

(Oxford University) was director of marine archaeology, and Ong Soo Hin (Saga) was managing director. Participants included experts and archaeologists from Oxford University, Kebangsaan University (Malaysia), the Czech Republic, and divers and maritime teams from Viet Nam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and England.

The excavation revealed a ship 29.4 meters long and 7.2 meters wide, with nineteen compartments. The hull and its transverse bulkheads survived in good condition. More than 240,000 artifacts were recovered, mostly late fifteenth-century Vietnamese ceramics from Chu Dau (Hai Duong) and Thang Long (present-day Ha Noi). The ship has been dated by Vietnamese scholars to the late fifteenth century, and by Butterfields to the early sixteenth century. Its national origin is still a controversial problem.

The excavation of the Cu Lao Cham wreck is considered an event that marks the making of Vietnamese marine archaeology.¹

THE BINH THUAN SHIPWRECK (SIXTEENTH–SEVENTEENTH CENTURY)

A wreck lying thirty-nine to forty meters deep was excavated off Binh Thuan Province during 2001–2 by the NMVH and Visal, in cooperation with Michael Flecker. The excavation was directed by Nguyen Dinh Chien.

The ship is 23.4 meters long and 7.2 meters wide with twenty-five compartments. Over sixty thousand artifacts were found, mostly blue-and-white and polychrome porcelains from the kilns of Jingdezhen (Jiangxi), Dehua (Fujian), and Guangzhou (Guangtung). The ship has been dated to about the sixteenth to seventeenth century, which is the Wanli period of the Ming dynasty (1573–1620). Excavation results were reported in “The Binh Thuan Shipwreck Report” by Nguyen Dinh Chien and Michael Flecker.²

THE HON CAU/VUNG TAU SHIPWRECK (C. 1690)

The excavation of a ship 32.71 meters long and nearly 9 meters wide, which was covered by .6 to 1 meter of sand, and which lay 15 kilometers off Hon Cau Island, Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, took place from June 1990 to July 1991. Visal, in cooperation with the Hallstrom Holdings Oceanic Company (Sweden), was permitted to use U.S. diving equipment, and divers from the United States, England, Canada, and Viet Nam. Michael Flecker participated in this excavation as archaeological experts. More than sixty thousand artifacts were recovered, mostly Chinese ceramics dating to 1690.³

THE CA MAU SHIPWRECK (1723–35)

This wreck was excavated off the coast of Ca Mau Province between August of 1998 and October of 1999 by experts from NMVH and Ca Mau Provincial Museum, and by Visal’s Vietnamese divers. Nguyen Dinh Chien was the managing director. The ship, twenty-four meters long and nearly eight meters wide, sank in thirty-five meters of water. Over sixty thousand artifacts were recovered, chiefly Chinese blue-and-white porcelain produced during Emperor Yongzheng’s reign, Qing dynasty (1723–35). The excavation results were presented in the related reports and in the newly published book, *The Ca Mau Shipwreck (1723–1735)*.⁴

It should be added that in 2000–2, fishermen in the Tran Van Thoi district, Ca Mau Province, recovered thousands of ceramics from an unexcavated shipwreck in the Ca Mau Sea. They brought up 4,944 late-fourteenth-century artifacts, including Vietnamese, Chinese, and Thai ceramics, which have been preserved at the Ca Mau Provincial Museum, while others have been occasionally found on the market.⁵