

### 34. NANDI RING

Oc Eo site, My Lam village, An Giang Province, 6th century  
Gold, H: 2.5 cm × W: 1.9 cm × D: .5 cm  
Museum of Vietnamese History, Ho Chi Minh City, BTL5 2104

### 35. EAR ORNAMENT

Oc Eo site, My Lam village, An Giang Province, 6th century  
Bronze with gold sheet, H: 3.5 cm × W: 3.3 cm  
Museum of Vietnamese History, Ho Chi Minh City, BTL5 2159

34. The Hindu god Shiva's mount is a bull called Nandi. While Garuda, the bird mount of the god Vishnu, attained independent status in Southeast Asia, Nandi generally remains associated with Shiva. Animal imagery on the jewelry from Oc Eo was most common on the intaglios, although, as seen on the mold on the preceding page, elephants and *makaras* adorned thin pendants. A single pendant in the form of a turtle and approximately twenty rings with three-dimensional bulls were also excavated at the site. The importance of the bull in an agricultural context may adequately explain the depiction of a bull on jewelry, though the fact that such a large number of these rings was discovered at Oc Eo may indicate an association with Shiva; hence, the small figure is generally identified as Nandi.

Nandi sits on the bezel of a band decorated with incised lines on each of its shoulders. Though the bull is tiny—the ring is quite dainty—the details of its body are finely delineated. His raised forelegs are creased, as are his muzzle and the lines around his eyes. Other details, such as his facial features and his back left hoof, are clearly defined. The ring and the band were separately cast. The ring was found on the right side of Giong Cat at Oc Eo, at a depth of a half-meter.

#### LITERATURE

Louis Malleret, *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mekong*, vol. 3, 1962; *Co Vat Viet Nam (Vietnamese Antiquities)*, 2003.

35. One common jewelry form found at Oc Eo is the ear ornament in the shape of a loop of uneven diameter, widening gradually along one side. Ear ornaments in this shape, worked in gold or bronze, are found throughout Southeast Asia from the early centuries A.D., making it difficult to evaluate where individual pieces were produced and their exact date. Since both bronze and gold jewelry were worked at Oc Eo,<sup>22</sup> this example may well be of local production.

This particular bronze ear ornament is covered with sheet gold; bronze corrosion is evident. While the overall form of these asymmetrical ear ornaments is similar, some open at one point in the loop (they are not consistent in opening at the widest or narrowest portion); some are a continuous loop; and some have a sophisticated fastening device. This example is unusual because of the single row of pyramidal shapes forming a ridge along one edge.

#### LITERATURE

Le Xuan Diem, Dao Linh Con, and Vo Si Khai, *Van Hoa Oc Eo: nhung kham pha moi*, 1995; Louis Malleret, *L'Archéologie du Delta du Mekong*, vol. 3, 1962.