

DOUBLE CIRCLE BASE MARKS

Very little appears to be published on double circle base marks and illustrations are equally rare. However, Regina Krahl, in *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapi Saray Museum Istanbul, Volume I - Yuan and Ming Dynasty Celadon Wares*, page 124, does state the following: “About 250 pieces in the collection are marked by rings (*i. e. circles*) only. These ring marks were used in both the Ming and Qing dynasties; they are likely to be merely borders meant to be filled in with a mark, rather than marks in their own right.” Krahl then continues with an illustration of a double ring mark and of a triple ring mark followed by a list of the pieces with double and with single ring marks. She also states that the dating of these pieces is the early 16th to mid 18th, and second half of the 19th century. The observation with respect to the rings being merely borders would not be true of any Kangxi pieces in which the reign mark was deliberately omitted.

The other scant references to double circle base marks appear to be confined to their appearance during the prohibition, by Imperial edict, of the use of reign marks during the early portion of the Kangxi period (1662 to 1722).

Double circle (22) and single circle (5) base marks are represented in the Collection of this writer by a variety of pieces ranging in date from the Banten, West Java excavations (approximately late 16th century) and the Banda shipwreck (1615) to the more recent Tek Sing Shipwreck (1822):

C-049 & C-238 (1 & 3 of 4) – from the Tek Sing Shipwreck dated to 1822 of the Daoguang period (1821 to 1850).

C-093 (17 & 18 of 27) and C-157 (24 of 42) – from the Vung Tau Shipwreck dated to 1690 of the Kangxi period (1662 to 1722).

C-143 – from the Maspere Wrecksite, Indonesia dated to the second half of the 17th century Transitional Period (1620 to 1683).

C-159 (6 of 8) – from the Musi River excavations, Palembang, Sumatra, Indonesia dated to the late 17th century to mid 18th century.

C-160 (single circle mark) – from the Ca Mau Shipwreck dated to circa 1725 of the Yong Zheng period (1723 to 1735).

M-319 (3 of 5 – single circle mark & 4 of 5), M-440 (10 of 10), M-443 (single circle mark), and **M-444 (1 & 2 of 2)** – from the Wanli Shipwreck dated to circa 1625.

M-383 and M-386 (1 & 2 of 2) (all 3 with single circle base marks) - from the Hatcher Ming (Hatcher Junk) shipwreck dated to the first half of the 17th century - approximately 1643.

M-424 (54 & 59 of 69) and M-508 (12 of 15) – from the Banten, West Java excavations, Indonesia and dated to approximately late 16th century of the Ming - Wanli period (1572 to 1620).

M-511 (44 of 210) and M-512 (19, 24, 67 & 75 of 512) – from the Banda shipwreck, Mauritius dated to 1615 of the Wanli period (1572 to 1620).

M-517 - from an old Japanese collection dated to the late Ming Tianqi/Chongzhen period (1628 to 1644).

Detailed descriptions of each of the above porcelains are included in the **Ceramics Catalogue** organized by the corresponding ceramic category (Qing or Ming). Details include the Catalogue Number, description, size, dating, provenance (origin, place and date of acquisition, cost), and any references to comparable examples.

Analysis of relevant items in the Collection has resulted in the observations concerning shipwreck recoveries which follow. The Vung Tau Shipwreck (dated to 1690) had many porcelains with a wide variety of base marks including numerous ones with a double circle base mark. In contrast, the Kangxi Indonesia shipwreck (dated to circa 1715), although also having many pieces with a considerable variety of base marks, had none with a double circle base mark. The only base mark noted on the Kraak wares from the earlier dated Banda wreck (dated to 1615) were a very limited number with a double circle (five out of the total of 210 base shards in the Collection of this writer for example). On the later Wanli Shipwreck (dated to circa 1625) a

considerable variety of base marks are in evidence, including double circle marks (as well a lesser number of porcelains with a single circle base mark). Of the three most thoroughly researched of the 19th century shipwrecks containing Chinese ceramics (Diana Cargo – 1817, Tek Sing – 1822, and Desaru – circa 1830), only the Tek Sing Shipwreck contained any porcelains with a double circle base mark.

Photos included below:

Double Circle Base Marks – Qing (C-049 to C-238) & Ming (M-319 to M-517)

Vung Tau - Base Marks (C-033 to C-157)

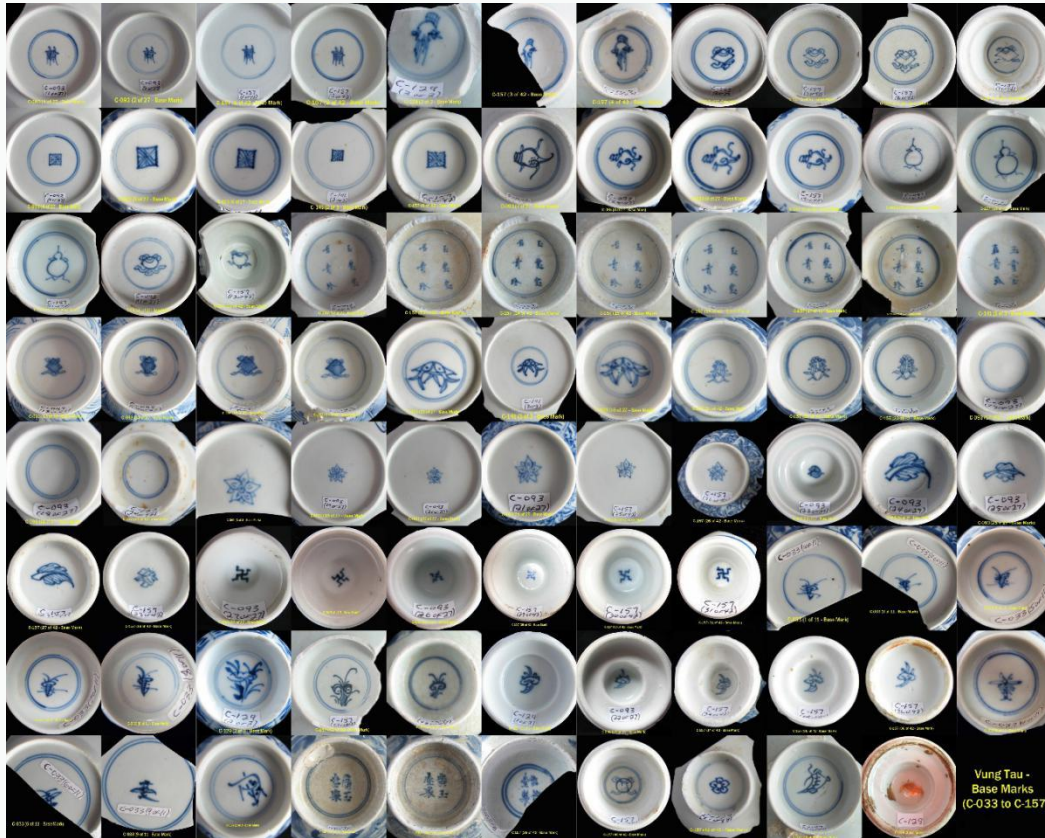
Wanli Shipwreck - Base Marks (M-319 to M-444)

Kangxi Indonesia Shipwreck - Base Marks (C-164 to C-235)

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