



Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum Newsletter

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Ca Mau Shipwreck – New Discoveries (Part I)

It has now been determined that complete sets of Kraak style plates, consisting of five plates in graduated sizes, were included in the original cargo of the Ca Mau shipwreck in response to European market demands. These Kraak style sets of five plates are consistent with the Deshima Island (Scheveningen) series of five plates which have been previously documented as part of the Ca Mau shipwreck cargo. Further information on the latter series of plates is included under the references below. The two publications

documenting the Ca Mau shipwreck recoveries, The Ca Mau Auction Catalogue and “Tau Co Ca Mau” (The Ca Mau Shipwreck), only included the two smallest plates in this series, the three largest plates were not included. However, there were other Kraak style plates included as is also detailed in the references below. Considering the foregoing, it may be inferred there were significantly more Kraak style plates and related sets included in the original cargo than previously documented and published.

Description of Fragments of the Complete Set of Kraak Style Plates

Ca Mau shipwreck study collection Kraak fragments from plates of the same series in five different sizes - set of 5 (C-246 No. 1 to No. 5). The border pattern surrounding the central medallion on all the plates represented by the five fragments consists of the following: a darkly shaded scalloped border outlined in white, and the center then further encircled by panels of diaper pattern filler in overlapping small circular motifs alternating with panels of swastika symbols reserved in white on a mottled blue ground. The number of panels is dependent upon the size of the plate as described in the chart below.

The central medallion of the fragments is decorated with two flowering bushes (typically a daisy or sunflower on the left and peony on the right) emerging from a rocky base against a varying background including horizontal and diagonal line accents along with swirls. The bushes on the three larger medallions would each contain two blossoms, while the bushes on the smaller medallions contain either one or two blossoms. On the three larger plates and a few of the two smaller plates there is an insect (cricket, beetle, bee or butterfly) amid the petals of the upper blossom on the left. Additional detailing is also included depending on size and décor.

Letter from the Editor

With deepest sympathy, all of us at the Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum, Bangkok University humbly express our heartfelt condolences, together with all of the Thai people, on the incomparable loss of His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Rama IX; 1927–2016), the King of the Chakri Dynasty, Thailand.

The steep cavetto and upward slanting flatted rim of the fragments is adorned with a four panel series in various combinations filled alternately with daisies, two swastika symbols reserved in white on a mottled blue ground with a bannered symbol (trigram on fragment No. 3) in-between, a parasol, and diaper pattern filler in overlapping small circular motifs with a bannered symbol (trigram on fragment No. 3) in the middle.

The underside of the fragments (except the medallion at No. 4) is adorned with a long, sweeping leaf and blossom spray (more elaborately rendered on the larger fragments); the intact plates would have included two such sprays. The foot of the fragments slants inward on the exterior and is upright on the interior with the exposed body at the unglazed footrim and fractures compact, fine textured, and light cream colored. The base on all the fragments is glazed and slightly convex.

Further details concerning the portions of the intact plate represented by each fragment and notes on décor of the central medallion and of the cavetto and rim of each plate, to the extent discernable from the fragments, are included in the chart below along with the diameter (D) or length (L) in centimeters of each fragment and the estimated diameter of the intact plates. Also included below is a photo illustrating the relative sizes of the plates and photos of each of the fragments (front and base). On the basis of a solitary shard it is sometimes not possible to definitively identify the size of the original intact ceramic form. Similarly, all details of the original décor of the intact ceramic form may not be completely and conclusively revealed from a single shard. In these instances carefully considered judgments have been arrived at based on detailed examination of the characteristics of the individual shard, as well as comparison with similar material.

Table 1 Qing blue and white wares dated to the Yong Zheng period (1723–1735), circa 1725 recovered from the Ca Mau shipwreck, Vietnam and acquired in Saigon (Fig. 1).

| Number | Description of Fragments | Fragment D/L (cm.) | Intact Plate D (cm.) |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| C-246 (1) | Rim, cavetto, and small portion of center and base; largest plate in series; border pattern around center contains approximately 12 panels, cavetto and rim have approximately 24 panels, actual number of panels is indeterminate. (Fig. 2) | L: 14.7 | 38–39 (Estimated) |
| C-246 (2) | Rim, cavetto, and small portion of center and base; border pattern around center contains approximately 12 panels, cavetto and rim have approximately 24 panels, actual number of panels is indeterminate. (Fig. 3) | L: 18.7 | 35–36 (Estimated) |
| C-246 (3) | Rim, cavetto, center and base; border pattern around center contains 12 panels; cavetto and rim have 24 panels, the panels with two swastika symbols reserved in white on a mottled blue ground contain exceptionally a trigram in-between, and similarly the panels with diaper pattern filler in overlapping small circular motifs also have a trigram in the middle. (Fig. 4) | L: 24.6 | 28 |

| Number | Description of Fragments | Fragment D/L (cm.) | Intact Plate D (cm.) |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| C-246 (4) | Center and base only; border pattern around center contains 8 panels; (on an intact plate cavetto and rim have 16 panels); bush on right has one blossom, and bush on left two blossoms with beetle amid petals of upper blossom. (Fig. 5) | D: 13.1 | 21.5 |
| C-246 (5) | Rim, cavetto, center and base; smallest plate in series; border pattern around center contains 6 panels, cavetto and rim have 12 panels, both bushes in center have one blossom; moderate amounts of marine encrustation on base. (Fig. 6) | L: 15.6 | 16 |

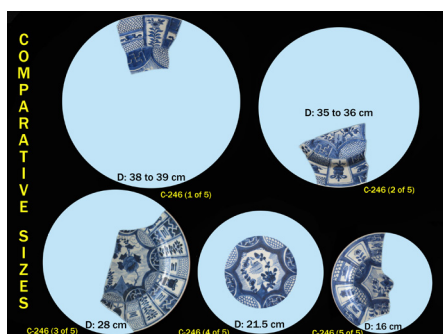


Fig. 1 Kraak style plates relative sizes, provenance from Ca Mau wreck



Fig. 2 Kraak style plate fragment No. 1, provenance from Ca Mau wreck



Fig. 3 Kraak style plate fragment No. 2, provenance from Ca Mau wreck



Fig. 4 Kraak style plate fragment No. 3, provenance from Ca Mau wreck



Fig. 5 Kraak style plate fragment No. 4, provenance from Ca Mau wreck



Fig. 6 Kraak style plate fragment No. 5, provenance from Ca Mau wreck

Ca Mau Shipwreck

The Ca Mau Shipwreck was discovered by local fishermen in the summer of 1998 near Ca Mau Island about 90 nautical miles south of Cape Ca Mau, southern Vietnam at a depth of 36 meters. The official excavation of the wrecksite was performed from August 8, 1998 to October 16, 1999 by the government owned Vietnam Salvage Corporation (Visal), the National Museum of Vietnamese History, and the Museum of Ca Mau. A total of over 130,000 ceramics along with numerous broken items and shards dated to the Yong Zheng reign (1723 to 1735) of the Qing Dynasty were recovered from the wrecksite. This total includes official recoveries as well as material recovered earlier by fishermen. Sotheby's conducted the sale of 76,000 Chinese ceramics from the Ca Mau shipwreck in January 2007.

Notes for Comparison

C-246 (1 to 5 of 5) -- compare with the Kraak style plate dated late 17th/early 18th century illustrated in Regina Krah, *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapi Saray Museum Istanbul, Volume II: Qing Dynasty Porcelains*, page 1051, Catalogue No. 2308 (includes the notation “An unusual type of ware which revives an export style of the late Ming dynasty...”); compare also with another similar Kraak style plate dated circa 1680 illustrated in Maura Rinaldi, *Kraak Porcelain, A Moment in The History of Trade*, page 232, Pl. 293.

C-246 (4 of 5) -- plates in the same series are illustrated in Sotheby's (Amsterdam), *Catalogue for Made in Imperial China: 76,000 Pieces of Chinese Export Porcelain from the Ca Mau Shipwreck, circa 1725*, January 29–31, 2007, page 128, lots 464 to 479; and in Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)*,

Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck), page 104, N.17 and N.18.

C-246 (5 of 5) -- plates in the same series are illustrated in Sotheby's (Amsterdam), *Catalogue for Made in Imperial China: 76,000 Pieces of Chinese Export Porcelain from the Ca Mau Shipwreck, circa 1725*, January 29–31, 2007, page 128, lots 464 to 479; and in Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)*, page 230, N.368.

Other Kraak style related plates -- all with no border around central medallion, cavetto and rim with panel décor, are illustrated as follows: Sotheby's (Amsterdam), *Catalogue for Made in Imperial China: 76,000 Pieces of Chinese Export Porcelain from the Ca Mau Shipwreck, circa 1725*, January 29–31, 2007, page 173, lots 703 to 717; and page

179, lot 757 (five large plates only); and in Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)*, page 104, N.16.

Deshima Island (Scheveningen) plates -- are illustrated as follows: Sotheby's (Amsterdam), *Catalogue for Made in Imperial China: 76,000 Pieces of Chinese Export Porcelain from the Ca Mau Shipwreck, circa 1725*, January 29–31, 2007, pages 74 and 75, lots 223 to 233; and in Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)*, page 108, N.27; and page 109, N.28, N.29 and N.30 (the latter with complete set of five plates in diameters of 20 cm., 21.9 cm., 24.4 cm., 26.7 cm. and 29.2 cm.).

Assistance in the research and preparation of this article was provided by Patrick McGlyn, fellow collector and former Museum Volunteer.

[Part II to be continued in next issue]

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Affixing of Ceramics to Buildings in the Temples, Thailand (Part I, from the Late 15th to Early 19th centuries)

The ceramic trade supplied by the maritime routes boomed in the South China Sea during the 14th to 20th centuries, especially to Siam or now Thailand, which was notable as one of the famous destinations. The ceramics were used for several purposes when they arrived in Southeast Asia, such as kitchen utensils, special gifts in establishment of trade, tributary, or diplomatic relations, as well as offerings in some ritual practices and especially for the decoration of buildings in the temples.

Ceramics were affixed to various types of buildings as a decorative ornament in the Buddhist temples around central and southern Thailand, including some islands in the Gulf of Thailand, which all connected to maritime routes, especially since around the 15th century. Most of the ceramics used to decorate buildings in both regions of Thailand were usually saucers, dishes, bowls, stem-dishes or lids. These forms of ceramics were previously used as a kitchen utensil before changing their function to become the ceramics used to decorate buildings. However, this pattern is different with the temple fittings made in the Sukhothai period, especially in the 16th century, in forms mimicking mythical creatures such as a “Makara” and a “Naga” with a flame-like top and used to decorate various parts of buildings around Sukhothai and Si Satchanalai in upper central Thailand. The parts of buildings included roof finials, gable finials or fence balustrades, for instance

(Rooney, 2013: 176–179). This article aims to focus on ceramics in the forms of dish, bowl, stem-dish and lid that were applied for use in building decoration in central and southern Thailand between the 15th to 20th centuries.

Based on the studies of historical records, construction history and architectural style of temples during the 15th to 20th centuries, most of the buildings decorated with ceramics had construction and restoration histories involved with great support by the kings, royalties or governors (Prakitnonthakan, 2013). At least three types of buildings in the Buddhist temples comprised of cave temple, ordination hall and stupa were decorated with ceramics in the shapes of dish, bowl, stem-dish and lid. The ways to decorate these three types of buildings were to affix complete ceramics or ceramic fragments cut into mosaic showing their beautiful designs on the interior, with a few reversed to show their exterior or base, by using ancient recipes of cement to affix the ceramics to the wall or other parts of the building. The decoration with complete ceramics was always a patterned alignment on the gable or the exterior wall of buildings. On the other hand, the decoration with ceramic fragments cut into a mosaic was aligned to be a floral design around the pedestal of a stupa, or even a decorative ornament of stucco sculptures placed on the buildings.

One of the important facts regarding

the research is that the ceramics are portable and can be used to decorate the buildings anytime. Because of this fact, the dating of decoration with ceramics can be considered in two different ways: Firstly, the buildings were decorated by the ceramics in the same period of initial construction or, secondly, the buildings were possibly restored for a new look or for better stability and that was a chance to decorate with ceramics. Unfortunately, historical records about construction or restoration are not available, because of lack of historical record production. Hence, the ceramics decorating the buildings are evidence giving indirect dating of the first construction or restoration when the ceramics were affixed to the building, as well as being useful to indicate the trend in architectural decoration and the connection with the port cities where the ceramics were imported.

The study of the result of architectural styles of buildings and ceramic dating can be examined by the trends in building decoration with ceramics divided into two different periods comprising of the late 15th to early 19th centuries, as this period will be presented in part one in this issue, and the mid-19th to early 20th centuries as will be presented in part two that is coming up in the May issue (Volume X, Number 3).

Affixing Ceramics to Buildings during the Late 15th to Early 19th Centuries

In the first period of ceramic affixing, during the late 15th to mid-18th centuries, the trend in building decoration was to only use Chinese ceramics to decorate. According to the maritime trade history, the Yuan and Ming Dynasties maintained close diplomatic and trade relations with Lanna, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya Kingdoms, which is supported by the evidence of the Chinese village located in Ayutthaya surrounded by the rivers, while European and Japanese villages were located in the south of Ayutthaya along the Chao Phraya River (Gernier, 2004). Many sunken sailing ships or junks of Chinese and South China Sea shipbuilding traditions (Green, 2011; Flecker, 2015) were found in the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea together with several kinds of products, such as coins, mirrors, ceramics (originating from Chinese Yuan, Ming, and Early Qing, Vietnam, Thailand and Burma) or ivories as the products or personal belongings carried on board (Praicharnjit, 1992; Brown, 2009). Yuan ceramics were put in the crypts of the great stupa of important temples built with the strong support of the kings, royalties or governors in Lanna, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya Kingdoms (Chandavij, 1994).

The affixing of ceramics seems to have been practiced since the Ayutthaya period (1350–1767) onwards. The decoration of buildings with ceramics was found in Ayutthaya as the capital of the kingdom, and even in the present-day provinces of Nonthaburi, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Surat Thani as they were a territory of dependent cities under Ayutthaya. Additionally, Nakhon Si Thammarat was an important chief or strategic city for the southern territory of

Ayutthaya and was situated on the Malay Peninsula for controlling, defending or expanding to other dependent cities on the peninsula and easily accessed from Ayutthaya both through land and the gulf. This city had a long period of history especially in war, trade and diplomatic relation with foreigners and had many Buddhist and Hindu temples around the city under Ayutthayan and Sri Lankan influences. The city was fortified with French style gates and a city wall during the Late Ayutthaya period (1630–1767). However, Chaiya, or now Surat Thani, was one of the dependent cities under Nakhon Si Thammarat as both were in the neighborhood as well as the southern area of Ayutthaya, or now Nonthaburi, which was a Mon community along the Chao Phraya River situated in the middle way between Ayutthaya and Bangkok.

The decoration of buildings with ceramics was possibly begun in Nakhon Si Thammarat, specifically at the Phra Mahathat, Chai Na Temple and Singkorn Temples. However, the Phra Mahathat Temple was an important temple located in the center of Nakhon Si Thammarat, with the huge Sri Lankan style bell-shaped stupa, as it was first built since Sukhothai ruled this city around the 13th century onwards. Ayutthaya conquered Sukhothai with other dependent cities under it including Nakhon Si Thammarat in the 15th century, which provided an opportunity for restoring the Phra Mahathat Temple many times when Ayutthaya ruled this city. Because of the restorations, complete ceramics were affixed to various parts of the great bell-shaped stupa, such as the throne or so called “Hermika” as it was an up-

per part of the stupa, with four side chambers on the pedestal of the stupa and four side miniature stupas. The complete ceramics used to decorate this stupa were comprised of monochrome glazed wares from Dehua, blue and white wares from Jingdezhen and overglaze enameled wares also from Jingdezhen, including one Bencharong dish ordered to be produced by the Thai at Dehua or Jingdezhen kilns, along with Chinese Islamic magic square pattern ware with painted Arabic alphabets produced at Jingdezhen, which all most likely belong to the 17th to 18th centuries. Based on the ceramics dating, there is support that the great stupa of Phra Mahathat Temple was mainly restored in the Late Ayutthaya period (1630–1767) with architectural decoration by these ceramics. However, the ceramics affixed to this stupa in the present are the replicas which were affixed during the restoration between 1990 and 1991. The original ceramics affixed to this stupa were removed to keep at the Phra Mahathat Temple Museum until the present day (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 Great stupa of the Phra Mahathat Temple, Nakhon Si Thammarat with some architectural decoration comprised of a Qing blue and white dish and overglaze enameled dish with Chinese Islamic magic square pattern produced at the Jingdezhen kilns [clockwise from left]. (Photo courtesy of the 14th Regional Office of Fine Arts Department, Nakhon Si Thammarat)



Fig. 2 Ordination hall of the Chai Na Temple, Nakhon Si Thammarat with Qing green glazed saucers affixed to the pillars. (Photo courtesy of the 14th Regional Office of Fine Arts Department, Nakhon Si Thammarat)

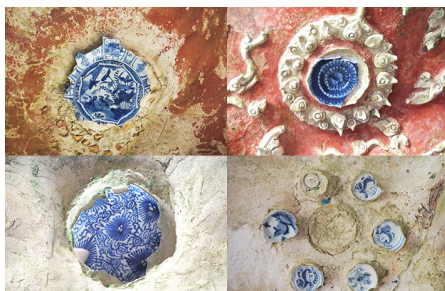


Fig. 3 Ceramics affixed to the ceiling of the cave temple of the Singkorn Temple, Surat Thani: Ming and Qing blue and white dishes produced at the Jingdezhen kilns, Qing blue and white dish produced at the Dehua kilns, and six blue and white dishes produced at the Jiucun kilns [clockwise from top left]. (Atthasit Sukkham)



Fig. 4 Ceramic fragments cut into a mosaic comprised of Qing monochrome glazed wares and blue and white wares produced at the Jingdezhen and Dehua kilns affixed to the wall around the pedestal of a square-planned stupa or "Phra Prang" of the Phutthaisawan Temple, Ayutthaya. (Atthasit Sukkham)

The Chai Na Temple located in the city center of Nakhon Si Thammarat, as well the ordination hall, are of the architectural style of buildings decorated by ceramics called the "Maha Ut" style and dated to the Early Ayutthaya period (1350–1488). However, the complete green glazed saucers with Chinese fret design were affixed onto the first couple of pillars in front of the Buddha image inside this building, which may possibly be dated to the last half of the 17th century. They suggest that the ceramics were affixed in a restoration sometime during the Late Ayutthaya period (1630–1767) for more beautiful interior decoration of ordination hall (Fig. 2).

The Singkorn Temple is located in the deep forest between Nakhon Si Thammarat and Chaiya, or now Surat Thani, and a bit far from the coast. There is a cave temple with a European style sitting Buddha image called "Pralambapadasana", stucco and mural painting on the cave ceiling, which based on their styles indicate the date of the Late Ayutthaya period (1630–1767). In this temple, complete ceramics were embedded

in the cave ceiling and some of them were affixed to stucco. The ceramics used as ceiling decoration are comprised of small numbers of Wanli blue and white wares from Jingdezhen or so called "Kraak wares," and mainly Qing blue and white wares from Jingdezhen, Dehua and Jiucun, which all most likely belong to the early 17th to early 19th centuries (Fig. 3). On the other hand, there is a square-planned great stupa called "Phra Prang" in front of the cave temple with ceramics affixed to decorate it, but most of the ceramics affixed to this building have been given a date in the later period and the details and conclusion will be presented in part two of this article.

In Ayutthaya as the capital of the kingdom, the Mahathat, Phutthaisawan and Chao Ya Temples were affixed with fragments of Chinese ceramics on the exterior wall and decorative elements of stucco sculpture. At the Mahathat Temple, a stucco sculpture in the form of a guardian with ceramic fragments decorating its face, necklet and bracelet were reported to be found, but, unfortunately, it was not found in its origi-

nal position and is now kept at the Chao Sam Phraya Museum, Ayutthaya (Chandavij, 1994; Sng & Bisalputra, 2011). The architectural styles of buildings decorated by ceramics are particularly the square-planned great stupa, called "Phra Prang," and its surroundings at the Phutthaisawan Temple. Moreover, the square-planned belfry in architectural style of Phra Prang at the Chao Ya Temple was also decorated by ceramic fragments (Phaethong, n.d.). The types and origins of ceramic fragments used to decorate these three temples are comprised of blue and white wares from Jingdezhen and Dehua, monochrome green, brown or blue glazed wares from Jingdezhen and Dehua, overglaze enameled wares also from Jingdezhen, and Bencharong or five-color overglaze enameled wares possibly from Dehua, which all most likely belong to the 18th to early 19th centuries. However, the stupa and belfry in architectural styles of Phra Prang are assumed to be of the Late Ayutthaya style of buildings, dated between 1630 and 1767 (Figs. 4–5). Both the architectural style of buildings and the ceramic



Fig. 5 Upper part of belfry in the form of “Phra Prang” of the Chao Ya Temple, Ayutthaya with ceramic fragments cut into a mosaic comprised of Qing blue and white wares from the Jingdezhen and Dehua kilns. (Atthasit Sukkham)



Fig. 6 Ordination hall of the Chomphu Wek Temple, Nonthaburi with Qing blue and white wares and Bencharong wares affixed to the gable [from top]. (Atthasit Sukkham)

dating in these three temples indicate that the ceramics were affixed during restoration in the Early Rattanakosin period between the reigns of King Phutthayotfa Chulalok (Rama I; 1782–1809) and King Phutthaloetla Naphalai (Rama II; 1809–1824) of the Chakri Dynasty.

The Chomphu Wek Temple located in the present-day Nonthaburi is the religious center of the Mon community who lived along the Chao Phraya River in the south of Ayutthaya, and most of the buildings and mural paintings in this temple are basically Late Ayutthaya style (1630–1767).

This includes one of the 16th century Mon (Hanthawaddy) style stupas. This river is marked as an important waterway connecting the open-sea maritime route in the Gulf of Thailand and Ayutthaya, as well as many ports and temples as the center of communities along the river which were founded when Ayutthaya ruled this area during 1350–1767. The ceramics in complete form and as fragments cut into mosaics were affixed on front and back gables of Buddha images and ordination halls, as well as window frames of ordination halls. However, ceramics on the front and back gables of Buddha image halls were extracted as there were many cement holes in the base of the ceramics for affixing. The ceramics, especially on the ordination hall, are comprised of celadon dishes from Jingdezhen, brown glazed lids also from Jingdezhen, blue and white lids from Jingdezhen and Changtai, and Bencharong lids from Dehua, or Jingdezhen, which all most likely belong to early 18th to mid-19th centuries (Fig. 6). The patterns of architectural

style and ceramic dating are similar to the temples in Ayutthaya, and the Buddha image and ordination halls of the Chomphu Wek Temple were Late Ayutthaya style of building, around the 17th to 18th centuries, but the ceramics were dated to the 18th to 19th centuries. These dates support the temple being first built in Late Ayutthaya and Mon styles sometime between 1630 and 1767, and the ceramics were possibly affixed during the restoration in the Early Rattanakosin period around 1782–1824.

[Part II to be continued in next issue]

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Copper Green Glazed Kendi in the Form of a Swan

Kalong (Thung Man) kilns, Chiang Rai
16th–17th centuries
width 3.2 cm.
Height 9.8 cm.

Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum
Bangkok University



The copper green glazed kendi in the form of a swan, spout in the shape of a swan's head, everted mouth, tall neck, round body on a high foot and handle in the shape of a tail of the swan.

Kalong copper green glazed kendi was rarely found in the archaeological sites, as opposed to other types of Kalong ceramics. Basically, Kalong ceramics were famous for domestic uses because of their good quality fine clay body and beautiful decoration.

The production of green glazed wares, especially in the form of a swan, was performed at Ban Thung Man in Wiang Kalong Sub-district, Wiang Pa Pao District, Chiang Rai Province. Important products produced

at Thung Man kilns are comprised of small containers, bottles, jarlets and kendis; and most of them are usually non-decorative. The thin glossy green glaze is a mixture of copper and lead. The clay body matured at Thung Man kilns is different from other types of Kalong ceramics in the same period.

However, the relations between the Lanna Kingdom, the Sukhothai Kingdom, China and Vietnam that were maintained were possibly the beginning of ceramic production exchange between Si Satchanalai (Ko Noi) kilns operated under the Sukhothai Kingdom and Kalong kilns operated under the Lanna Kingdom producing ceramics in the early phase. Based on the historical records and archaeological evidence from excavations

in dependent cities under the Lanna Kingdom, the ceramic production at Kalong was possibly terminated in the 17th century.

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The Fine Arts Department of Thailand Excavated at the Great Stupa of Phra Mahathat Nakhon Si Thammarat and Revealed the Foundations and Ceramics Dated to Pre-Sukhothai Period, Thailand

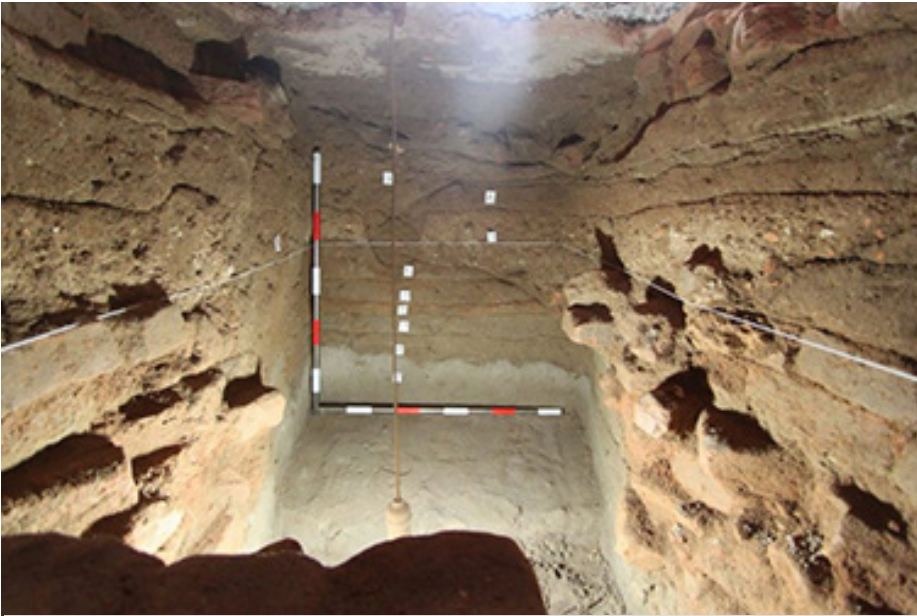


Fig. 1 Stratigraphy in two meter deep excavation pit in Thapkaset Buddha image hall of Phra Mahathat Temple. (Photo courtesy of the 14th Regional Office of Fine Arts Department, Nakhon Si Thammarat)



Fig. 2 Pa-O earthenware jar found under the ground around the great stupa of Phra Mahathat Temple. (Photo courtesy of the 14th Regional Office of Fine Arts Department, Nakhon Si Thammarat)

The progress of 2016 archaeological excavation at the Phra Mahathat Temple by the 14th Regional Office of Fine Arts Department (FAD), Nakhon Si Thammarat revealed the construction techniques of the foundations of the great stupa and several other types of archaeological evidence. The excavation pits are located in Thapkaset Buddha image hall and seven other pits around the temple. Construction techniques of the foundations of the stupa used broken brick mixed with coarse sand to reinforce and prevent the huge stupa from sinking further into the ground and collapsing before construction of stupa and bricklaying of floor tiles around the stupa. The lowest stratigraphic layer with a depth of two meters below the surface sup-

ports these foundations, which were built onto the sand dune.

Many burial jars were also buried under the ground around the stupa. Most of the burial jars basically originated from the kilns in China and the Sukhothai Kingdom, which most likely belong to the 15th to 16th centuries. One of the most recent ceramic finds is the earthenware jar produced at Pa-O kilns in Sathing Phra Peninsula, Songkhla and given the date to the Pre-Sukhothai period around the 11th to 12th centuries. Additionally, the FAD archaeologists recovered the bricks to be used as the samples for scientific dating and results will be published soon.

This excavation project by the Fine

Arts Department of Thailand is a part of data collection to nominate the great stupa of Phra Mahathat Temple for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Matichon Online
October 29, 2016

Myanmar's Ancient Treasures on Display at Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore



Fig. 1 Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the opening of the Cities And Kings: Ancient Treasures From Myanmar Exhibition at the Asian Civilisations Museum. (Photo by Mayo Martin)



Fig. 3 Wood and lacquer statues of Nats, or Myanmar's indigenous spirits, from the Department of Archaeology in Yangon. (Photo by Mayo Martin)

Myanmar's national museums, which have lent objects from their collections.

"Cities and Kings" comprises 32 artefacts - including 14 that are travelling outside of Myanmar for the first time -- that were loaned from the National Museum of Nay Pyi Taw, the National Museum of Yangon, the Bagan Archeological Museum and the Department of Archeology in Yangon. These will be supplemented by 28 additional objects from Singapore's national collection and a private collection.

The three-month exhibition looks at 2,000 years of Myanmar's history, from the earliest city-states of Pyu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to the ancient kingdom of Bagan and all the way to the last kingdom of Mandalay.

Among the rare artefacts displayed are a popular 11th century sandstone Buddha, which visitors to the Bagan Archeological Museum had worshipped inside the museum premises; and a double-sided stone slab, which dates from between the 4th and 6th century, and features both Hindu and Buddhist elements.

Myanmar's ancient treasures will return to their respective museums after the exhibition closes in March. But with recent news of the mutual lifting of visa requirements for traveling Singapore and Myanmar citizens, the exhibition could go beyond offering visitors a glimpse of the country's art and culture.

For your plans to visit, please refer to <http://acm.org.sg/>.



Fig. 2 A Buddha made of marble, with traces of lacquer, from the Bagan Archeological Museum. (Photo by Mayo Martin)

As Myanmar opens up to the world, a milestone exhibition in Singapore is set to offer a rare glimpse into the country's rich cultural heritage.

From centuries-old Buddhas to exquisite miniature stupas, some of the country's most prized artefacts are now on display at the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) in a show titled "Cities and Kings: Ancient Treasures from Myanmar".

The exhibition was unveiled on Thursday, December 1, 2016, with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Myanmar State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, who is currently on an official visit to Singapore, gracing the opening.

Not only does the show commemorate 50 years of diplomatic ties between the two countries, it is also a landmark collaboration between ACM and four of

Opening of First Special Art Exhibition with Inspiration from SEACM Ceramic Collection, Thailand



Fig. 1 Eric Zetterquist gives an artist's statement.



Fig. 2 Zetterquist explains this work to the audience.

The Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum (SEACM) held the special exhibition entitled “Contemporary Portraits of Ancient Objects,” by American photographer and collector, Eric Zetterquist, which is the first art exhibition with inspiration from the SEACM ceramic collection.

The opening ceremony took place on the afternoon of Saturday, January 21, 2017 at the special exhibition gallery of the Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum, Bangkok University, as Zetterquist introduced his own series of portraits of Southeast Asian ceramics together with the SEACM ceramic collection used as his inspiration.

Following and contemporizing the practice of Chinese paintings of the portraits of art objects, Zetterquist has created this series of portraits of Asian ceramics dating from 2500 BC–1400 AD. He has done this by isolating minute form elements of the object, and highlighting the negative space created by them. He further reduces and abstracts these forms by creating large-scale, flattened images in black and white with “painterly” edges. Unlike the hard-edged minimalism of the seventies, the matte, inky black and splashed edges, together with the matte textured paper on which they are printed, are evocative of Asian calligraphy, and create “warm minimalist” abstractions. Not merely photographs of objects, they challenge their viewers to explore concepts of form and negative space in both ancient and contemporary contexts.

Every work of art should reveal the sum total of the

artist's life experience. After working for Hiroshi Sugimoto for ten years, Zetterquist became a collector, dealer and photographer of the ceramics of this period. As such, he has given a great deal of thought as to what makes a form dynamic, and how we perceive this dynamism, either consciously or subconsciously. These large modern images of ancient objects are the result of his connoisseurship and the expression of his artistic philosophies.

The special exhibition is open to the public from January 21 through March 18, 2017, Monday to Saturday, 9 am. till 4 pm. with no admission fee. For your plans to visit, please refer to <http://museum.bu.ac.th>.

***Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum
Bangkok University
January 21, 2017***