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### 36. BEADS FROM IRON AGE HOARDS IN LATVIA, by Karlis Karklins (1985, 6:9-11)

Since 1790, approximately 108 hoards and votive offerings buried during the Bronze and Iron ages (1300 B.C.-A.D. 1200) have been uncovered within the borders of Latvia, a [former] Soviet Socialist Republic situated between Estonia and Lithuania on the east side of the Baltic Sea. Five of the Iron Age finds contained beads.

Burned fragments of **bone beads** or discs about 20 mm in diameter (Fig. 1:1) were among some 130 broken or burned objects found in the Kokumuiža (Līgotnes) II offering (Fig. 1, map, no. 1) which was buried in a marsh in apparent votive thanks for good fortune in battle or for the aversion of death or misfortune. It is uncertain whether the discs, some of which have conical perforations, served as beads or fulfilled some other function. Based on the associated artifacts, the discs are attributed to the end of the 5th century A.D.

An **amber bead** was found in the Celmiņi hoard (Fig. 1, map, no. 2) which was buried in the 11th century A.D. Irregular in outline, the bead is in the form of a short circular barrel (Beck type I.B.1.b.) with a slightly sloped "upper surface" (Fig. 1:2). Its irregularity and small size (16.5-19.0 mm diameter; 11.0 mm length) preclude its having been used as a spindle whorl and suggest that it most likely served as a bead or pendant. The specimen was imported from the territory of the western Balts, probably the coast of Lithuania or Poland.

**Bronze beads** of indigenous manufacture formed part of a woman's breast ornament in a hoard at Reznes (Fig. 1, map, no. 3). Two pins of tinned bronze with cross-shaped

heads were connected in two places by two barrel-shaped beads of cast bronze. Similar beads have also been unearthed in 11th- and 12th-century graves and habitation areas of the Livs, a Finno-Ugrian people who inhabited the region to the east and southeast of the Gulf of Riga.

The Reznes hoard also contained a double strand of bronze-wire spiral beads strung on linen thread. Such neck ornaments have frequently been encountered in the graves of 11th-12th century Liv women.

**Silver beads**, eleven in all, formed part of the rich Ipšas hoard (Fig. 1, map, no. 4). Oblong and globular in shape, these hollow beads were produced using the "filigree and granulation" technique (Fig. 1:4). The specimens measure 12-14 mm in diameter and 11-20 mm in length. Their combined weight is 15.65 grams. Associated coinage, the most recent of which is that of the Hungarian ruler Salomon (A.D. 1063-1074), suggests that the beads date to the second half of the 11th century. They were imported from Russia.

Similar beads of various styles have been found at the Salaspils Laukskola settlement near Riga, as well as in Gotland, Sweden, Old Prussia, Kievan Russia, and the territory of the western Slavs, primarily in 11th- and 12th-century contexts.

**Glass beads** were encountered in the Koknese I (Fig. 1, map, no. 5) and Reznes hoards. The former produced three whole beads, two bead halves, and several fragments. Round originally, the specimens were all burned and deformed to some degree (Fig. 1:3). Beads of this type are common finds at 12th-century hill-forts in Latvia and adjacent countries.

The Reznes hoard produced half of a round gilded bead as well as several decomposed fragments. The beads, together with six perforated silver coin pendants of 10th-11th-century West European origin, undoubtedly comprised a Liv woman's necklace, such as have been found at Lehavere, Estonia, and Mārtiņšala near Riga.

Associated artifacts reveal that both hoards date to the 12th century. The beads are believed to have been imported from "somewhere to the east."

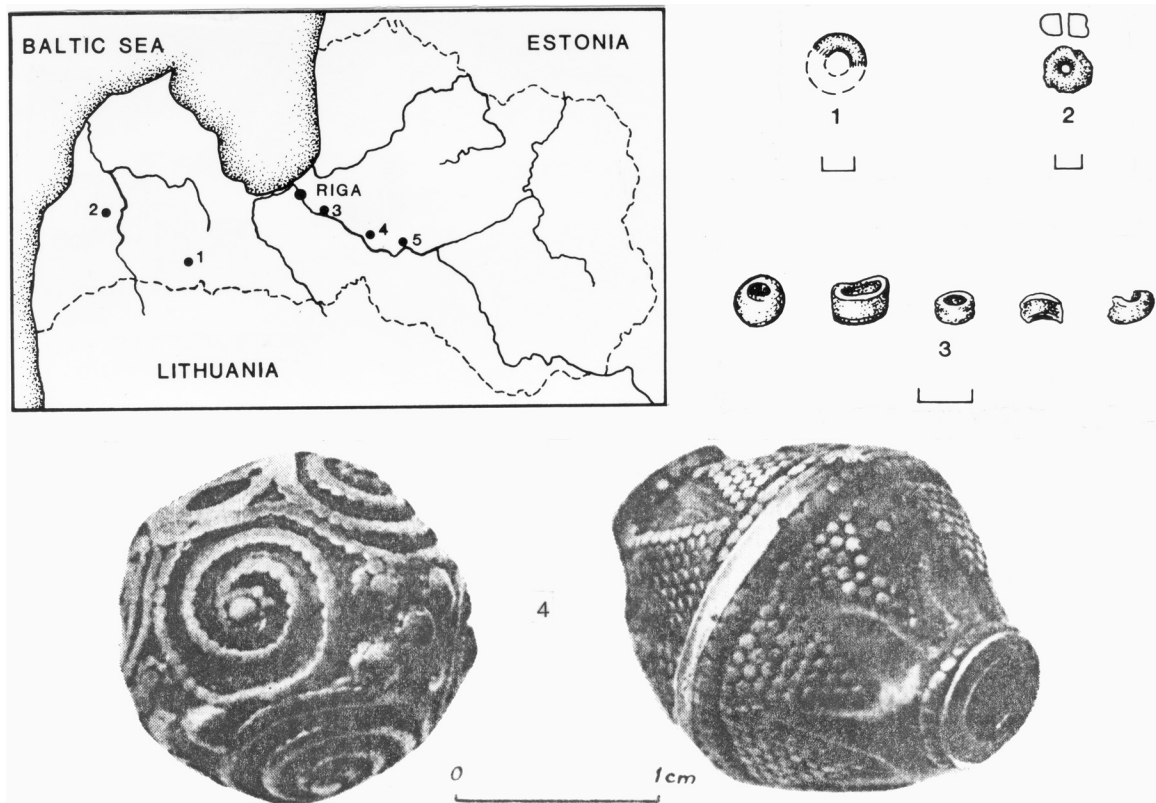
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**Figure 1.** Beads from Iron Age hoards in Latvia: 1) bone; 2) amber; 3) glass; and 4) silver (drawing: D. Kappler; photo from Urtāns 1977: Fig. 25).

### 37. THE BIRMINGHAM BEAD INDUSTRY, by Karlis Karklins (1987, 10:9-11)

Several entries in late 19th- and early 20th-century encyclopedias reveal that a prosperous bead manufacturing industry once existed in the English Midland's city of Birmingham. The earliest item, which appeared in the 1860 edition of *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* (Vol. 1, p. 771), states that "large quantities of beads, used for dolls' eyes, are manufactured at Birmingham." Published in 1879, *The Globe Encyclopaedia* (Vol. 1, p. 315) further informs us that "large quantities of plain beads are made in Birmingham, which are used for embroidery and fancy work." *The English Cyclopaedia* (1891, Vol. 1, p. 24) contains the statement that "beads are also made to an enormous extent in Birmingham; where certain varieties of them are sold in thousands of dozens for doll's eyes." And, finally, *The Harmsworth Encyclopaedia* of 1906 proclaims that "Birmingham is the centre of the [bead] industry in England."

Attempts to uncover further details in the bead literature and various works dealing with the English glass industry yielded few results. However, a thorough examination of sundry Birmingham city directories dating from 1767 to the present produced sufficient information for the preparation

of a skeletal description of the Birmingham bead industry.

Although it could not be determined when the industry began, it was certainly in existence by 1767. Of eleven "glass pinchers" listed in *Sketchley's Birmingham Directory* for that year, one—William Simmons—is specifically listed as a "necklace maker." (The designation "glass pincher" intimates that the beads were produced by "pinching" molten glass in a mould.) In 1785, steel beads are added to the list of local products (Pye's *Birmingham Directory*), followed in 1800 by gilt, glass, patent pearl, wax, and fancy beads, and gilt and glass necklaces (*Chapman's Birmingham Directory*).

*Thomson and Wrightson's Triennial Directory* for 1812 lists eleven individuals who are identified as beadmakers. Their products included glass beads (3), glass beads and bugles (1), gilt and/or steel beads (3), black necklaces and beads (1), both glass and gilt beads, as well as patent pearls, and wax, and fancy beads (1), and beads of unspecified materials (2).

By 1829, the number had swelled to 16 producers. Four of them made glass beads, eleven made steel and/or gilt beads, and one made both metal and glass beads, etc. (*Pigot and Company's Commercial Directory of Birmingham*, p.