

Essai de Typologie des Perles des Sites Archéologiques du Nord de Madagascar

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Abstract: *Beads are important artefacts retrieved from archaeological investigations carried out in Madagascar since the beginning of the 20th century. Excavations in Northern Madagascar (especially on the western coast and part of the eastern coast) have provided thousands of beads (see for example Gaudebout & Vernier 1941; Vérin 1975; and Radimilahy 1998). Four archaeological sites have been chosen (Mahilaka, Vohémar, Antsoheribory and Andoka) where 33,000 beads have been studied.*

The present work is an attempt to establish a typology in time and in space, from the standardisation of characteristics of beads : material, shape, size and colour. Comparative study of the four collections showed that beads, such as pottery represent historical and archaeological time reference, thus a relative dating method.

INTRODUCTION

Les perles constituent une part importante des mobiliers mis au jour lors des fouilles archéologiques entreprises à Madagascar depuis le début du XXe siècle. La région Nord de Madagascar (plus particulièrement la côte ouest et une partie de la côte est), a livré des milliers de perles lors de ces travaux, entre autres ceux de Gaudebout & Vernier (1941), de Vérin (1975) et de Radimilahy (1998).

Cette étude sera limitée aux produits de quatre sites archéologiques