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# U Thong City of Gold

## The Ancient History

### Anna Bennett

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- A wide-reaching and comprehensive study of U Thong
- Extensively illustrated - including dig sites, relics and artifacts
- First book on the area in English
- The world authority on this area of Thailand, at the forefront of archeological research
- Includes ancient gold (six or seven centuries old) artifacts from U Thong National Museum and the National Museum Bangkok
- U Thong is being heavily promoted by the Thai Tourism Industry and is likely to become a major destination for cultural travelers over the next year or so

U Thong, 100 or so km north of Bangkok, has been an important site for over 2,000 years, as witnessed by the discovery of a 3rd century Roman coin. The moated city was connected to the Chin river, thereby gaining access to international trade routes.

The inhabitants of the early centers of Classic Southeast Asian civilization were already wealthy enough to own large quantities of ornate jewelry such as imported beads from India and carved stone from Taiwan. They had so much gold that central and western mainland Southeast Asia including the U Thong area was known in Sanskrit as Suvarnabhumi, the Golden Land.

This publication brings a new perspective to the study of ancient gold from U Thong. The author is a trained research metallurgy scientist, and these skills have been brought to bear on the highly significant corpus of early gold artifacts found in and around the moated city, the largest accumulation of such artifacts from any of the ancient muang of Thailand.

The goldsmiths were as highly skilled as those anywhere else in the world, but almost all previous studies have been written by people who can only study the outer appearance to draw conclusions regarding its age and place of origin.

**Anna Bennett** is an archeological scientist and conservator, as well as a principal of Conservation and Technical Services Limited - a company she founded in 1989, which is affiliated with the Centre for the Scientific Investigation of Works of Art. She was trained as a conservator and gained her PhD in 1988 from University College London. From her doctorial fieldwork in Lopburi province in the years 1984 to 1988, and frequent return visits to investigate new finds, she has been scientifically engaged with this region for some 32 years.

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