

Karklins, Karlis

1985 *Glass Beads: The Levin Catalogue of Mid-19th Century Beads; A Sample Book of 19th Century Venetian Beads; Guide to the Description and Classification of Glass Beads*. Parks Canada, Studies in Archaeology, Architecture and History, Ottawa.

Stone, Lyle M.

1974 Fort Michilimackinac, 1715-1781: An Archaeological Perspective on the Revolutionary Frontier. *Publications of the Museum, Michigan State University Anthropology Series 2*.

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Ezakwantu: Beadwork from the Eastern Cape.

Emma Bedford (ed.). Exhibition catalogue; South African National Gallery, P.O. Box 2420, Cape Town 8000, South Africa. 1993. 112 pp., 13 color plates, 61 b&w figs. Rand 50 + Rand 40 for postage (paper).

The ending of apartheid in South Africa has been accompanied by an upsurge of public awareness of, and interest in, aspects of indigenous African culture. Since 1990, the South African National Gallery (SANG) has expanded its collection's and exhibition's policy to include material culture, especially that of southern Africa. *Ezakwantu*, a Xhosa word meaning "the things of the [Bantu] people," is the first exhibition in a series planned to endorse this modification of policy. In fact, South African ethnographic work (including the study of beads and beadwork), did not really take off until the 1930s, and it was not till then that beadwork began to be collected formally by museums in South Africa (p. 39). Horace Beck of England and C. van Riet Lowe of South Africa both made reference collections of beads and bead sample cards.

The exhibition catalogue ought to be reviewed under two broad headings. It consists of twelve articles by different authors plus a Catalogue List of the actual exhibits. The first article, by Emma Bedford, defines *Ezakwantu*, and explains why there

are so many contributors. It was deemed necessary, in a pioneering exhibition of this nature, to involve Africans from the East Cape area, whether through staff members of SANG or by interviews. The articles fall into two broad categories, one of which places beadwork into the context of South African society; the other one treats beads and beadwork as a subject of archaeological or historical research.

There is a discussion of traditional dress and its use, whether to affirm identity or to make a political statement. In curating the exhibition, and in producing the catalogue, black Africans were given control over the way they and their culture were represented; otherwise the colonial pattern of domination would have been seen to continue. Examples of this cultural domination are the 19th-century paintings and photographs of Africans wearing beadwork, quite often incorrectly, as expounded by Gary van Wyk in his discussion of the paintings of Thomas Baines and the photographs of W.F.H. Pocock. Lindsay Hooper, in the final section on "The Social Life of Beads" writes: "Beadwork encodes social information about the power, age, gender and ritual status of the wearer." Power is shown in the accumulation of beadwork which is also an accumulation of wealth. Beadwork also shows cross-cultural influences, such as in headgear and adaptations from Victorian beadwork. Color symbolism and other aspects of beadwork style may have a purely local validity. As women are the chief makers of beadwork within South Africa, a feminist-oriented interpretation of the production and consumption of beadwork is essential to understanding the position of women in Eastern Cape societies. Diviners use beadwork to affirm their ritual identity, modifying it according to their level of initiation. As well as a cultural identifier, beadwork can be used as a telling political statement, notably when Nelson Mandela elected to appear at his trial in Johannesburg in 1962 in full Thembu beaded costume.

After briefly reviewing the glass bead trade and glassmaking, Sharma Saitowitz, in "Towards a History of Glass Beads," discusses the impact of glass beads on trade, citing references dating from 1516 and from van Riebeeck's Journals (1652-1655) that concern trade in beads in East and South Africa. While documentation relating to Africa at such an early date is scanty, there is quite a body of information about bead manufacture in Venice and Bohemia. Venice, in

the interests of maintaining its monopoly on the bead trade, acquired a factory in France in 1900, and the firm of A. Sachse in Gablonz, Bohemia, in 1920. Indeed, until about 1955, Venice's *Conterie* seems to have cornered the bead export trade to South Africa; Saitowitz in her Appendix 2 tabulates the amazing quantity of beads (including glass rods and lamp-worked beads) exported to Africa during 1932-1955, country by country and year by year, totalling a staggering 3,706,256 kilograms, of which 1,665,691 went to South Africa and Zimbabwe. She also has useful data on traders in Cape Colony and the Eastern Cape, and has tracked down old records, including an annotated trade-bead card, from merchants operating in King William's Town. Her paper really adds to the recorded data on beads in South Africa.

Carol Kaufmann, in "The Bead Rush: Development of the Nineteenth-century Bead Trade from Cape Town to King Williams Town," continues where Sharma Saitowitz left off, concentrating on the part that beads played in Xhosa-speaking trade and economy. After 1830, the bead market became deregulated to some extent, and beads were more generally available, instead of being exclusively under royal control. Beads became increasingly important as currency among the indigenous population, and the making of beadwork becomes a feature of South African life. Kaufmann adds to the roll of former merchants through the records held in Cape Town, and documents the efforts of frontier missionaries and traders who tried to order beads directly from London and thus bypass the inflated prices charged in Cape Town. Sections in this paper entitled "Distribution of Trade Beads," and the periods 1820-1830, 1840-1870 and 1870-1900 take us through the history of the bead trade in the Eastern Cape area, and trace the changes in value and availability. An ongoing archaeological excavation at the farm "Canastaplace" promises to give significant information arising from a bead assemblage found in grain storage pits, a find that is so far unique in the Eastern Cape.

The exhibition catalogue, compiled by Carol Kaufmann, one of the curators of the exhibition, covers 373 entries, including 12 paintings and photographs, 12 bead sample cards and a variety of beadwork, among which is a complete diviner's outfit.

The illustrations are well chosen to accompany the text, and show that the exhibition must have been well worth a visit. Perhaps something more permanent may come about ere too long.

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Beads and People Series.

Volume 1, "Heirlooms of the Hills (Southeast Asia)," 1992. vi + 22 pp., 13 color figs., 12 b&w figs., index. \$15.00 (paper).

Volume 2, "Where Beads are Loved (Ghana, West Africa)," 1993. vi + 22 pp., 11 color figs., 8 b&w figs., index. \$15.00 (paper).

Peter Francis, Jr. Lapis Route Books, The Center for Bead Research, 4 Essex Street, Lake Placid, New York 12946.

These two publications are the first in a series of monographs aimed at a popular audience. Both volumes cover very large geographical areas and time periods. "Heirlooms of the Hills" features beads from Southeast Asia. A brief introduction to the region is followed by short discussions of the beads of ethnic groups in Thailand, Burma, Taiwan, the Philippines and Indonesia, the work concluding with a brief overview. "Where Beads are Loved" concentrates on beads in southern Ghana, though the text ranges widely over time and space, including condensed discussions of the trans-Saharan trade, the European bead trade, African-made beads and bead use.

As publications aimed at the collecting market, these volumes are likely to sell well. Both volumes provide basic introductory information on such topics as how to distinguish wound and drawn glass beads, European bead manufacture and bead terminology which will be useful to the novice. The prose is generally engaging and the ethnographic examples colorful.

There is less of interest for advanced researchers. The referencing in both volumes is fair, though this is not surprising given the constraints of space and the