



“... another fine monograph in the St. Catherines series ... an essential volume for anyone studying Spanish colonial beads in the Southeast and the Caribbean.”

Karlis Karlkins, Parks Canada

“The St. Catherines collection of beads is one of the largest and most important collections to be recovered by archaeologists in North America. ... a major contribution to bead research.”

Marvin Smith, Valdosta State University



St. Catherines Islanders have worn beads for 5000 years. Almost 70,000 individual beads have been recovered from extensive archaeological excavations on St. Catherines Island, Georgia. In this volume Elliot Blair and his colleagues describe and classify this extraordinary bead assemblage, putting the entire collection into a worldwide perspective. First, they explore the global origins of beadmaking and provide an overview of previous studies of bead manufacture. This analysis then allows them to pull together the documentary and archaeological evidence relating directly to the Spanish Colonial Empire, the source of most trade beads recovered on the island. To provide a context for the bead assemblage, the authors survey the Native American landscapes across five millennia of human occupation on St. Catherines Island. The entire bead collection is then classified and detailed, including the nonglass beads recovered from the island. This description in hand, the authors discuss the likely origins of the various glass trade beads, with particular attention to the diverse manufacturing techniques employed by various glassmaking guilds in Europe. Finally, the

discussion returns to the archaeological and behavioral contexts of St. Catherines Island, specifically examining the role of indigenous and trade beads within the 16th- and 17th-century occupations of Mission Santa Catalina de Guale.

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PETER FRANCIS JR. (1945–2002) was the Founder and Director of the Center for Bead Research, Lake Placid, NY. He has published extensively on beads throughout the world.

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The Beads of St. Catherines Island

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