

IDENTIFICATION

Few beads are as distinctive, easy to identify and date as the *Nueva Cadiz*, *Plain* and *Twisted* (Fig. 1). These are cane beads of square cross-section, with or without a twist; most commonly they are in various shades of blue, ranging from robins-egg, 'teal' to dark navy. In eastern Canada, in former Huron territory, there is a variety in opaque 'turkey' or 'brick red'. Dating for any variety of *Nueva Cadiz* ranges from mid-16th to mid-17th century. Except for specimens in two Portuguese collections, these square cross-section cane beads have only been found in the New World, in Spanish contact sites, except for the red variety, which have a probable French derivation (Fairbanks, 1968). The blue varieties range from northeastern U.S. (New York, Pennsylvania) to Argentina (including sites in Alabama, Florida, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Canal Zone, Ecuador, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, the largest source) (Fairbanks, 1968). Since the primary report on these beads (Fairbanks, 1968) is not easily accessible, and because some additional information has accumulated, I thought it worthwhile to figure and briefly describe the *Nueva Cadiz* beads.

*Nueva Cadiz* beads, of the blue and possibly red varieties, both *Plain* and *Twisted*, appear from sites around Lancaster, PA (Fenstermaker, 1974; Liu, 1974) and possibly the red twisted variety, from upper New York state (Pratt, 1961). When fully documented, these finds can further the distribution record. I have had opportunity to examine one strand of blue cane beads, imported from Africa, which are identical to *Nueva Cadiz Plain*; the color is 'teal' blue, the condition perfect, and only differs from New World specimens in having a proportionately thicker outer layer of blue glass (Fig. 2). Although larger in diameter than most specimens I have examined, the 14mm diameter is within the range cited by Fairbanks (1968). There appears to be at least one other such strand from Africa, but in a

much corroded condition. It would be extremely important to determine if these beads are really contemporaneous to the New World specimens, or are later copies of this type. In addition, Fairbanks (1968) reported that twisted specimens which appeared to have inlaid stripes were "... simply the thinning of the surface layer which allows the inner layer to show through." I have examined Peruvian specimens, one of which may show this effect, but at least two do have genuine, inlaid stripes. A 'teal' blue specimen from the study collection of the Museum of the American Indian, New York, has a broad black stripe down the center of the twist; similar specimens have been seen in imported strands from Peru. A dark blue specimen from coastal Peru has light blue and brick red inlaid stripes at the four edges of the twisted bead (Fig. 1). There is the possibility that such beads with inlaid stripes are not contemporaneous with other *Nueva Cadiz* beads, but their association suggests otherwise.

I thank Anna Roosevelt and U. Vincent Wilcox for permission to study specimens of *Nueva Cadiz* in the collection of the Mus. of the American Indian; Jay Louthian for the gift of Peruvian specimen; Liza Wataghani for the opportunity to examine the strand from Africa and Elizabeth J. Harris for extremely valuable bibliographic help.

References:

Fairbanks, C.H. 1968 Early Spanish Colonial beads. Confer. on Historic Site Archaeology Papers, S. South, ed., 1967 2(1): 3-21.  
 Fenstermaker, G.B. 1974 Susquehanna, Iroquois colored trade bead chart, 1575-1763. Lancaster, PA: 8 p., 1 fig. and color photo insert.  
 Liu, R.K. 1974 Glass trade beads from an early eastern North American site. *Bead J.* 1(2): 23-26.  
 Pratt, P.P. 1961 Oneida Iroquois glass trade bead sequence, 1585-1745. Fort Stanwix Mus., Rome, N.Y.: 20 p.

ROBERT K. LIU

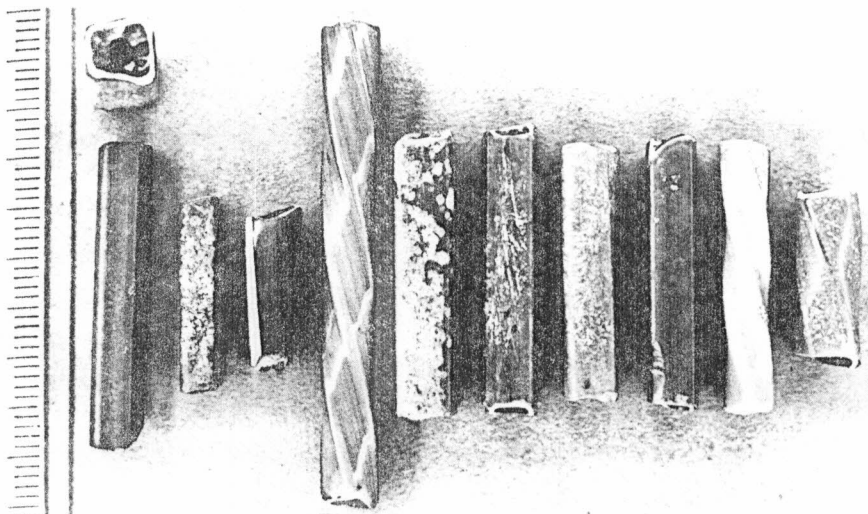


Fig. 1. Selection of *Nueva Cadiz Plain* and *Twisted* cane beads, all in shades of blue, ranging from 'robins-egg' to 'teal' to deep navy (specimen with stripes). All from Peru, no provenance. Notes variation in diameters, degrees of surface corrosion. Fairbanks (1968) states that most such beads have an outer layer of clear glass overlaying a thin layer of blue, under which is a layer of white, resulting in "...a very rich, brilliant color". Inner core appears black to naked eye, although some have definitely transparent, light blue cores. Red variety (not shown) appears to be of one color throughout. Cross-section shown typical of most beads. Striped specimen courtesy of J. Louthian.

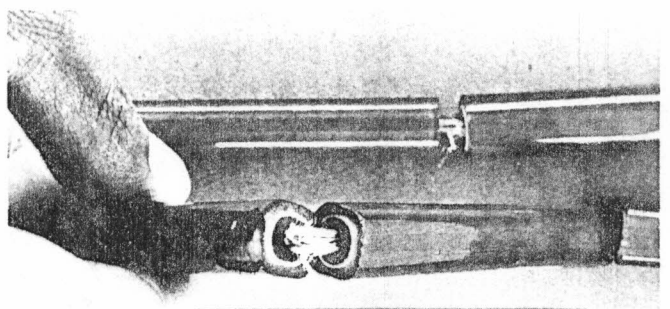


Fig. 2. Strand of large diameter cane beads of square cross-section, closely resembling *Nueva Cadiz Plain*, but imported from Africa. Courtesy of L. Wataghani.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10