

## 76. JAR WITH OPENWORK BASE

Ly dynasty, 12th–13th century

Stoneware, H: 21.8 cm × D: 17.8 cm

National Museum of Vietnamese History, Ha Noi, LSb 22326

1

John Stevenson, "Ivory-Glazed Wares of Ly and Tran," in John Stevenson and John Guy, eds., *Vietnamese Ceramics: A Separate Tradition* (Chicago: Art Media Resources, 1997), 112; a good survey of the period, 111–27.

2

*ibid.*, 113.

3

Roxanna M. Brown, *The Ceramics of South-east Asia: Their Dating and Identification* (Chicago: Art Media Resources, 2nd edition, 2000), plate II c–8, 35.

4

Stevenson, "Ivory-Glazed Wares of Ly and Tran," 113.

The Ly (1009–1225) and Tran dynasties (1225–1400) heralded a period of experimentation in the field of ceramics. New techniques of decoration and a wider range of types arose; the glazes used were white (ivory), brown, and green. The typical ivory color of this vessel was achieved with a wood-ash glaze, and the brown with a higher iron content (6 percent) wood-ash glaze.<sup>1</sup> The technique of inlaid iron-oxide glaze differs from the Chinese *cizhou* technique to which it is frequently compared, in which the iron-oxide pigment is painted over a white slip. Here, an ivory wood-ash glaze is applied, the design is incised and scraped, and the darker iron-oxide decoration is inlaid.

Jars of this type, generally found in a burial context, are often referred to as Thanh Hoa jars, as the first examples were found in that province. Since then, they have been discovered throughout the Hong (Red) River valley and were probably produced at a number of sites.<sup>2</sup> Although apparently fashioned for domestic purposes, at least one example has been found in the Philippines. Another example with the openwork base purportedly was excavated from a tomb in northern China, along with other similar Vietnamese ceramics.<sup>3</sup>

Most of these jars were covered, though their original covers have often been separated from them. Floral motifs, often a lotus, are the most common decoration. In this instance, an unidentifiable floral motif alternates with an abstracted four-petal flower, each section demarcated by a dark brown line. A common motif is the row of deeply carved lotus petals that point downward from the rim of the vessel. Various authors have suggested Cham influence for this motif, as metal containers with deep repoussé are known from Champa.<sup>4</sup> The deep foot, which was clearly attached to the thrown body of the vessel, has been perforated and is a less common type than the flat base of the majority of the barrel-shaped vessels.

### LITERATURE

*Co Vat Viet Nam (Vietnamese Antiquities)*, 2003.

