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PLATE, 1573–1620

China, Binh Thuan shipwreck

Porcelain, D: 27.3 cm

National Museum of Vietnamese History,

Ha Noi, LSB 31066

The Binh Thuan shipwreck, from which excavators retrieved approximately sixty-one thousand Chinese ceramics, lay at a depth of forty meters or forty miles off the coast of Phan Thiet, Binh Thuan Province. The ship has been tentatively identified as a junk belonging to I Sin Ho, who was using it to ship Chinese goods to the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Johore when it sank in 1608.¹ The ship's cargo included raw silk (according to a VOC representative who wrote about the

sunken I Sin Ho ship), in addition to blue-and-white porcelains (previously called Swatow ware, based on the belief that the ceramics came from the Shantou area of Guangdong Province) produced at the Zhangzhou kilns, Fujian Province in southern China, and, in the lowest levels of the hull, cast-iron cooking pans.

This underglaze bluish-gray plate is a typical piece from the cargo, with its deep cavetto decorated in an alternating scallop and cartouche pattern.

