

CA MAU SHIPWRECK – NEW DISCOVERIES (PART 1) KRAAK PLATES

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 related 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 (**Catalogue Number 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.

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Ca Mau Shipwreck – New Discoveries (Part 1) - Continued

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.

Qing: Yong Zheng period (1723 to 1735) - circa 1725.

Provenance: Ca Mau shipwreck, Vietnam - acquired in Saigon.

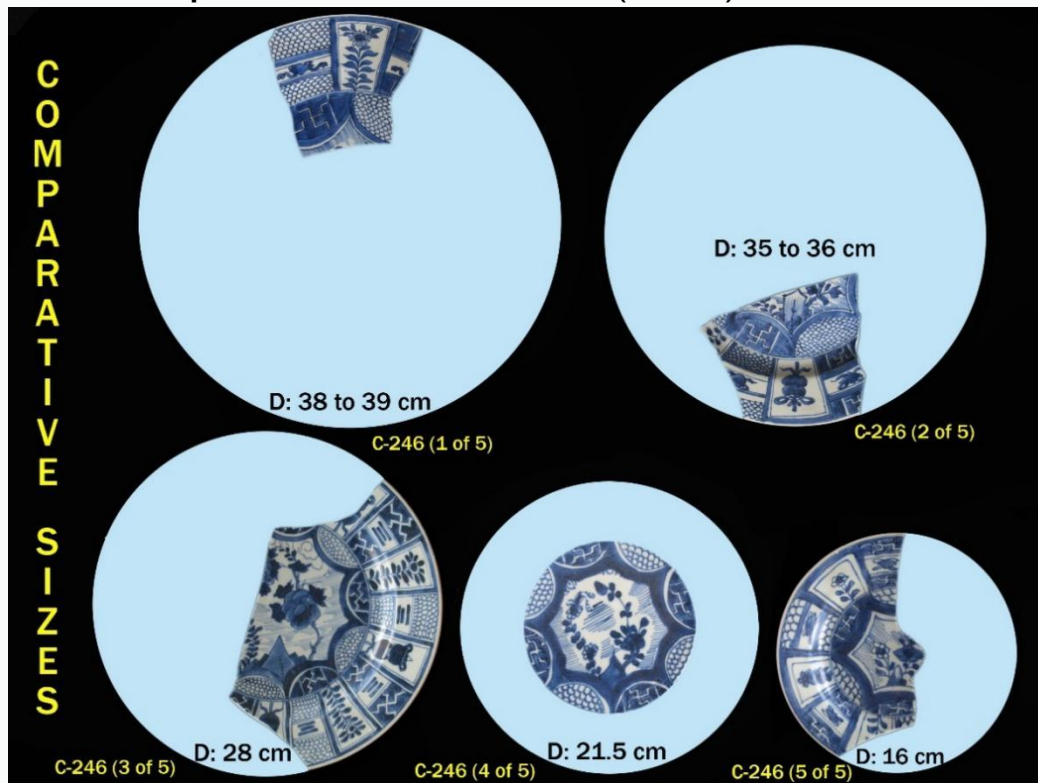
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Ca Mau Shipwreck – New Discoveries (Part 1) - Continued

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.	L: 14.7	38 to 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.	L: 18.7	35 to 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.	L: 24.6	28
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.	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.	L: 15.6	16

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Ca Mau Shipwreck – New Discoveries (Part 1) – Continued



Ca Mau Wreck - Kraak Style Plates Relative Sizes



Ca Mau Wreck - Kraak Style Plate Fragment No. 1



Ca Mau Wreck - Kraak Style Plate Fragment No. 2

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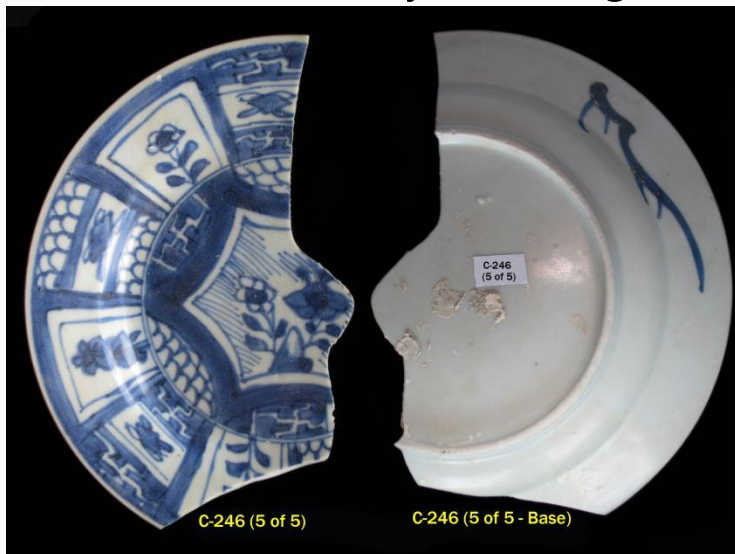
Ca Mau Shipwreck – New Discoveries (Part 1) – Continued



Ca Mau Wreck - Kraak Style Plate Fragment No. 3



Ca Mau Wreck - Kraak Style Plate Fragment No. 4



Ca Mau Wreck - Kraak Style Plate Fragment No. 5

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Ca Mau Shipwreck – New Discoveries (Part 1) – Continued

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.

Assistance in the research and preparation of this article was provided by Patrick McGlyn, fellow collector and former Volunteer at the Southeast Asian Ceramics Museum – Bangkok, University.

REFERENCES

C-246 (1 to 5 of 5) – compare with the Kraak style plate dated late 17th/early 18th century illustrated in Regina Krahl, *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapi Saray Museum Istanbul, Volume III - 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)*, 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*,
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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.).

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