

90. INCENSE BURNER AND PAIR OF LAMPS

August 15, 1634

Stoneware, 12834, H: 38.7 cm x W: 27 cm x D: 16 cm;

15407, H: 40.7 cm x W: 15.9 cm x D: 12.8 cm;

17251, H: 41 cm x W: 16 cm x D: 13.3 cm

National Museum of Vietnamese History, Ha Noi, LSb 12834, LSb 17251, LSb 15407

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Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Cam Nang Do Gom Viet Nam Co Minh Van*, 87–88.

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According to Terese Bartholomew, curator emeritus, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, personal communication, May 2008, they may read Temple of Lofty Announcement, though the central character (announcement) seems to be missing a few strokes.

An inscription on the base of the censer in Chinese characters states that the burner is a donation to the pagoda Chua Sung Bao. The donation was made on December 3, 1634, and given by Do Luan (Phuc Mien) and his wife, Lady Thi Nhung (Dieu Tam), and others in the village of Lai Oc.³⁶

The complex decoration of the incense burner, with its inset cartouches and appliqué of bisque ware, includes on the upper section hornbills, two kneeling *nghe* looking at the sun, *bodhi* leaves (*Ficus religiosa*, the tree under which the Buddha became enlightened), and three Chinese characters.³⁷ On the four sides of the body, dragons appear in the cartouches. The base has a sharpened lotus and clouds, and on either end, an inscription. Green and white glaze contrasts with the bisque.

Two lamps were placed to either side of an incense burner before the altar. The pair included here did not originally accompany this particular censer, but they are of approximately the same date.

As on the burner, the artist has combined the glazed *nghe* (fantastic lion) and upright sections of the lampstands with appliqué bisque and glazed decoration. The appliqué sections are molded in the shape of small *nghe*, a scene with the sun, abstract clouds, and floral motifs. Molded appliqué are even applied to the head of the lion, whose overall form was molded.

LITERATURE

Co Vat Viet Nam (Vietnamese Antiquities), 294; Nguyen Dinh Chien, *Cam Nang Do Gom Viet Nam Co Minh Van: The Ky XV–XIX (Handbook of Vietnamese Ceramics with Inscriptions from the Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries)*, 1999.