

## 17. BEADS

Sa Huynh site, 5th century B.C.–1st century A.D.

Glass

National Museum of Vietnamese History, Ha Noi, LSb 19625b

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These beads were brought back to the museum from the Musée Cernuschi in 1923.

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Andreas Reinecke, Nguyen Chieu, and Lam Thi My Dung, *Neue Entdeckungen zur Sa-Huynh-Kultur*, 221.

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Bérénice Bellina and Ian Glover, "The Archaeology of early Contact with India and the Mediterranean World, from the Fourth Century BC to the Fourth Century AD," in Glover and Bellwood, eds., *Southeast Asia*, 74; Miriam Noel Haidle, "Fragments of Glass Bangles from Krek 52/62 and Their Implications for the Dating of the Mimotien Culture," *Asian Perspectives* 40, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 195–208. Glass finds at this site suggest a date as early as circa 500 B.C. for glass production in Southeast Asia.

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Bennet Bronson, "Glass and beads at Khuan Lukpad, Southern Thailand, in Ian and Emily Glover, eds., *Southeast Asian Archaeology 1986: Proceedings of the first Conference of the association of Southeast Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe*, BAR International Series 561 (1990), 213.

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Bellina and Glover, "The Archaeology of early Contact with India and the Mediterranean World, from the Fourth Century BC to the Fourth Century AD," 75. Francis, *Asia's Maritime Bead Trade*, suggests they were manufactured in Arikamedu, South India.

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Francis, *Asia's Maritime Bead Trade*, 131.

Beads of various materials—stone, agate, red, white, and blue glass—were excavated in burial jars of the Sa Huynh culture.<sup>25</sup> Analysis of glass from one Sa Huynh site, which shows the glass to be lead-free, and the remains of blue glass in one jar, indicate the presence of local glass production.<sup>26</sup> To the south, archaeologists discovered evidence of glass production at the Sa Huynh site of Giong Ca Vo (on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City), where glass beads, bracelets, and bicephalous ear ornaments were discovered. While the earliest glass beads found in Southeast Asia were of foreign production, by the early centuries A.D. they were being produced locally.<sup>27</sup> Glass bead production in Thailand also dates to this early period.<sup>28</sup>

The beads vary in size, shape, and color; the color ranges from a turquoise to a deep lapis lazuli blue. One could suggest that the deep blue might have been popular as a substitute for the coveted lapis lazuli. Scientific analysis of beads from the site of Giong Ca Vo, in southern Viet Nam, indicates the blue beads found at that site are high in potash and are colored with cobalt and manganese; Bellina and Glover believe potash beads, as opposed to the mixed-alkali beads found in Southeast Asia, were locally produced.<sup>29</sup> As noted above, that site also shows evidence of glass production (not seen at Sa Huynh, where these beads were found), though Francis indicates most local glass appears to be black or dark green, probably colored with iron.<sup>30</sup>