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**COVERED BOX, 1662–1722**

China, Hon Cau shipwreck  
Porcelain, D: 9 cm  
National Museum of Vietnamese History,  
Ha Noi, LSb22526/SM2-1575

The Vung Tau (also called the Hon Cau)

shipwreck was excavated in 1990–92 off the coast of the southern tip of Viet Nam, near Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province and the Con Dai Islands. Approximately 48,000 objects were retrieved from the ship, which excavators estimated was 32.71 meters by 7 meters. It is the first *lorcha*, a hybrid Chinese and European vessel, to be found in the South China Sea where it had sunk to a depth of 34 meters. The cargo, consisting largely of blue-and-white Jingdezhen (Chinese) Kangxi wares, was probably being taken to Batavia, where it would have been transferred to a Dutch East India Company vessel to continue its journey to Europe.

The blue-and-whites include garni-

tures of jars and vases in a wide range of sizes that were painted in patterns that varied from cursory to quite finely patterned. In addition to the blue-and-whites, a large number of white wares was included in the cargo, and lesser numbers of unglazed jars and nonceramic artifacts, including iron goods (padlocks, woks, cauldrons, and tweezers), ink sticks, ink stones, die, and silk (some of which survived).

Large numbers of Chinese soft paste boxes, such as this one, have been found in insular Southeast Asia. The clay body is finely grained white clay that is quite light and so fragile that it is surprising that

**3 COVERED VESSEL, 1662–1722**

China, Hon Cau shipwreck  
Porcelain, H: 20.1 x D: 6.4  
National Museum of Vietnamese History,  
Ha Noi, LSb 22382

