



Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum Newsletter

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Ca Mau Shipwreck New Discoveries (Part II)

This paper summarizes the results of examination and study of eight distinct porcelain tray fragments recovered from the Ca Mau shipwreck (Figs. 1 and 2). 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 representations of two and four, respectively, of the eight stand and tray fragments described below, the others were not included.



Fig. 1 Ca Mau Shipwreck porcelain trays – front view only, Yong Zheng period of Qing Dynasty (1723 to 1735) *circa* 1725, provenance from Ca Mau shipwreck, Vietnam, all acquired in Saigon.

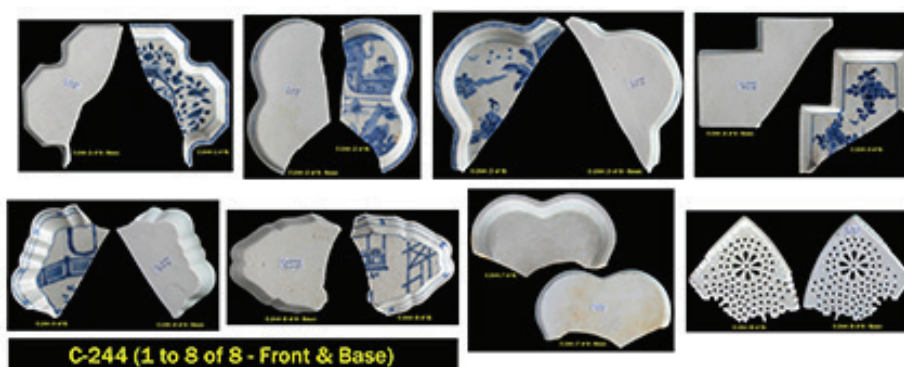


Fig. 2 Ca Mau Shipwreck porcelain trays – front and base view, Yong Zheng period of Qing Dynasty (1723 to 1735) *circa* 1725, provenance from Ca Mau shipwreck, Vietnam, all acquired in Saigon.

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 Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum is pleased to announce new opening hours of exhibition, effective June 5, 2017. The new opening hours are from Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed on weekends, public holidays and during the semester break periods of the university. For further information and planning your visit, please contact to museum@bu.ac.th.

Accordingly, it can now be stated there were significantly more tea sets and related sets included in the original cargo, in terms of variety and quantity, than previously documented and published.

Examination was completed of Ca Mau shipwreck study collection stand and tray fragments (8) from tea sets and related sets consisting of blue and white, Chinese Imari (underglaze blue, with the iron-red and gilt now eroded), polychrome enamel, and monochrome-white pierced examples. Decorative motifs include female figures in a garden setting, floral and leaf sprays, interior scenes, and pierced blossoms. The trays are in a variety of shapes and with various rim treatments. All of the fragments have a flat unglazed base with compact, fine textured and light cream colored body (russet tingeing on fragment No. 7). There is a moderate amount of marine encrustation on the interior of fragment No. 2. On the four blue and white examples (No. 1 to No. 4) there are similarly rendered leaf spray accents on the sides; the sides on the two Chinese Imari examples (No. 5 and No. 6) are plain. Although no trays comparable to fragment No. 7 (originally with polychrome enamel floral décor) are published and illustrated, associated cups and saucers and teapots were included in *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)* as referenced below.

Six of the fragments (Nos. 1 to 4, No. 7 and No. 8) represent examples which were not included in the Ca Mau Auction, and with four of the six (No. 2, No. 3, No. 4 and No. 7) also not included in *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)* as detailed in the chart which follows below.

Also indicated in the chart below are the following: the shape and décor of each fragment; corresponding items in the same series of the fragments as 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; and in Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)*; and the diameter (D) or length (L) in centimeters of each fragment. Also indicated is the name of the décor as referred to in the Sotheby's Auction Catalogue (fragments No. 5 and No. 6).

Constellation Orion

The representation of a stellar body, as in the example of the Constellation Orion, which is clearly depicted on tray fragment No. 3 (Fig. 3), is quite unusual to encounter on Chinese ceramics. Based on preliminary research and review, the extremely few recorded examples identified with constellations appear to be confined almost exclusively to the first half of the 18th century. Further research will likely add to these preliminary findings. Also of note, for example, is that out of the several hundred Chinese ceramics in the Collection of this writer (dating from the Tang dynasty to the Qing dynasty), this is the only one so adorned.

Orion was known as Shen (参宿) - a great hunter or warrior - by ancient Chinese astronomers. According to traditional Chinese astronomy, the sky was divided into four quadrants, with each quadrant representing a season of the year. The constellation Orion extends across two of the quadrants, symbolized by the White

Tiger of the West - Xi Fáng Bái Hu (西方白虎) and the Vermilion Bird of the South - Nán Fáng Zhu Què (南方朱雀). In modern Chinese the name of the Orion constellation is Liè Hù Zuò (猎户座), which means the hunter constellation.

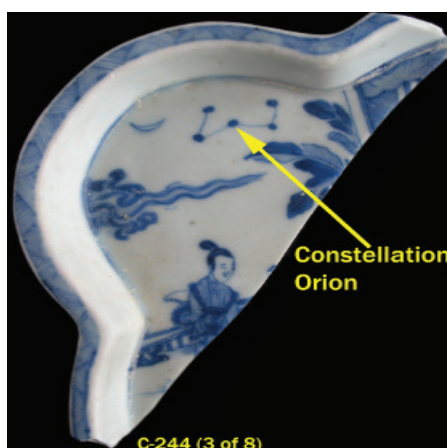


Fig. 3 Ca Mau Shipwreck porcelain tray – Constellation Orion.

Table 1 Ca Mau Shipwreck Study Collection Stands and Trays C-244 (1 of 8) TO C-244 (8 of 8) (Figs. 1 and 2)

Number	Shape & Décor	Reference Sotheby's Auction Catalogue	Reference <i>Tau Co Ca Mau</i>	D/L CM
C-244 (1)	Quatrefoil shape, flattened rim with cross-hatch diaper; floral sprays, with leafy stems.	None	Page 107, N. 24 and page 227, N. 360, "Dish"	D: 15.7
C-244 (2)	Lobed quatrefoil shape, flattened rim with cross-hatch diaper; aristocratic lady at desk in garden setting.	None	None	D: 15.9
C-244 (3)	Lobed shape, flattened rim with cross-hatch diaper; aristocratic lady standing in garden setting; Constellation Orion above.	None	None	L: 14.9
C-244 (4)	"T" shape, narrow flattened plain rim; three floral sprays.	None	Page 107, N. 25, "Dish"	L: 14.2
C-244 (5)	Hexagonal shape, upright rim with floral panel band below w, slanted fluted sides; interior pavilion setting (Chinese Imari).	Page 238, lot 1071; pages 240 to 242, lots 1073 to 1094, "Chinese Imari Pavilion," stand	None	L: 8.9
C-244 (6)	Elongated oval shape, upright rim with floral panel band below, slanted fluted sides; interior pavilion setting (Chinese Imari).	Page 238, lot 1071 and pages 240 to 241, lots 1073 to 1086, "Chinese Imari Pavilion," spoon tray	Page 183, N. 243, "Dish"	L: 8.5
C-244 (7)	Lobed quatrefoil shape, flattened rim; traces of original polychrome enamel décor remain visible in reflected light including floral sprays, blossoms and leaves.	None	None - Page 196, N. 277, cup and saucer; page 198, N. 282, tea-pot (for comparison)	D: 15.9
C-244 (8)	Indeterminate shape, band of pierced circles under upright rim; pierced blossoms on pierced circle ground.	None - Page 187, lot 791, associated "pierced strainer" for comparison (only one in Auction)	None	L: 10.6

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 bro-

ken 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.

Further Reading Related to This Study

Bartholomew, Terese Tse, 2006. *Hidden Meanings in Chinese Art*. San Francisco: Asian Art Museum;

Marchant, Richard P., 2014. *Exhibition of Chinese Ceramics Tang to Qing, 6 May to 30 May 2014*. London: Marchant; Nguyen Dinh Chien, 2002. *Tau Co Ca Mau (The Ca Mau Shipwreck)*. Hanoi: The National Museum of Vietnamese History; Sotheby's (Amsterdam), 2007. *Catalogue for Made in Imperial China – 76,000 Pieces of Chinese Export Porcelain from the Ca Mau Shipwreck, circa 1725, January 29 - 31, 2007*; Williams, C. A. S., 1960. *Encyclopedia of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motives*. New York: Julian Press; www.ancient-wisdom.com/orion.htm

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Affixing of Ceramics to Buildings in the Temples, Thailand (Part II, from early 19th to early 20th centuries)

The Tan Lom Temple, Chonburi is located not far from the coast of the Gulf of Thailand. The temple was first constructed in 1803 during the reign of King Phutthayotfa Chulalok and seemed to be an early temple decorated by a new wave of ceramic export. There were affixed ceramics on the door frames comprising of Bencharong ware, Chinese Qing overglaze enameled and blue and white wares from Jingdezhen, and European transfer-printed and sponge-wares from Société Céramique factory in Maastricht (Fig. 1). Especially Bencharong and Chinese Qing blue and white wares have given the date around the late 18th to early 19th centuries, and the ceramic dating matches the construction date of this temple.



Fig. 1 The rear door frames of ordination hall of Tan Lom Temple, Chonburi, first constructed in 1803: Bencharong dish, 1767–1809; Jingdezhen blue and white dish, early 19th century; Société Céramique dishes with transfer-printed 'Alpine' and sponged 'Décor C,' 19th century. (Atthasit Sukkham)

The Prod Ket and Phaichayon Temples, Samut Prakan are located on both sides of Chao Muang Canal connected to the Chao Phraya River. These two temples were newly constructed in the reign of King Phuttha-loetla Naphalai around 1809–1824. The ceramics were affixed on the gables, door frames and window frames of ordination and Buddha image halls of both temples, but they were affixed around the pedestal of the stupa only at Prod Ket Temple.

The ceramics affixed at the Phaichayon Temple comprised of Bencharong wares, Chinese Qing green glazed, blue and white and overglaze enameled wares from Jingdezhen and Dehua, Japanese Edo overglaze enameled wares from Arita (Imari), and European transfer-printed wares possibly from J. & M. P. Bell factory in Glasgow (Fig. 2). Most of the Bencharong wares, Chinese Qing wares, and Japanese Edo wares as affixed to both ordination and Buddha image halls have been given the date from the early 18th to early 19th centuries. However, some pieces of Chinese Qing blue and white and European wares affixed to both halls were of a different period, especially between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This suggests most of the ceramics were affixed to both halls since the first construction, and some of them were replaced for some reason during restorations sometime in the past.

The ceramics affixed at the Prod Ket Temple comprised of Bencharong wares, Chinese Qing blue and white wares from Jingdezhen and Dehua, European transfer-printed wares from Petrus Regout (Sphinx) in Maas-tricht and J. & M. P. Bell in Glasgow (Fig. 3). However, the characteristics



Fig. 2 All four door frames of Buddha image hall of Phaichayon Temple, Samut Prakan, constructed around 1809–1824: Bencharong dishes, 1767–1809; Jingdezhen overglaze enameled stem bowls, late 17th to early 18th centuries; Arita/Imari overglaze enameled dishes, late 17th to mid-18th centuries; Dehua blue and white dishes, late 18th to early 19th centuries. (Atthasit Sukkham)



Fig. 3 The front gable of Buddha image hall of Prod Ket Temple, Samut Prakan, constructed around 1809–1824: Jingdezhen blue and white bowls, first half of 19th century; Regout /Sphinx dishes with transfer-printed 'Willow,' 19th century; J. & M. P. Bell dishes with transfer-printed 'Ayan Jantan,' 19th century. (Atthasit Sukkham)

of the Bencharong wares indicates they most likely belong to 1868–1910 (Håbu and Rooney, 2013); and J. & M. P. Bell transfer-printed Ayan Jantan pattern wares were registered as being produced in 1891 (Kelly,

2006), which suggest all ceramics were probably affixed to the gable of ordination hall, Buddha image hall and great stupa of this temple during the restoration around the late 19th to early 20th centuries.

Until the reign of King Mongkut and King Chulalongkorn between 1851 and 1910, as the policies of modernity and international relations were established, the affixing of ceramics on the buildings in temples has become a widespread tradition for new construction and even restoration of temples. The temples appearing with affixing of ceramics can be examined from the Arun Temple or well-known as “Temple of Dawn” in Bangkok, the Khao Yi San Temple in Samut Songkhram, Yai Intharam Temple in Chonburi, and the Nai and Phrotaram Temple in Surat Thani. These temples were affixed with similar types of ceramics which came from same origins as Chinese and European ceramics. However, the Japanese ceramics were rarely exported for Southeast Asian and even the global markets, and they disappeared from the decoration of buildings in temples especially since the mid-19th century. This situation happened because of the revival of Chinese ceramic production and the ability of the Europeans to purchase Chinese ceramics directly from South China. Also around this time, European ceramic factories began to meet the demand for oriental-style ceramics for the global market (Nagatake, 2003).

In Bangkok and Nonthaburi, not only at the Temple of Dawn, there are many other temples with ceramics affixed to the buildings, such as the Phra Kaew Temple or well-known as “Temple of the Emerald Buddha,” the Bowonniwet Temple, Ratcha Osaram Temple, Pho Temple or well-known as “Temple of the Reclining Buddha,” Chaloem Phrakiat Worawihan Temple and the Ratchabophit Temple.



Fig. 4 The great stupa or Phra Prang of Temple of Dawn, restored in 2016: Bencharong stem dishes, 1868–1910; Société Céramique dishes with blue transfer-printed floral and sponged ‘Dessin 232 A,’ late 19th to early 20th centuries. (Atthasit Sukkham)

The Temple of Dawn, Bangkok has more variety in the method in affixing of ceramics and in the origins of ceramics than others, as well as it should since it is marked as the key site of affixing of ceramics on the buildings in the temples of Bangkok. Based on the history of the temple, the Temple of Dawn was first constructed since the Late Ayutthaya period as it was named the “Makok Temple” and the name was changed to “Chaeng Temple” in the Thonburi period. This temple was restored since the reign of King Phutthayotfa Chulalok, but the restoration was completed with renaming to be “Arun Temple” or “Temple of Dawn” in 1820 during the reign of King Phutthaloetla Naphalai and, after that, the restorations were annual in almost every following reign.

The affixing of ceramics can be divided into at least three methods: as

complete ceramics, and as ceramic fragments cut into a mosaic affixed to the great stupa with four miniature surrounding stupas or all called “Phra Prang,” while ceramic tiles were used to cover the exterior of great Buddha image hall.

The history of restoration conducted clearly stated that the great Buddha image hall was restored in the reign of King Nangklao (Rama III; 1824–1851), and the overglaze enameled tiles with Thai style designs were orders placed by King Nangkhiao himself to be produced in China, possible at Jingdezhen, especially for using in restoration of this building. Moreover, the great stupa with its surrounding stupas was restored in the reign of King Chulalongkorn as it was affixed with complete ceramics and ceramic fragments cut into mosaics of Bencharong wares, Chinese Qing overglaze enameled and blue and white wares showing an exterior of monochrome color in blue, green, orange and yellow produced at Jingdezhen, and European transfer-printed and sponge-ware which were from only three factories consisting of Regout/Sphinx and Société Céramique in Maastricht and J. & M. P. Bell in Glasgow, and which all most likely belong to 1868–1910 (Fig. 4). These ceramics were aligned to be a floral design or even a decorative ornament of stucco sculptures placed from the pedestal to the top of the great stupa and its surrounding stupas. Additionally, these stupas were also affixed with some of the Republic period (1916 to the present) overglaze enameled and blue and white wares from Jingdezhen, including ceramics reproduced for replacing lost original pieces with annual restorations conducted in



Fig. 5 The front gable of ordination hall of Khao Yi San Temple, Samut Songkhram, possibly restored during 1851–1910: Regout /Sphinx dish with transfer-printed ‘Paddyhalm,’ 1883; Société Céramique dish with sponged ‘A38,’ late 19th to early 20th centuries. (Atthasit Sukkham)



Fig. 6 The front gable of ordination hall of Phrotaram Temple, Surat Thani, possibly restored during 1868–1910: Bencharong stem dishes, 1868–1910; Regout/Sphinx dishes with transfer-printed ‘Goudkust,’ 1873; Jingdezhen overglaze enameled stem dishes, late 19th to early 20th centuries. (Photo courtesy of the 14th Regional Office of Fine Arts Department, Nakhon Si Thammarat)

the following periods until last year, 2016, when the author had a chance to observe the restoration.

These methods in affixing of ceramics to decorate important buildings had become a royal tradition of this period and appeared at the temples in Bangkok and Nonthaburi: the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, Temple of the Reclining Buddha, Bowonniwet, Ratcha Osaram, Chaloem Phrakiat Worawihan, and the Ratchabophit Temples as they were the royal temples or were involved with royal support. However, other temples located outside of Bangkok, such as the Khao Yi San Temple in Samut Songkhram (Fig. 5) and the Nai and Phrotaram Temple in Surat Thani (Fig. 6) may have influenced methods since earlier periods until the reign of King Chulalongkorn, but they were restored by local builders and usually affixed only with complete ceramics on the gables, door frames and window frames of the halls. The ceramics used were of the same group as Bencharong and European ceramics dated to the same period, 1868–1910.

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Collection Review



Underglaze Black Dish with Floral Design

Kalong kilns, Chiang Rai

16th century

Diameter 22 cm.

Height 4.8 cm.

Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum
Bangkok University

A flattened rim dish, decorated with the floral petal design on both interior and exterior. A dish with short and thin foot, clear glazed ending at the foot rim and unglazed at the outside base.

Among the Northern Thai ceramics or Lanna wares, there are hundreds of kilns scattered in northern Thailand. Kalong ware is the most famous and well known because of its beautiful clay quality, and it is thinner than the other wares. If we consider the ancient ceramics from Sukhothai or Lanna, most of them are under the same creative framework. In the early stages, the potters imitated the Chinese and Vietnamese ceramics and created their own design into Kalong wares.

The unique identity of Kalong wares is the decorated design and fine clay, which has a mixture of kaolin. The clay can make a thinner dish than other ceramics found in Thailand. Kalong ceramics characteristics are thin clear glaze and the small crackle. Most of Kalong wares are underglaze black and with clear white glaze.

The famous decorative design is a bird-like pattern known as “Ka” (the crow). Local belief is that it comes from the name of the ancient town where the kilns are located. There is a local tale about the giant white crow who got lost in the forest and became the town named after the tale. It is “Wiang Kalong,” an ancient small town which is surrounded by a moat.

Where does a bird-like pattern come from? Consider the process of making underglaze ware, in which the potter usually applied white slip before painting, and the bird-like pattern is draw with a paintbrush using both thick and thin stripes by free hand. The pattern on the outside of the dish is often in a simple line which evolved from the Chinese style lotus petal. Inside the dish is often painted floral petals and floral patterns. These patterns, if combined, look like a bouquet of flowers. The potter sometimes draws only flower patterns. These patterns are similar to a bird (crow). Due to the intensity of the black paint, the shape of the petals and the name of the nearby town, it understood that the floral petals are the black crow.

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News in Brief

NUS Museum Exhibition Reveals Myanmar's Lost Art of Celadon Ceramics, Singapore



Fig. 1 Scores of unexcavated kilns in the town of Twante reveal Myanmar was an exporter of celadon during the 15th century. Now, a group of people are trying to revive this lost craft for the future. (Photo by NUS Museum)



Fig. 2 A jar fragment found on the banks of the Twante Canal in Myanmar. (Photo by NUS Museum)

To outsiders, the Myanmar township of Twante may be best known as the place where British writer George Orwell was once posted to as a police officer during colonial times.

But when National University of Singapore (NUS) Museum curator Foo Su Ling visited the place last year, something else had caught her eye - seemingly strewn everywhere on the banks of the Twante canal were old pieces of pottery.

For the past two decades, the area around Twante, located west of Yangon, has been ground zero for some of the country's most exciting archaeological discoveries - scores of kilns, many of which are still unexcavated, revealed how Myanmar once produced exquisite ash-glazed greenware or celadon.

About 60 pieces of these artefacts, dating back to the 15th century, are currently on display at a small exhibition at NUS Museum. Titled From

The Ashes: Reviving Myanmar Celadon Ceramics, it features various celadon bowls and shards, as well as figurines, ranging from elephant and swan incense holders to a small figure of a cow.

It is the first exhibition in Singapore which is devoted to Myanmar ceramics.

Beyond acquainting visitors with Myanmar's ancient art of ceramic-making, the exhibition reveals a bigger story about regional ceramic production.

The discovery of these artefacts debunks preconceived notions about ceramics production and trade patterns in the region. Prior to the discovery of the kilns in Twante in the late 1990s, Myanmar was never known to be a producer and exporter of celadon. The Chinese were famous for glazed ware and in Southeast Asia, Thailand was the recognised ceramics centre.

Until the historical find, archaeologists and ceramics scholars often attributed many of the pottery found from ancient shipwrecks to countries like China, Vietnam and Thailand. Following the discovery of the kilns, scholars now regard Myanmar as a key exporter of celadon during ancient times. In fact, there was one dig done in the United Arab Emirates that revealed pieces of Myanmar celadon.

But the NUS Museum exhibition takes the historical narrative of Myanmar's ceramic traditions one step further and draws a link to Myanmar's budding ceramic sector - exhibited alongside the 15th century finds are a handful of celadon pieces made in Twante over the past three years.

These "prototypes" of celadon ceramics were crafted by Myanmar potters currently reviving an art form previously lost to them. The pieces, old and new, come from the collection of the Myanmar Ceramic Society (MCS), a non-governmental organisation that has been trying to revive this specific type of glazed pottery-making in Twante for the past couple of years.

While the township is already known for pottery, the products have mostly been simple forms of unglazed clay-based earthenware such as water jars. The highly-sophisticated process used to make celadon had been lost to the community. According to Ms Foo, MCS is now trying to redevelop the lost art, using borax to

create a hybrid “celabon” ceramic. Potters have forgotten how to make ash-glazed greenware and MCS realised that with a rich tradition such as this, it could help invigorate the domestic ceramics industry. The process of creating this hybrid ceramic and encouraging the Myanmar industry to adopt this new production method are still in the experimental stages. But with Myanmar’s growing F&B industry - which turns to China and Thailand for glazed crockery - there are ready untapped markets for local potters.

Even as today’s potters at Twante continue to explore the possibilities of making glazed ceramics, the discovery of the old kilns already has a positive effect on them.

Making glazeware is a high-level technology and in Myanmar, there’s a kind of national pride in rediscovering this tradition of making such things.

In almost every village area, you’ll find people making earthenware. It’s a very prevalent occupation even today. In a way, this exhibition is an alternative way of understanding Myanmar from the common people’s perspective.



Fig. 3 Animal and human celadon figurines from Myanmar are among the artefacts on display at NUS Museum’s From The Ashes: Reviving Myanmar Celadon Ceramics exhibition. (Photo by Geraldine Kang/NUS Museum)



Fig. 4 15th century artefacts from the exhibition From The Ashes: Reviving Myanmar Celadon Ceramics (Photo by Geraldine Kang/NUS Museum)

Channel NewsAsia
February 15, 2017

Digging through Time, China



Fig. 1 The “Archaeological Discoverys from the Historical Site of Qinglong in Shanghai” exhibition is now being held in Shanghai Museum. Inset: Staff working at the historical site of Qinglong town in Qingpu District. (Photos by China Daily)

New archaeological exhibition sheds light on how Shanghai was an influential maritime trading port as long as a thousand years ago.

Shanghai Museum is currently presenting an exhibition of its latest archeological discoveries which prove the Chinese mega city was an important harbor on the maritime Silk Road.

Titled “Archaeological Discoverys from the Historical Site of Qinglong Town in Shanghai”, the exhibition is being held at Hall No. 3 on the fourth floor of Shanghai Museum and will run till the end of May. It showcases the history of Qinglong town, which is located in today’s Qingpu district.

Yang Zhigang, director of Shanghai Museum, said that this proof of Shanghai’s early interactions and communications with other countries echoes the Belt and Road Initiative that China is carrying out.

Yang also noted that this is one of the “speediest shows” ever hosted by the museum. He pointed out that Shanghai Museum usually takes months, if not years, to prepare for an exhibition, but some of the relics were still buried underground a few months ago.

As some of the most exquisite ceramic pieces unearthed were either broken or incomplete, the Shanghai Museum’s acclaimed restoration department was roped in to

help restore the pieces for the exhibition, said Chen Jie, head of the archeological department of Shanghai Museum.

The exhibition, which features 101 artifacts, is divided into three segments. The first part touches on the prosperity of the ancient town and showcases pieces related to everyday use, such as an iron tripod, bronze mirrors decorated with fine carvings of parrots holding branches in their mouths, as well as utensils and pottery wares used to drink tea.

Some of the finest pieces were excavated from the bottom of an ancient well and they reflect the wealthy and comfortable lifestyle of the locals. However, we don’t know why these valuable objects were thrown into the well. Such is the mystery of history.

Qinglong town is believed to have been built in 746. The town, which during its prime was located between the Wusong River and the ocean, was Shanghai’s first trading harbor. It was so busy that the town had to establish a special administration for outbound trading.

Trading subsequently brought prosperity to the town. According to the late author Mei Yaochen - he was the person who created Qinglong Zazhi, believed to be the first chronicle of the town - Qinglong town had “workshops of all trade and cooking smoke rising from thousands of households”.

By the 13th century, the mouth of the Wusong River was badly choked by silt and the harbor was moved to the new Shanghai town. In the 1980s, during the dredging of local rivers, an ancient well and a large number of ceramic pieces were discovered, providing archeologists with vital information of the town’s rich history.

Large scale excavation did not begin until 2010 when archeological studies started to develop rapidly in China. This was also the time when the country started prioritizing the research and conservation of important historical relics.

Chen and his colleagues at Shanghai Museum have since found more than 6,000 ceramic pieces which

they said were made in kilns in the provinces of Fujian, Zhejiang and Jiangxi. They added that similar ceramics have been found in Japan and the Korean Peninsula and they reflect “the importance of Qinglong town as a trading hub along the maritime Silk Road”.

In the years that followed, archeologists found relics of housing foundations, wells, tiled floors and more piles of ceramics dating back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907). In October 2015, the local township planned to grow trees on a large portion of the site. However, after discussions between the municipal administration of culture relics and the local government, the tree-growing plan was shelved in favor of archeological work.

The third phase of the archeological excavation at Qinglong town, which took place from October 2015 to October 2016, covered 2,500 square meters. During this phase, archeologists made some important discoveries, such as the foundation of a Buddhist tower, large amounts of ceramic pieces and relics relating to daily life and commerce.

The museum decided to announce its discoveries to the public in December 2016, inviting members of the media and archeology enthu-

siasts to the conservation center of Shanghai Museum to view artifacts that had yet to be restored.

The museum decided to quickly showcase the new discoveries because these findings are pivotal to the understanding of the city. The story of Qinglong town will fill a gap in historians’ knowledge of Shanghai.

People were very interested in the finds. Qinglong town used to be a relatively unknown part of Shanghai, but now we often come across people who drive over just so they can check out the relics. The exhibition would have been better if we took longer to prepare for the show, but the enthusiasm among the public would have faded by then.

One of the most important discoveries in the latest phase of the archeological project is Longping Temple.

With the development of trading and the growth in population, Buddhism thrived in Qinglong town. According to historical records, the town was known to have seven pagodas and 13 temples.

Chen said that the pagoda of Longping Temple marked a pivotal position which archeologists used as reference during the mapping of Qinglong town’s layout. Ancient docu-

ments found that the pagoda used to serve as a navigational beacon for sailors, another piece of evidence that proves Qinglong town’s status as a maritime trading port.

Believed to be built between 1023 and 1032, the octagon-shaped Longping pagoda is a rare example of ancient Chinese Buddhism architecture. In order to present the intricacies of the pagoda’s foundation, Shanghai Museum created a replica for the exhibition.

The tiles and bricks retrieved from the pagoda ruins suggested that it was built with donations from believers. Many of the bricks have engravings that document the name of the donor and the size of their offerings.

Some of the most brilliant pieces were unearthed from the underground chamber of the pagoda, and they include Asoka pagodas made of gold-plated lead and bronze, and sets of boxes placed within one another.

Opening the cover of the main box, which was made of stone, archeologists found a wooden box in the shape of a coffin that contained a badly rusted iron box. Within this iron box was an outer coffin made of gold-plated wood and a silver inner coffin.

Also found within these boxes were rosaries made of crystal and gilt bronze, as well as sariras kept in a bronze jar. These bead-shaped objects were believed to be relics of Buddhist spiritual masters.



Fig. 2 Artifacts displayed in the exhibition. (Photos by China Daily)

New Opening of SEACM's Special Exhibition "Source of Inspiration to Create Northern Thai Ceramics," Thailand



Fig. 1 The special exhibition was opened by Mr. Yotin Tarahirunchoti [middle] as well as Dr. Sountaree Rattapasakorn, Executive Vice President for Administrative Affairs [right] and Dr. Pariwat Thammapreechakorn, Director of Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum, Bangkok University [left], who hosted the opening ceremony.



Fig. 3 Miss Wanaporn Khumbutshya, an assistant curator of SEACM, gave a curator's talk.



Fig. 2 Mr. Supat Lerdpanyanukul, an expert potter, demonstrates Northern Thai ceramics production.

On March 30, 2017 the Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum (SEACM) hosted the opening ceremony of the special exhibition entitled "Source of Inspiration to Create Northern Thai Ceramics." The opening ceremony included Dr. Sountaree Rattapasakorn, Vice President for Administrative Affairs of Bangkok University, who gave a welcome speech, and Mr. Yotin Tarahirunchoti, who gave the opening speech for the special exhibition. Moreover, this ceremony included a demonstration on how to mold northern Thai ceramics by Mr. Supat Lerdpanyanukul, who is an expert potter, as well as a presen-

tation by Miss Wanaporn Khumbutshya, who gave a curator's talk on this special exhibition.

The special exhibition displays ceramics produced at the northern Thailand kiln sites in which there are notable differences in the products from the various kiln groups. It is clearly shown that the ceramics are of different types such as brown glazed, green glazed, monochrome white glazed, and underglaze black. In addition, the special exhibition presents the results of the study of the development of the kilns and the art patterns of the northern Thai ceramics found since the early 14th century. Furthermore, there is information to assist in identifying the sources of inspiration to create Northern Thai ceramics in which it is discovered that there are approximately 7 main sources, which is very interesting.

The special exhibition is open to the public from now through June 9, 2017, Monday to Saturday, 9 a. m. till 4 p. m. with no admission fee. For your plans to visit, please refer to <http://museum.bu.ac.th>.

***Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum
Bangkok University
March 30, 2017***