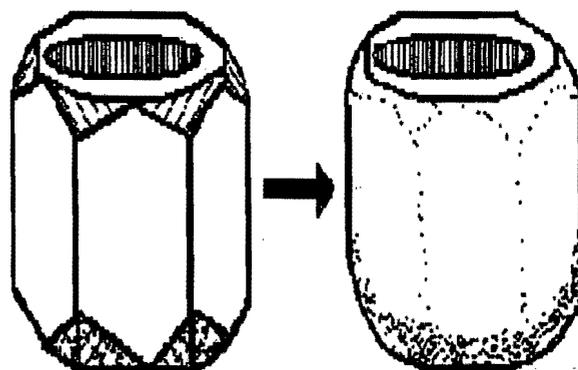
Although altering glass beads is known in West Africa, and this issue discussed an East African example, more is to be learned about the practice elsewhere. In Southeast Asia the only recorded case is of the Kelébit of Sarawak grinding off decorations with stones because they prefer monochrome beads [Munin-Oettli 1983:94].

Another instance has come to light. One of the most common beads on the multistrand necklaces of the Kalinga in the Philippines has been altered. I had seen many of these short cobalt blue barrels with flat ends, but could not work out what they were. I could not detect winding, nor figure out how drawn beads would have that shape. At last I was able to study them at leisure when cataloguing a major private collection in Manila. Examining two strands for a long time, it slowly dawned on me: I knew these beads, but in a different form.

They were cornerless hexagonals, drawn beads with six (or more) sides ground at the twelve corners to total 18 facets. They are 19th century Czech. The

ones in the Kalinga strands were ground down again to remove all facets and make the bead round. No glass beads of the Kalinga are faceted, though faceted carnelians are tolerated. Examples in other collections confirmed the observation. At the ends a hexagonal outline is often left, and remnants of facets can sometimes be detected.

No matter that the Czechs worked hard to make fine faceted blue beads, they were not appreciated



**Bead altering in Southeast Asia**  
The Kalinga of the northern Philippines grind 19th century Czech cornerless hexagonals down to make cobalt blue barrels for their heirloom beads.

by the Kalinga. This is yet another example of our growing appreciations of the complexities of the bead trade.

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**Bead and Culture Tours:**  
Southeast Asia is planned for early 1993 (see next page). After that we are working on other exciting tours: West Africa in late 1993, East Asia, India and Mexico. Where would you like to hunt for beads?

### Short Notes

#### New Gem at Arikamedu

At Arikamedu, India, an unrecorded gem anciently worked there has been identified by the Center's lab as hessonite, a variety of grossularite, in the garnet group. This beautiful deep reddish brown gem is much less common than the reddish-violet almadine garnet there. As virtually the only source for gem quality hessonite is Ceylon (Sri Lanka), where it is often confused with (and sold as) hyacinth zircon, this is another early connection between Arikamedu and the island.

#### Mutisalah and Inheritance

More on Mutisalah has been found when writing a more detailed paper for an anthropological journal. In the Indonesian islands of Timor, Flores, Sumba, Savu, Roti etc., the princely families use Mutiraja, wound Chinese coil beads of lead glass and the commoners have Mutitanah (red) and Mutibatta (orange), drawn Indo-Pacific beads of soda-lime glass. Moreover, they circulate differently. The royal Mutiraja are given by the bride's family to the groom, worn by the bride, and handed down from her to her daughters. But, the commoners' Mutitanah/Mutibatta are given by the groom to the bride's family as brideprice and handed down to the sons of the family. Thus, not only are the beads different and owned by different classes of people, they circulate as heirlooms in distinctly different manners. The more you look, the more complex it all becomes.

#### Privitization in Czechoslovakia

Our correspondent in Jablonec, Czechoslovakia, soon to be the Czech Republic, reports that privitization is moving along, and in two or three years 15 to 20 separate companies are expected to emerge. As 30% of their business was with East Europe and this market has dried up, the current amount of export is down, but they remain optimistic about the future.

#### California Flower Beads: A Hoax?

In issues 1(1):2 we introduced a bead factory in Long Beach, California: the Restall Manufacturing Co., which made "California Flower Beads." Two boxed sets of the beads are in the Center's collection. One listed thirteen flowers used to make them and a "history" which said the making beads from flowers was introduced by Spanish missionaries:

"Recently an industry for the manufacture of similar beads has been established and the beads used for making beautiful necklaces and coat chains possessing all the natural color and odor of real flowers and conveying the beautiful sentiments associated from time immemorial with flowers."

Issue 1(2):2 had an update, thanks to Vivian Gonzales. From the Canadian T. Eaton catalogues we learned that these (and possibly rivals' beads) were offered to "ladies and misses" from 1915 to 1921. At first they were expensive at a dollar a strand. Prices dropped (and the strands got shorter) until in 1921 some were offered for 19 cents.

The latest word comes from Pippa Fog who had a bead examined at the Smithsonian and learned they were not made of flowers but of plaster. There is no flower substance other than an essence for the odor.

Restall's beads were only "similar" to the Spanish Missionaries', but not what we would call "flower petal beads". The claim that they were "Manufactured Entirely By Hand in the First Rose Bead Factory in the World" might just squeak by modern truth-in-advertising restrictions, but the beads aren't what we were lead to believe they were.

**CORRECTION:** A misspelled name crept into issue 3(2) on Ghana. "Pacheo" should be "Pacheco" on pp. 3-6.

### Bead and Culture Tour of Southeast Asia:

Sorry, due to unforeseen circumstances, the tour must be postponed. If you would like to join us at a later date, please let us know.

We are, however, planning a Bead and Culture Tour of West Africa (Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo) later in 1993, to include markets, beadmakers, and all the sights. For the adventurous only. Drop us a note if the Idea Intrigues you.

**Let's Go!**