



This book is a labour of love, the result of Terry's long involvement in the field of ancient ornaments, as a researcher and artist, offering his own interpretation on the creations of ancient craftsmen in his homeland. It is Terry's sincere wish that this book will fill a gap on this specific topic and that it may be useful to other researchers in the field of ancient ornaments from Myanmar.

Terence Tan (Tan aka U Sein Wynn) has researched the ancient ornaments of Myanmar for almost three decades. He holds a Master's degree in Public Administration, a Master's degree in Archaeology and is a PhD Candidate in Archaeology. He has presented numerous papers at international conferences and has been a visiting lecturer in the USA at the universities of Yale, Harvard and Northern Illinois. He has been invited to present his work in the UK at Jesus College, Oxford University; in Singapore at the National University (NUS) and in Thailand at Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok) and Chiang Mai University. In his native Myanmar, Terry has lectured extensively at Yangon University and at other learning institutions. His publications include articles in journals and magazines, including Arts of Asia. Terry is also an accomplished jewellery designer, deriving his inspiration from a long involvement in the research and documentation of ancient ornaments. He is an acknowledged expert in his field and has displayed his collection at a solo exhibition in New York. In Myanmar, he is a frequent designer-artist guest at the MRTV-4 channel.

This book on ancient ornaments is the first of its kind in Myanmar and one of the first in the region. The book covers ornaments from Prehistory to the Pyu period. It is hoped that a subsequent publication will cover the remaining eras, to the Konbaung dynasty founded by King Alaungpaya (c. 1752–1760). King Thibaw, the last King of the Yadanabon period, was also the last King of the Konbaung dynasty and the last king of Myanmar. He was exiled to India during British colonial rule.

In this book, Terry traces ornamental evolution in Myanmar and offers new concepts and hypotheses borne out of his long involvement in the field. He also makes an impassioned appeal for the safeguard of this priceless cultural heritage, that it may be cherished in our present times and protected for the benefit of future generations, that they may also know the creative genius of Myanmar's ancient craftsmen and artists. Terry also addresses the thorny issue of provenance and its implications for his country's cultural heritage.



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Preface P7
 I was born into a traditional family with a legacy in the gem-trading business. In my childhood I was surrounded by the gemstones, jewellery and design techniques that, consciously or unconsciously, shaped these blissfully happy years. As a teenager, I became fascinated with the wonders of ancient ornamental art, a passion which endures to this day and the driving force for my decision to formalise this interest academically, first with a Master's degree in Archaeology and subsequently with a research degree, an ongoing pursuit.

As was expected of me, I became involved in the family business. From a young age I had access to a wide range of books on Southeast Asian jewellery of the Early Era but I resolved to make a personal contribution to this body of printed literature. It is with delight that I present this first volume, an illustrated overview on ancient jewellery and ornaments from Myanmar, by a Burmese national. Southeast Asia is where I hail from and the area of my main academic interest.

The information in this book has been researched over a period of 20 years, travelling to remote and inaccessible regions of Southeast Asia. I personally collected the information and documented the items to ensure the integrity of the data in this book. The project has not been without its challenges, however, mostly connected to the lack of specific publications on the topic and the unequivocal requirement to establish the provenance of objects, often collected in non-scientific contexts.

As is the custom in other parts of the world, it is highly likely that gold and other metal artefacts have been melted down by people unaware of their cultural value. All too often, the primary consideration is the outward monetary value of gold or other precious metals and the financial gain that can be derived from "recycling" one of these priceless objects into a modern-day piece of jewellery to adorn the window of a contemporary shop. It will always be a matter of conjecture how much of our ancient heritage has been lost in this way but, fortunately, what has been spared is sufficient for academic analysis and interpretation. Pieces are becoming increasingly rare, however, and this is elevating their already high status to sought-after items among collectors and scholars.

This book is a comparative study, a typology based on style, technology and materials of ornaments from various eras. Most of these ornaments can be identified, through design and stylistic features, to a specific historical context, since each period is characterised by its own cultural traits. It is hoped that this book will shed a new light on the chronology of jewellery and ornaments of ancient Myanmar, from the dawn of the country's history to the Pyu period.

The Pyu Period is deemed Proto-historic and their culture is a unique phenomenon of early urban civilisations. Their written records have yet to be deciphered but not for lack of academic endeavours. We can therefore only glimpse at this advanced culture from an archaeological perspective, by trying to reconstruct the important role they played in the early development of Southeast Asian culture. Despite the important role they played in the history of Southeast Asia, relatively little research has been conducted on their culture and lifestyle and much of contemporary research centres on their architecture, numismatics and, to a lesser degree, their burial customs.

The Pyu enjoyed massive wealth. In addition to using coins minted from gold or silver, they also made conspicuous use of jewellery. Objects of personal adornment can reveal significant details about their wearers. Jewellery is a reliable indicator of many aspects of society: changing styles, rank, status, abstract symbolism, and much else besides, are reflected in personal items.

My active participation in archaeological missions has helped to broaden my knowledge and the experience gained as a result has been instrumental in bringing this book into being. Some readers may question the authenticity of some of the artefacts detailed therein. However, in as much as a gem dealer or jeweller acquires his knowledge from being involved in his trade, I derive my confidence from a long association with ancient beads and jewellery, as a researcher and designer.

I am proud to present this book to the public and I hereby invite scholars to engage in mutually-beneficial exchanges on the region's ancient ornaments. I am delighted to offer this book as my contribution to the topic and as a labour of love for a long-held dream. The pieces detailed in this publication are mostly from the T&Q private collection. Some of the objects from this rich collection have been illustrated in other publications, like the teardrop-shaped, clear corundum bead in gold lotus fitting, attributed to the Pyu era, illustrated in Moore's *Early Landscapes of Myanmar*!

With the aim of providing a reference for scholars, and to bring my knowledge to the wider public, it is my wish to widen my research of ancient artefacts. It is hoped that this book will be the first of several more publications on the topic and that it may help junior scholars, art historians and the general as a useful work of reference.

It is envisaged that this first effort will be enhanced by future reprints.

FOREWORD

Terry Tan has done an enormous service to art historians and the art world in general, in documenting the rich, but often obscured, origins of creative expression among the peoples of Myanmar. The beauty, the sensitivity and the technological skills employed in those distant ages conveys a definite awe to us as we are brought face to face with forms, styles, colors and an aesthetic thinking that connects us to our forebears across the millennia.

But while Terry's work, especially his masterful descriptions of Bronze Age and Pyu Period stones and gold ornaments, will be much appreciated by scholars, it is the people of Myanmar who will benefit the most from this work. A global audience can now appreciate the origins and dimensions of Myanmar's early culture and its unique contribution to the cultural development of Asia. A veil has been lifted from the past to reveal a richness and wonder of which Myanmar can be truly proud.

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19 January 2015

Foreword

Tan has been passionate about beads and jewellery since I first met him in 2003 when he undertook the Diploma Programme of the Department of Archaeology, University of Yangon. Ever since I met him he has been talking about this book, so to see it come to fruition is very welcome indeed.

Tan has many facets to his love of adornment that are seen in the array of images in this volume. I hope once published, he will have the chance to go back and document some of the pieces further. He has a keen eye for detail, which has served him well in choosing the objects to put in this book. As portable goods, they have in many cases been travelling since they were made. Thus the collection reaches out in many geographical and stylistic pathways.

Tan's interest in the past is not restricted to the beads and jewellery for he is knowledgeable on the whole sequence of a changing style and aesthetic influencing the jewellery in addition to understanding the technical side of manufacture learned through his family. He has defined regional types, and postulated how they were used, whether for personal adornment, honouring the Buddha, or donation. The regional distinctions in addition offer a chance to do further research on the aesthetics of each of the geographical areas from which he has drawn images.

I warmly commend him on his perseverance, fine eye for detail, and understanding of the process of making new-to-look old objects. I recall a Bead Conference in Bangkok we both attended where pointed questions were raised on the authenticity of several of the objects Tan had presented. His rejoinder was to next show the steps in forging a bead, reminding the audience that he could distinguish between the ancient and contemporary manufacture. Combined with his connoisseur's eye developed over a lifetime of involvement with jewellery of all sorts is an understanding of the production processes for the collection.

Publication of the book in the opening months of 2015, will not I suspect be the last of Tan's writing on ornament and jewellery. He continues to work with jewellery, now designing his own, and reading up on the pieces from the past within his collection. Thus this volume is both culmination and new beginning in his documentation and appreciation of these 'small windows' of the past.

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Prologue
 In the late evening of 17th January 2015, Terence Tan phoned up my son Maung Kyaw Zaw Nuynt, who was his classmate in their college years, if he could see me. I told my son to let him come "right now". Terence came with three bundles of printed papers with photographic illustrations, and requested me to write a prologue to his book for publication. I never write introduction, preface or foreword to a book to be published until I thoroughly read it. So I told him to wait a couple of days or may be more as I have to read his three bundles of printed papers, in addition to my routine lectures and talks at the universities and institutions.

"Ancient Jewellery of Myanmar". From Prehistory to Pyu Period. I am not surprised at all that Terence would write a book on such a subject. He was my student in the Diploma class of archaeology, Department of Archaeology, University of Yangon, and also in the M.A. class where I teach history of archaeology in Myanmar and Myanmar under water archaeology. A regular, punctual and keen Terence proved his family background, personal character, interest and proclivity since these years. Hailed from a wealthy family of successful prosperous Mining business in Tavoy a southern part of Myanmar, Terence is "the white sheep of the family", loved and favoured by parents, siblings and everyone yet he is not spoilt by all these blessings, for he did get through his education from primary to tertiary levels. Though science and technology were the most popular subjects among matriculates of his days as the then government education emphasized material progress and development of the country, Terence chose archaeology for his specialization. Though archaeology department was one of the oldest departments in Myanmar, established in the early British colonial time of late 19th century, it remained first as an Epigraphic Office, a branch of India Archaeological survey. Only after Myanmar regained her independence in 1948, Myanmar Archaeology Department emerged. Even then the Department was solely concerned with maintenance and digging. For the teaching and training, new recruits were sent to India. It was the same with regard to the Forest Department. It was only in late 1997-98 academic year that the teaching archaeology department was opened. Terence belonged to the early batches of archaeology students. There were misgiving views on the subject archaeology at that time. It is a boring and useless, time and money consuming subject with no prospect of a lucrative job. Without a good financial background and a dedicated personal interest, no member of a new generation of college students would turn their attention to archaeology. They would join excursions to ancient sites for the pleasure of a picnic, not for interest in the antiquities of long forgotten past.

But with the fast booming of hotel and tourism industry, archaeology begun to gain popularity among tour operators and tour guides who want to require as much as possible knowledge of the sites their clients want to visit. Hence Archaeology Diploma classes are crowded in spite of rigid entrance examinations. Besides as the Education Ministry re-introduced English as the medium of instruction, tour guides interest in Archaeology Diploma classes became twin fold to learn about the sites of tourist attraction and to gain English proficiency.

When I saw Terence in my class I thought he was a tour guide or tour operator. But his English is quite OK as he received a good English education at English schools. But he gradually revealed himself to be a serious academic scholar and researcher in the field. Not only fulfilling all the requirements of the class and examinations, but his works at academic institutions at home and abroad, as recorded in his auto-biographical sketches in this book, proved what he had done in research and field.

Terence is not merely a scholar, he is an ardent art collector and a designer as well. With the generous support of his parents and siblings he could well afford to collect some antiques especially ancient jewellery. Besides Terence is a born artistic craftsman. He showed me quite a few of his designs he created with precious and semi-precious stones which find their way to many shops at hotels, home and abroad.

Regarding the book he wrote, I would like to say it is a book partly academic and partly coffee table book. Compiled like a dissertation, the book is crammed with facts, figures, illustrations, references, footnotes and bibliography, leaving rooms for other researchers to come in, inviting their comments, suggestions and further contributions. It is for collectors and general public as well because although many works on Myanmar antiquities have been compiled and published, most of them are in the nature of putting on record of the research. Terence's book has the inclination to make use of ancient jewellery for many purpose in this Age of Globalization. There is a boundless field for Myanmar designs in the world of fashion. Terence who has already set his foot in that fashion world, would, I am quite confident, make his name, as he has proved himself a scholar-writer with this book.

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