

ON HIZEN PORCELAIN AND THE MANILA - ACAPULCO GALLEON TRADE

Takenori Nogami

Arita History and Folklore Museum, 1-4-1, Izumiyama, Arita-cho, Saga Prefecture, Japan 844-0001

ABSTRACT

Hizen porcelain was exported from Nagasaki by Dutch East India Company (VOC) ships and Chinese junks between the late 17th century and the middle of the 18th century. Many pieces of Hizen porcelain have been found at sites in Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia, but there has been no evidence that Hizen porcelain was imported to Manila before our research. In March 2004, we examined sherds of porcelain unearthed at Intramuros in Manila and found several pieces of Hizen porcelain for the first time. Some of them were identical to the sherds of blue and white dishes unearthed in Mexico City and Guatemala. In March and May 2005, we examined sherds of porcelain unearthed in Taiwan and Southern China and found some pieces of Hizen porcelain. One sherd found in Taiwan is similar to those identified as Hizen porcelain in Manila. We can postulate that some Hizen porcelain was exported from Nagasaki to Manila via Taiwan and Southern China by Chinese junks. Some Hizen porcelain was consumed at the Intramuros in Manila; also, other Hizen porcelains were transported from Manila to Spanish colonies in the American Continent by Spanish galleon ships.

In 1571, Spain founded Manila City for the rule of the Philippines and the Asian trade. Magellan crossed the Pacific Ocean half a century before that time. After the city of Manila had been built, the Manila Galleon trade route was soon established. It functioned as a long-distance and large-scale sea trade route connecting the Asian world with the American Continent until the early 19th century. Many Asian goods such as silks and spices were exported by the Spanish galleons, and some of the goods were shipped to Europe. On the other hand, many New World goods, including Mexican silver, crossed the Pacific Ocean and were brought to the Asian world. Cargoes sent to Acapulco from Manila included East Asian porcelain as well.

The subject of the galleon trade in Hizen porcelain has rarely been discussed. One of the reasons is that Hizen porcelain had not previously been identified in Manila, the base for the Asian side of the galleon trade. Another reason is that we did not have enough knowledge about the role of Chinese junks compared to the role of the Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or VOC).

THE ORIGINS OF HIZEN WARE

Hizen Province, which existed up to the 1860s and the Meiji Restoration, is currently part of Saga and Nagasaki Prefectures. It is located in the northwest of Kyushu Island, Japan. The production of Hizen Ware started in the late 16th century and is still an important industry in this region. There are two kinds of Hizen ware; one is Hizen glazed stoneware, so-called Karatsu ware, and the other is Hizen porcelain, including Arita ware, Hasami ware and Mikawachi ware. Hizen porcelain was the first porcelain produced in Japan. Until the production of porcelain was mastered in the early 17th century, Japan had to import porcelain mainly from China.

The Japanese ruler Hideyoshi Toyotomi (1536-1598) sent his troops to the Korean peninsula between 1592 and 1598, bringing back to Japan many Korean people including skilled pottery-makers. Some of them were brought to Hizen Province. At first, these Korean pottery-makers in Hizen produced glazed stonewares. After they found the raw materials for making porcelain near Arita in Hizen province, the first porcelains were produced there in the early 17th century. The basic techniques thus came from Korean ceramics, but they imitated the styles of Chinese porcelain or adapted them because the domestic market wanted "Chinese porcelain".

It was very fortunate for the Hizen porcelain industry that the quantity of Chinese porcelain exported to Japan was reduced from the middle of the 17th century, due to civil war and the dynastic change from Ming to Qing. As a result, the volume of production of Hizen porcelain increased, and the Hizen porcelain industry dominated the domestic market. However, it was not only the Japanese who sought porcelain. It was in short supply in the markets in Southeast Asia and other areas as well. Therefore, Hizen porcelain started to be exported to the overseas markets instead of Chinese porcelain, but it was Chinese junks and VOC ships that sent out Hizen porcelain from Nagasaki port. Only the Chinese and Dutch were permitted to trade in Nagasaki under the rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate until the middle of the 19th century.

Teijiro Yamawaki wrote that "inferior porcelain" was exported from Nagasaki to Cambodia via Thailand in 1647. He pointed out the possibility that the inferior porcelain was Hizen porcelain, and suggested that Hizen porcelain started to be exported to the Indochinese peninsula from about the late 1640s (Yamawaki 1988:265-410). Koji Ohashi discussed Hizen porcelain

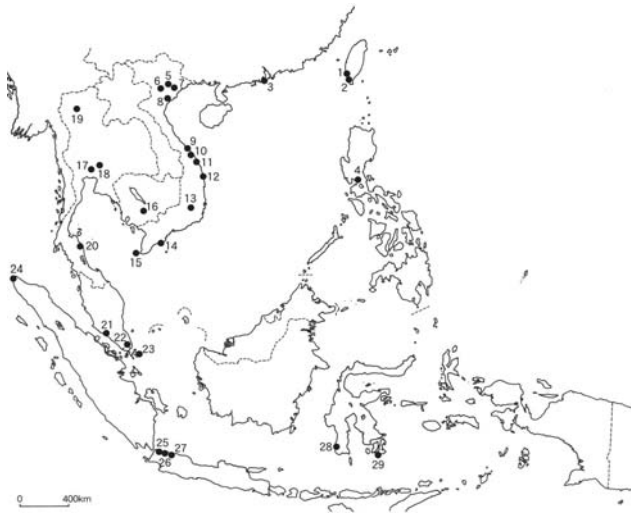


Figure 1. Archaeological sites with Hizen porcelain in Southeast Asia. 1 Tainan, Taiwan; 2 Kaohsiung; 3 Monte Fortress site, Macao; 4 Intramuros, Manila; 5 Ha nôl, Vietnam; 6 Ho'a Binh; 7 Hai Hư'ng; 8 Thanh Hoa; 9 Quang Tri; 10 Huê; 11 Hôi An; 12 Bin Dinh; 13 Lâm Đông; 14 Côn Dao ; 15 Kien Giang; 16 Ôdôngk, Cambodia; 17 Ayutthaya, Thailand; 18 Lop Buri site; 19 Chiang Mai; 20 Nakhon Si Thammarat; 21 Melaka, Malaysia; 22 Kota Tinggi; 23 The Geldermalsen; 24 Gien site, Sumatra; 25 Banten Lama, Jawa; 26 Tirtayasa site; 27 Batavia; 28 Benteng ; omba Opu site, Sulawesi; 29 Benteng Wolio site, Buton

found in Vietnam and Indonesia, noting that it included types produced in the 1640s (Ohashi 1990:88-176).

The Qing administration restricted maritime access to China between 1656 and 1684 to reduce the power of Zheng Chenggong (Coxinga), who resisted the Qing forces because sea trade supported his power. After the export of Chinese porcelain almost stopped, Zheng began to deal in Hizen porcelain because he could not get access to Chinese porcelain. Thus, he became the most important merchant for the exportation of Hizen porcelain. As a result of the reduction of the quantity of Chinese porcelain for export, the number of kilns in Hizen producing export wares suddenly increased, and Hizen wares spread in the overseas market, many pieces being found in sites in Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia (Figure 1). However, there was no archaeological evidence that Hizen porcelain was exported to the Philippines until our research in 2004.

HIZEN PORCELAIN FOUND IN MANILA

As far as we know from recent studies (Beyer 1947: plate 16-22; Jocano 1998:138-152), Hizen porcelain has not been recorded from the Philippines before, but Chinese and Indochinese ceramics received more attention. In 2004 we investigated the ceramics unearthed at the Intramuros in Manila (Figure 2) and found several pieces of Hizen porcelain (Figure 3). It was the first archaeological discovery of Hizen porcelain in the Philippines (Nogami, Orogo, Tanaka and Hung 2005). So we started doing joint research with the National Museum of the Philippines in 2005. We found about 60 sherds of Hizen porcelain from the 17th century.

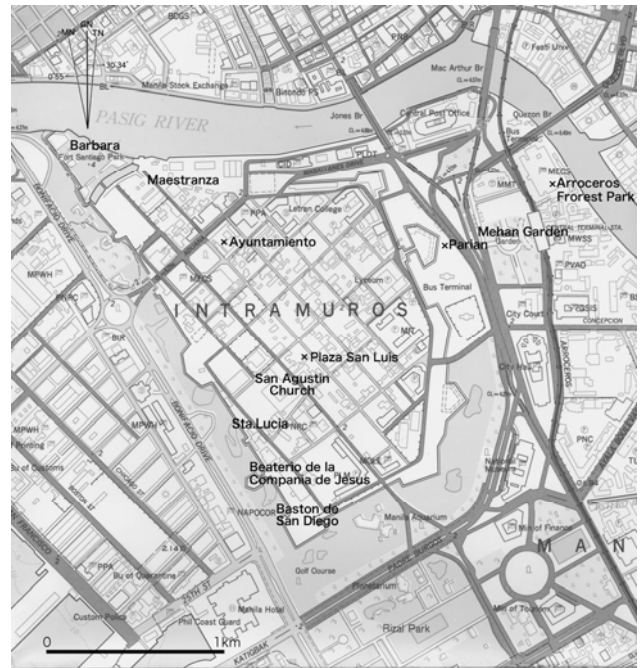


Figure 2. Map of Intramuros, showing the archaeological sites

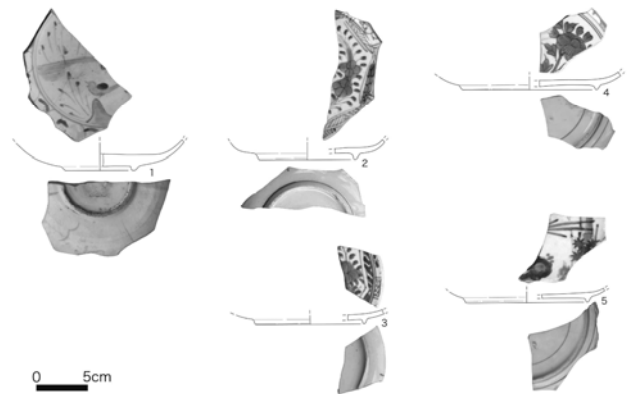


Figure 3. Hizen porcelains from Intramuros, Manila. Courtesy: National Museum of the Philippines.

First, I will discuss the sherds found in 2004. Figure 3:1 is a sherd of blue and white dish with a bird and flowers design, produced between the 1650s and 1670s. A specimen similar to this was excavated at the Hokaoyama kiln site in Arita. Figure 3:2 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with a flower design dating between the 1660s and 1680s, also from Arita. It is similar to sherds excavated at the Hiekoba kiln site in Arita and is so-called "Carrack (Karaak) ware", a typical porcelain style for European export. Figure 3:3 is a sherd of another blue and white "Carrack style" dish with a flower design dating between the 1660s and 1680s from Arita, where similar shards were found at the Nakashirakawa kiln site. Figure 3:4 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with a peony flower design, produced between the 1670s and 1690s, from Arita. Figure 3:5 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with a bamboos and leaf design, produced between the end of the 17th and the early 18th century. The leaf design was not drawn with a

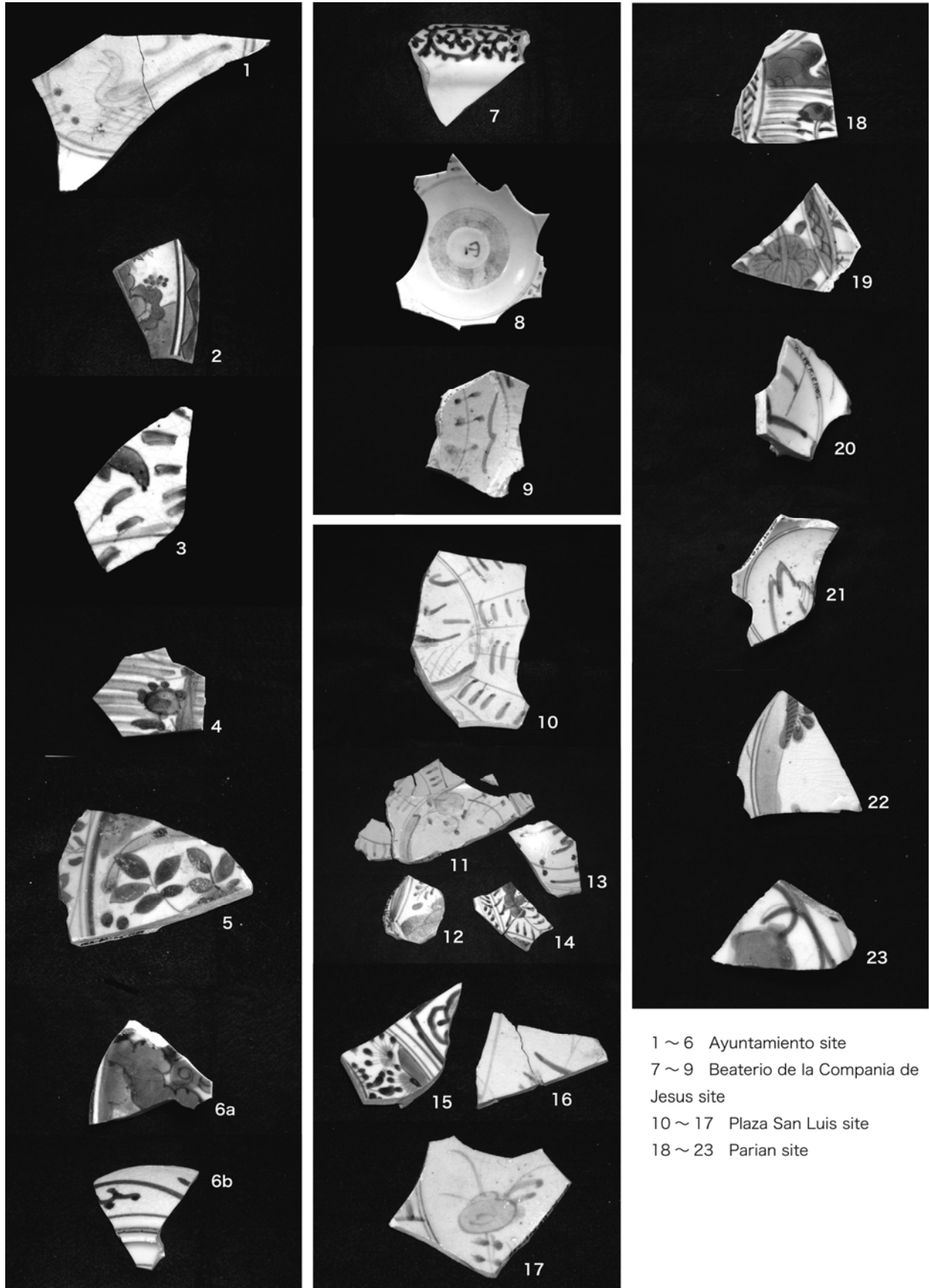


Figure 4. Hizen porcelains from Intramuros. Courtesy: National Museum of the Philippines.

brush but was applied with a kind of cowhide stamp called a *konnyaku*.

Next, I will present several sherds of Hizen porcelain found in 2005 (Nogami, Orogo, Cuevas, Tanaka and Hung 2005). Figures 4:1-6 were unearthed at Ayuntamiento site, Intramuros. Figure 4:1 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with a bird and flower design dating between the 1650s and 1670s, from Hizen. Figure 4:2 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with a design of rocks and leaves. The leaves seem to be *konnyaku* stamped. It was produced between the end of the 17th and the early 18th century. Figures 4:3 and 4 are sherds of a blue and white "Carrack style" dish produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Arita. Figure 4:5 is a sherd of another blue and white "Carrack style" dish produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Arita. Figures 4:6a and 6b show a sherd of a blue and white dish produced between the end of the 17th and the early 18th century in Arita.

Figures 4:7-9 were unearthed at Beaterio de la Compania de Jesus site in the Intramuros. Figure 4:7 is a sherd of a blue and white chamber pot with an arabesque design. It was produced between the 1680s and 1700s in Arita. Figure 4:8 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with the Chinese *ri* character for sun. It was produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Hasami, Nagasaki Prefecture, and is similar to sherds found at the Nakao-Uwanobori kiln site in Hasami. Figure 4:9 is a sherd of a blue and white dish with a floral design produced between the 1650 and 1670s in Hizen. Figures 4:10-17 are from at Plaza San Luis site, Intramuros. Figures 4:10, 11, 13, 16, and 17 are blue and white dish sherds with bird and flower designs, produced between the 1650s and 1670s in Hizen. Figures 4:12 and 14 are sherds of blue and white "Carrack style" dishes with insect and flower designs, produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Arita. The specimen in Figure 4:15 is a sherd of a blue and white "Carrack style" dish plate produced between the 1660s and 1690s in Arita.

Figures 4:18-23 were unearthed at the Parian site, located outside the walls of Intramuros. Figures 4:18 and 19 are sherds of blue and white dishes with insect and flower designs, produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Arita. Figure 4:20 is a sherd of a blue and white cup with a wave and fish design. It was produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Hizen. This type of cup is one of the most popular Hizen porcelains found in archaeological sites in Southeast Asia. Figure 4:21 is a sherd of a blue and white cup with a dragon design. It was produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Hizen. The specimens in Figures 4:22 and 23 are blue and white dish sherds. They were produced in the late 17th century.

DISCUSSION

Hizen Porcelain Inflow Routes to Manila

Who exported Hizen porcelain from Nagasaki? And who imported Hizen porcelain into Manila? As mentioned above, only the Dutch and Chinese could send out Hizen porcelain from Nagasaki until the middle of the 19th century. It is unlikely that Dutch ships sailed to Manila

because the Dutch were hostile to Spain. On the other hand, it is known that Chinese junks entered Manila for trade. So I think that there is a high possibility that Chinese ships imported the Hizen porcelain to Manila. But it is not certain that Chinese ships went directly from Nagasaki to Manila. I suppose that some cities in Taiwan and southern China, around the South China Sea, were relay-ports for the trade network of Hizen porcelain in Chinese junks.

The South China Sea, surrounded by the coasts of southern China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam, was a very important area for the trade of Hizen porcelain (Nogami 2005b). Many ships carrying it sailed from Nagasaki port and went southwards across the East China Sea and entered the South China Sea near Taiwan. This area was controlled by Zheng Chenggong, the most important merchant dealing in Hizen porcelain as mentioned above, and Teijiro Yamawaki (1988) points out that ships carrying Hizen porcelain went to Amoy (Xiamen) and Anhai on the coast of southern China, the main bases controlled by Zheng, in 1657 and 1658. Although there are no records of Hizen porcelain unearthed in Amoy and Anhai, I think that these places were important relay-ports for the Hizen trade between the late 1650 and the early 1660s.



Figure 5. An old picture of Monte Fortess. Courtesy: Museu de Macau.

As for other cities in southern China, I do not have enough data to indicate trade in Hizen porcelain. At present, the only published Hizen porcelain unearthed in China comes from Macao. In May 2005 I researched ceramics unearthed in Macao with Hsiao-chung Hung, Tai-kang Lu and Wai Yee Wong, receiving the cooperation of *Museu de Macau* and *Museu de Arte de Macau*. We found several pieces of Hizen ware among them (Nogami 2005). They were unearthed at the Monte Fortess site (Figure 5), a Portuguese fort completed in 1626. Figure 6:1 is a blue and white bowl with a pine and plum flower design with a *Tai-ming* character on the bottom, produced between the 1650s and 1670s in Arita. Figure 6:2 is a blue and white bowl, also with a *Tai-ming* character on the bottom produced between the 1650s and 1670s in Hizen. Figure 6:3 is a blue and white bowl with a landscape design produced in the second half of the 17th century in Hizen. Figures 6:4 and 5 are blue and white shaving basins, produced between the 1670s and 1700s in Arita. Since neither Portuguese nor Spanish ships came to

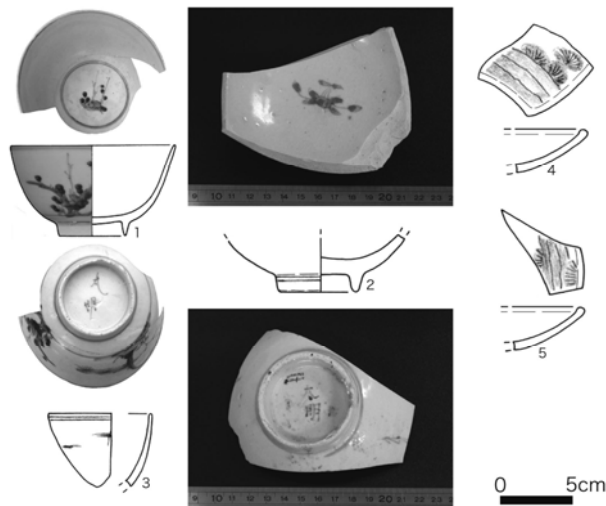


Figure 6. Hizen porcelains from Monte Fortress. Courtesy: Museu de Macau.

Nagasaki, I think that these Hizen porcelains were imported by Chinese junks. However, it is difficult to judge whether these specimens show special characteristics restricted to Portuguese settlements, or if they are typical of other port cities in China.

Zheng Chenggong sent troops to Taiwan in 1661 and defeated the Dutch in 1662. Tainan was the main location of his group until they surrendered to the Qing Dynasty in 1683. They engaged in China – Taiwan - Manila or Japan – Taiwan - Manila trade between 1662 and 1683. Therefore, Tainan was one of the most important relay-ports of Hizen porcelain trade. Fang Zhen-zhen (2003) has researched the records of customs in Manila and discusses the relationship between Manila and Taiwan in the second half of the 17th century. She notes that fifty-one ships sailed from Taiwan to Manila between 1664 and 1684. She notes the cargoes of these ships included “Japanese dishes” (Fang 2003: 82).

Concerning archaeological evidence of the Hizen porcelain trade, Ming-liang Hsieh and Takashi Sakai discuss several Hizen porcelain and stoneware sherds unearthed in Taiwan (Hsieh 1996, 2000, 2005). Although these specimens show connections between Hizen ware and Taiwan, they are not direct evidence that Taiwan was a relay-port for the trade network of Hizen porcelain, because they are not examples of the typical export style porcelain found in Southeast Asia and the European world.

In 2003-2004, Kuang-ti Li excavated several pieces of Hizen porcelain at the Shenei site near Tainan (Li 2004). Tai-kang Lu, who analyzed them, noted that about four pieces of Hizen porcelain were found there, and he also informed me that a sherd of Hizen porcelain was found during the construction of an underground shopping area in Tainan City. Figures 7:1, 2, 3, and 4 show pieces unearthed at Shenei. Figure 7:1 is a blue and white bowl with a *Xuan-ming* character on the bottom. It was produced between the 1660s and the 1670s in Arita, as was Figure 7:2, a blue and white dish with a “Carrack style” design. It is typical porcelain produced for the European market. We

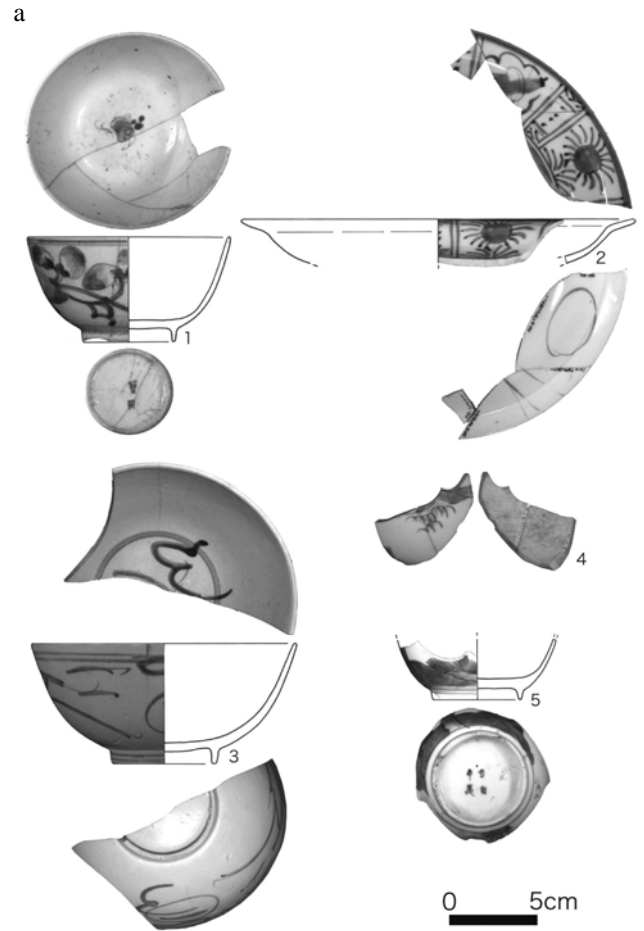


Figure 7. Hizen porcelains from the Tainan area, Taiwan.

can see the same kind of porcelain among specimens from Intramuros, Manila. The specimen in Figure 7:3 is a blue and white bowl with a wave and fish design, produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Hizen. It is typical of the porcelain produced for the market in Southeast Asia and we can see the same kind of porcelain in many archaeological sites in Southeast Asia. Figure 7:4 is a blue and white bottle with a bamboo and leaf design. It was produced between the 1660s and 1680s in Arita. Figure 7:5 is a blue and white bowl with a *Xuan-ming* character, produced between the 1660s and 1670s in Arita. Since these specimens included typical export style porcelain for Southeast Asia and European world, it is highly possible that Tainan was one of the relay-ports (Nogami, Li, Lu and Hung 2005). As for the Hizen porcelain imported to Manila, it is highly possible that many pieces of it were imported to Manila by Chinese junks via Taiwan. I think Taiwan played an important role in the trade in Hizen porcelain between the 1660s and 1680s.

The Trans-Pacific Transport of Hizen Porcelain

We can establish that Chinese junks exported Hizen porcelain from Nagasaki to Manila via Taiwan. Was Hizen porcelain transported to the American continent by galleons? I will compare the sherds found in in Manila

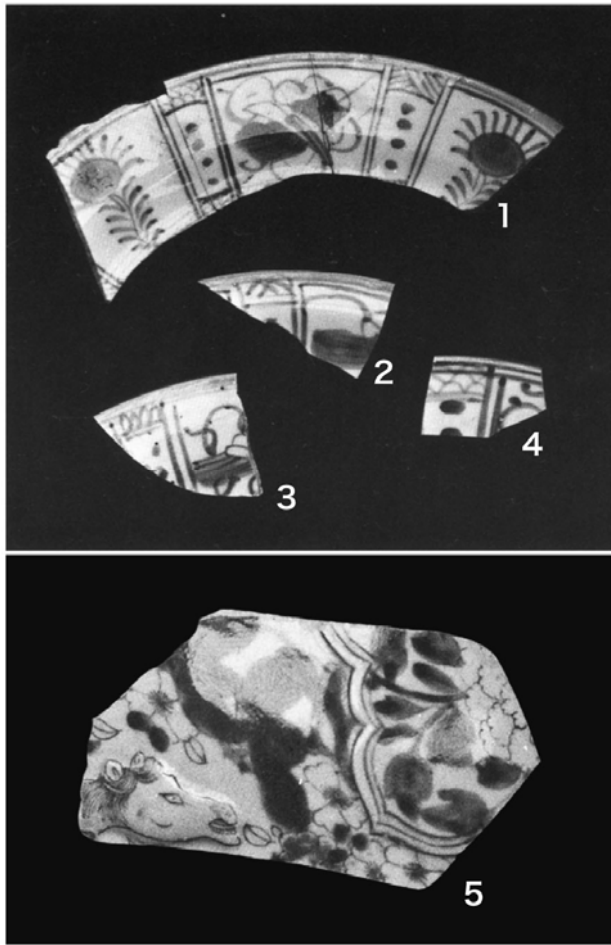


Figure 8. Hizen ware in Mexico City. With permission from Misugi 1986.

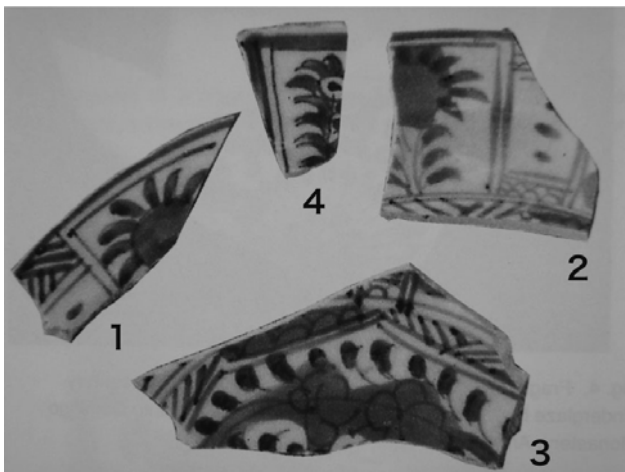


Figure 9. Porcelain from Santo Domingo Monastery, Guatemala. With permission from Kuwayama et al 2002.

with 8 sherds found on the American continent. Takatoshi Misugi has published several pieces of Hizen porcelain found in Mexico City (Misugi 1986:96) (Figure 8). They were found while constructing the subway. Figure 8:1-4

are blue and white dish sherds. They have the same design and shape as the Manila specimens. Although Misugi identified several pieces of porcelain with over-glazed enamel as Chinese, I think that one of them (Figure 8.5) is a sherd of Hizen porcelain produced in the first half of the 18th century in Arita. Kuwayama has published several pieces (Figure 9) of porcelain unearthed in Guatemala (Kuwayama and Pasinski 2002:30). Although he identified them as Chinese porcelain, at least three are the same design and shape as the sherds of Hizen porcelain in Manila. Although only a very small amount of Hizen porcelain has been found on the American continent, that from Mexico City and Guatemala is the same kind as that from Manila. It is highly possible that these porcelains were transported from Manila to the colonies in the American continent by the galleon ships (Figure 10). With proper identification of materials from excavations of Spanish colonies in the American continent we should be able to find more Hizen porcelain.

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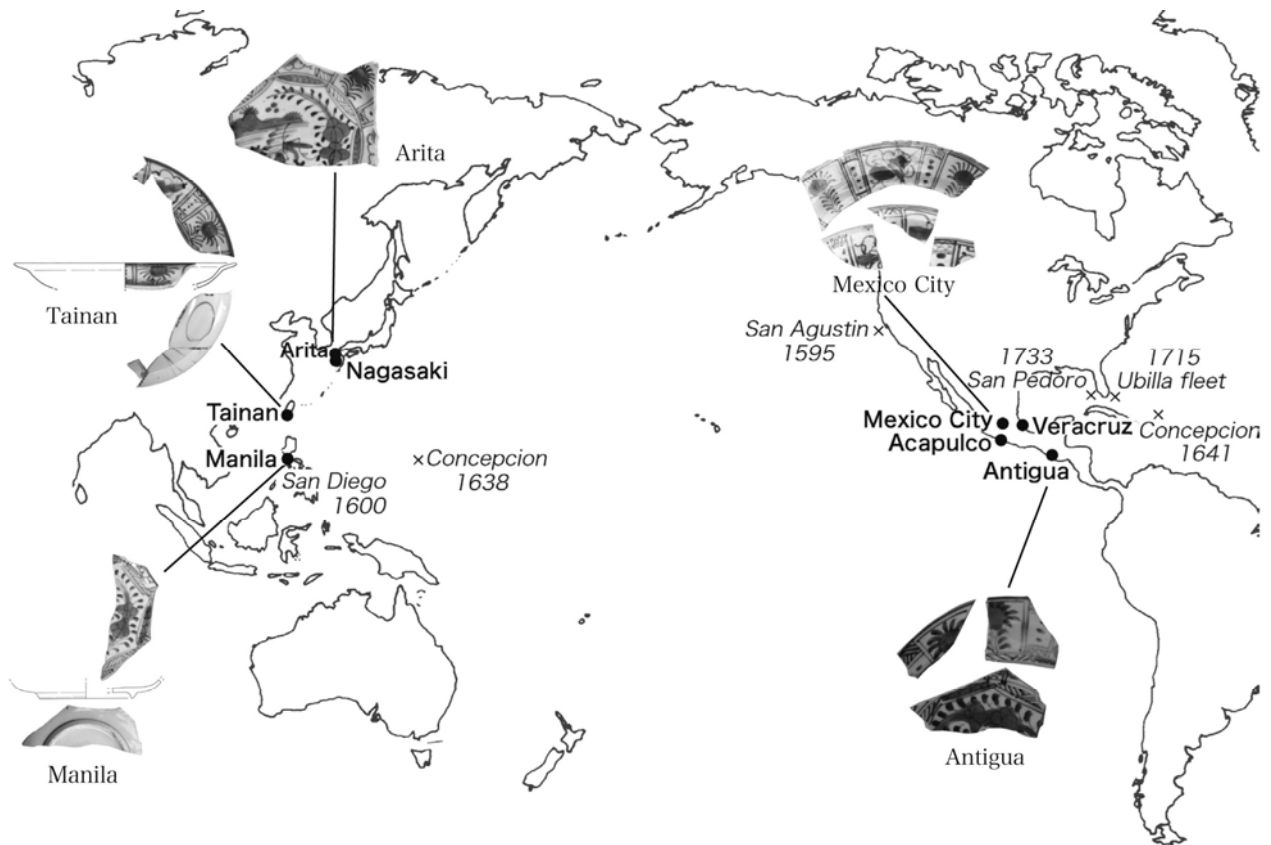


Figure 9. Galleon trade cities and wreck sites in Asia and America.

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