

II. The motifs were floral designs fabricated with small glass beads from Venice which displayed a wide variety of color nuances ranging from violet and rose to white.

References Cited

Foy, Danièle

1989 *Le verre médiéval et son artisanat en France méditerranéenne*. Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris.

Frothingham, Alice

1963 *Spanish Glass*. Thomas Yoseloff, New York.

69. NOTES ON A RARE MELON-SHAPED CHEVRON BEAD, by Marie-José Oppé (1997, 30:10-11)

Among a group of very small, old chevron beads acquired at the market in Chinguetti in northeastern Mauritania, and found together at a nearby ancient site, is a rare seven-layered melon-shaped specimen (Fig. 1). John and Ruth Picard (1993:40, no. 265) mention another similar bead, declaring it to be the single unique example so far encountered. The other chevron beads in the group are the same small size and also have seven layers. One is square, and another has a black inner and outer layer, showing similarities to bead number 95 in Smith and Good (1982:43). Three other beads correspond to their no. 79. In addition, there is an eight-layered chevron, with numerous imperfections. These types of small, ancient chevrons are highly prized in Mauritania, as well as northern Morocco.



Figure 1. The seven-layered chevron bead from Chinguetti.

Accompanying the chevron beads are three, short, three-layered, squared tubes with faceted corners. These beads, also described by Smith and Good (1982:42, no. 55), have a colorless core, a thin white middle layer, and an ultramarine exterior. There is also a similar bead, but without the facets.

If these beads were exported to the Americas by 16th-century Spanish explorers, how did they come to be found in Mauritania as well? Chinguetti is actually the site of an ancient city that, since the Middle Ages, served as a major relay point for caravans that had just traversed over 1,000 km of harsh desert. This major trans-Saharan route, located just 4 km from the town, linked southern Morocco with the Adrar, a mountainous region located in what is now Algeria and Niger. It is most likely, therefore, that the chevron and tubular beads acquired in Chinguetti were transported there by caravan from Morocco sometime in the 16th century.

References Cited

Picard, John and Ruth Picard

1993 Chevron and Nueva Cadiz Beads. *Beads from the West African Trade Series 7*. Picard African Imports, Carmel, California.

Smith, Marvin T. and Mary Elizabeth Good

1982 *Early Sixteenth Century Glass Beads in the Spanish Colonial Trade*. Cottonlandia Museum Publications, Greenwood, Mississippi.

70. RESPONSE TO BUSCH, by Marie-José Oppé (1997, 31:1-12)

First, thank you to Mr. Busch for pointing out the error published in "Notes on a Rare Melon-Shaped Chevron Bead" which concerns the location of *l'Adrar des Iforas*, effectively straddling Algeria and Mali. This error of inattention by the author is compounded by the fact that she is native to the region, having roamed the Sahara all the way to Mauritania. Concerning the role of the caravan route from Sidjilmassa to Ghana via *l'Adrar de Mauritanie*, one has merely to consult Mauny (1961:428-434, Figs. 74-76) to confirm its importance.

The extent to which these beads are "highly prized" (please note the word used is prized, not priced), is revealed in such sources as Delarozzière (1985:69, 72, 126-127) and Fisher (1987:219), as well as through personal observation. Regarding rarity, so far, only six melon-shaped chevron beads have been documented among the thousands of chevron beads that have been studied to date by various