

TWENTIETH ANNUAL SINKANKAS SYMPOSIUM Gems & Minerals of Burma (Myanmar)

Saturday, April 25, 2026

GIA World Headquarters
Carlsbad, CA

The one-day event features 10 speakers on topics related to one of the most storied gem-producing regions of the world. Specialists noted in their fields will discuss geology, field gemology, geochemical characterization of sapphires, inclusion features in Burmese gems, modern mining and production, market reports, jade nomenclature, history of jadeite, pearls, and the quest for Burma's finest and rarest gems. This year's event and proceedings are dedicated to Professor George R. Rossman.

Venue: GIA World Headquarters | The Robert Mouwad Campus
5345 Armada Drive, Carlsbad, CA 92008

Sponsors: Gemological Institute of America
and Geo-Literary Society

Registration: NOW OPEN through April 24, 2026, noon PDT
Short URL: <https://bit.ly/sinksymp2026>

Cost: US \$200.--

What's included: One copy of the printed proceedings volume (value \$47.00), morning and afternoon refreshments, boxed lunch. A reception in the GIA rotunda follows. The venue features an exhibition of "Temples & Treasures of Southern Asia" and booksellers will have specialty publications on gem and minerals available for purchase.

Contact: Issues with registration? phammers@gia.edu

Sign-in, 7:30 – 8:40 AM

continental Program starts at 8:50 AM sharp. Concludes
breakfast: at 4:20 PM. Reception follows at GIA.

The Rules: No on-site/same-day registration.
Valid government picture ID.
All attendee names must be on the list at the gate – no grouping of reservations under one name.

Website: sinkankassymposium.net

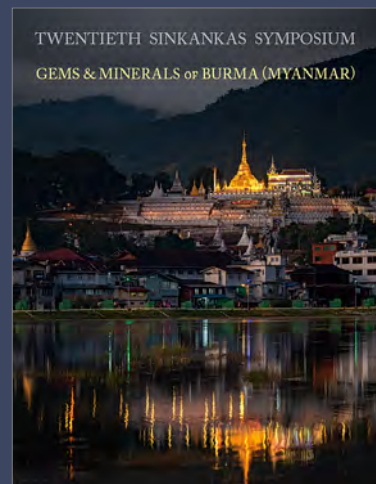


Ruby in marble matrix from Baw Badan, Mogok Stone Tract, Burma. Courtesy of William Larson, photo by Robert Weldon.

Speakers*

Dr. Rachele Turnier
Dr. Aaron Palke
Wim Vertriest
Roland Schluessel
Nathan Renfro
Richard Hughes
Dr. Laichen Sun
Dr. Tao Hsu
Stuart Robertson
William Larson

* *Speakers and program subject to change without notice.*



TWENTIETH SINKANKAS SYMPOSIUM GEMS & MINERALS OF BURMA (MYANMAR)

April 25, 2026

GIA World Headquarters and The Robert Mouawad Campus
5345 Armada Drive, Carlsbad, CA 92008
S. Tasaki Student Lecture and Graduation Hall

Hosted by
Gemological Institute of America and Geo-Literary Society

PROGRAM

Greetings, Coffee Hour: 8:00

Robert Weldon - Introduction 8:50 - 9:00

Dr. Rachelle Turnier - Geology of Burmese Corundum 9:00 - 9:30

Dr. Aaron C. Palke - Geology of Burmese Non-Corundum Gems, Including Peridot 9:35 - 10:05

Wim Vertriest - Field Gemology in Burma 10:10 - 10:40

Break: 10:45 - 11:00

Roland Schluessel - Gems of Mogok 11:00 - 11:30

Nathan Renfro - Inclusions in Burmese Gems 11:35 - 12:05

Lunch: 12:15 - 1:00

Richard W. Hughes - Burmese Jade 1:00 - 1:40

Dr. Laichen Sun - Burmese Jadeite in China (1580-1911) 1:45 - 2:15

Dr. Tao Hsu - Treasures from the Coastlines of Myanmar: Burmese Pearls 2:20 - 2:50

Break: 2:55 - 3:10

Stuart Robertson - Market Report: Burmese Gems 3:10 - 3:40

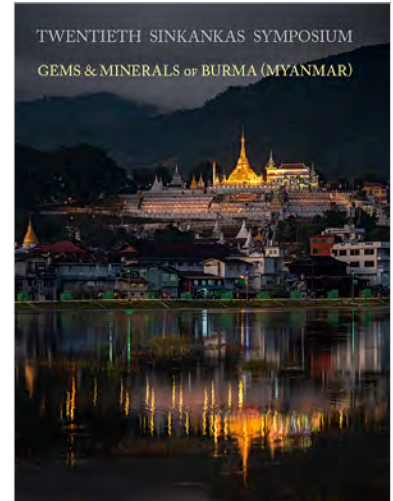
William F. Larson - From Myth to Market: In Search of Burmese Gem Crystals 3:45 - 4:15

Reception: 4:20 - 5:15

TWENTIETH SINKANKAS SYMPOSIUM GEMS & MINERALS OF BURMA (MYANMAR)

Stuart Overlin and Lisbet Thoresen, editors
Photographs by Mia Dixon, Jeffrey Scovil, Harold & Erica Van Pelt,
Orasa Weldon and Robert Weldon

Publisher: Pala International, Inc., Fallbrook, California
Publication Date: April 25, 2026
Specifications: 8.25" x 10.75", digital press, full color, soft cover,
perfect binding. 124 pp., 131 illustrations/plates/maps
ISBN: 978-0-9915320-8-7
Print House & Distributor: DPI Direct, Poway, California
Inquiries: sinkankas.dpidirect.com



CONTENTS

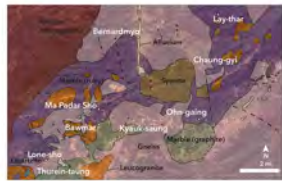
- Acknowledgments
- Dedication – George R. Rossman
- Program
- Speaker and Author Biographies
- George Harlow
 - George R. Rossman: A Remembrance
- Rachelle Turnier, Tyler Blum, Kouki Kitajima,
Aaron C. Palke and John W. Valley
 - Geochemical and Temporal Variations Among
Mogok Sapphires
- Aaron C. Palke
 - General Geology of Gem Deposits From the
Mogok Stone Tract
- Wim Vertriest
 - Field Gemology in Burma
- Roland Schluessel
 - Gems of Mogok
- Nathan Renfro
 - Inclusions in Burmese Gems
- E. Billie Hughes
 - Hyperion—Mapping the Hidden Worlds Within Stones
- Liu Shangji, Richard W. Hughes, Zhou Zhengyu
and Kaylan Khourie
 - Broken Bangle: The Blunder-Besmirched History of Jade
Nomenclature
- Tao Hsu
 - Treasures from the Coastlines of Myanmar: Burmese Pearls
- Stuart Robertson
 - Market Report: Burmese Gems
- William Larson
 - From Myth to Market: In Search of Burmese Gem Crystals
- Selected Bibliography



Dedication – George R. Rossman



George Harlow
George R. Rossman: A Remembrance



Geochemical and Temporal Variations Among Mogok Sapphires

Rachelle B. Turnier, Tyler Blum, Kouki Kitajima, Aaron C. Palke and John W. Valley

THE MOGOK STONE TRACT in Myanmar is a sapphire-bearing area with a complex geological history. Despite the widespread presence of sapphire deposits in the gemstone trade (Figure 1), little is known about their genesis. Apart from the ability of growing over the Mogok sapphire, several other gemstones, such as garnet, zircon, and rutile, are found in the area. It is difficult to understand their relationships to Mogok sapphires and sapphire-bearing mafic granitoids.

Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.



General Geology of Gem Deposits From the Mogok Stone Tract

Aaron C. Palke

WHILE THE 1970s Mogok sapphire boom in Myanmar is well known, the general geology of gem deposits in the Mogok Stone Tract is less understood. This paper provides a general overview of the geology of the Mogok Stone Tract, including the Mogok sapphire, garnet, zircon, and rutile. The Mogok sapphire is a corundum (Al₂O₃) gemstone that is found in the Mogok Stone Tract. It is a blue gemstone that is highly valued for jewelry.

Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.

Rachelle Turnier, Tyler Blum, Kouki Kitajima, Aaron C. Palke and John W. Valley
Geochemical and Temporal Variations Among Mogok Sapphires

Aaron C. Palke
General Geology of Gem Deposits From the Mogok Stone Tract



Field Geology in Myanmar

Wim Vertrieet

FIELD GEOLOGY IN MYANMAR is a complex task. It involves understanding the geological context of the field, the distribution of gemstones, and the relationship between the gemstones and the host rocks. This paper provides a general overview of the field geology in Myanmar, including the Mogok sapphire, garnet, zircon, and rutile.

Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.



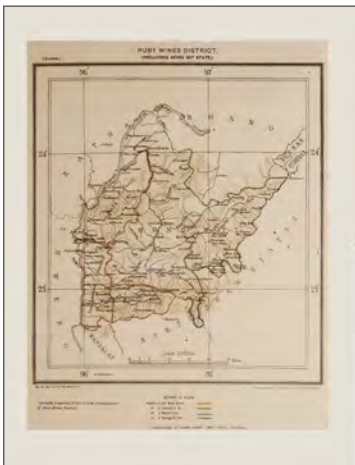
FIELD GEOLOGY IN MYANMAR is a complex task. It involves understanding the geological context of the field, the distribution of gemstones, and the relationship between the gemstones and the host rocks. This paper provides a general overview of the field geology in Myanmar, including the Mogok sapphire, garnet, zircon, and rutile.

FIELD GEOLOGY IN MYANMAR is a complex task. It involves understanding the geological context of the field, the distribution of gemstones, and the relationship between the gemstones and the host rocks. This paper provides a general overview of the field geology in Myanmar, including the Mogok sapphire, garnet, zircon, and rutile.

Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.

Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.

Wim Vertrieet
Field Geology in Burma



Gems of Mogok

Roland Schluessel

INTRODUCTION
Mogok is a gemstone-bearing area in Myanmar. It is known for its sapphires, garnets, zircon, and rutile. This paper provides a general overview of the gems of Mogok, including their distribution and the geological context.

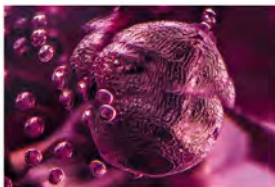
Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.



Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.

Figure 1. A large pile of rough sapphires and a single faceted Mogok sapphire. The inset shows the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar. Figure 2. A geological map of the Mogok Stone Tract in Myanmar.

Roland Schluessel
Gems of Mogok



Inclusions in Burmese Gems

Nathan Renfro

BURMESE GEMSTONE is a world of wonder. It is a world of color, texture, and history. It is a world of mystery and discovery. It is a world of beauty and wonder. It is a world of... (text continues)

Broken bangle. An advanced Burmese ruby containing an inclusion of corundum, shown in isolated light. Photographed by John Renfro.

Nathan Renfro
Inclusions in Burmese Gems



Hyperion – Mapping the Hidden Worlds Within Stones

E. Billie Hughes

HYPERION is the world's first available gem inclusion database. It is a world of... (text continues)

Hyperion. A Burmese ruby gemstone with a complex internal structure, shown in isolated light. Photographed by E. Billie Hughes.

E. Billie Hughes
Hyperion—Mapping the Hidden Worlds Within Stones



BROKEN BANGLE

THE BLUNDER-BESMIRCHED HISTORY OF JADE NOMENCLATURE

By Liu Shang, Richard W. Hughes, Zhou Zhengyu & Kaylan Khourie

COVERTURE

THE SEARCH FOR A SINGULAR

One of the greatest challenges in writing... (text continues)

Liu Shang, Richard W. Hughes, Zhou Zhengyu
and Kaylan Khourie
Broken Bangle: The Blunder-Besmirched History
of Jade Nomenclature



Treasures from the Coastlines of Myanmar: Burmese Pearls

Tao Hsu

MYANMAR is a beautiful country... (text continues)

Burmese Nacreous Pearls. A large, faceted Burmese pearl with a complex internal structure, shown in isolated light. Photographed by Tao Hsu.

Tao Hsu
Treasures from the Coastlines of Myanmar: Burmese Pearls



Market Report: Burmese Gems

Stuart Robertson

MYANMAR has long been a source of... (text continues)

Market Report. A collection of Burmese gemstones, including rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, shown in isolated light. Photographed by Stuart Robertson.

Stuart Robertson
Market Report: Burmese Gems



From Myth to Market: In Search of Burmese Gem Crystals

William Larson

MYANMAR has long been a source of... (text continues)

From Myth to Market. A large, faceted Burmese gemstone with a complex internal structure, shown in isolated light. Photographed by William Larson.

William Larson
From Myth to Market: In Search of Burmese Gem Crystals