

Conical bowl with *bi*-disc foot

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 3.8 cm, diam. rim 15.7 cm, diam. foot 6.6 cm

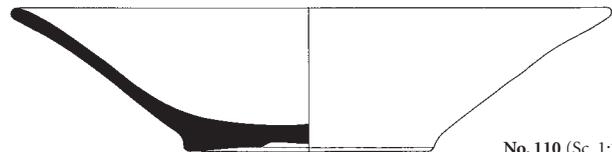
The bowl has straight conical sides and rests on a foot in the form of a *bi*-disc. The foot is unglazed; the rest of the bowl, including the small recessed base, is covered with a thin layer of olive-green glaze. There is no decoration. Thirty-five pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

This shape represents the most characteristic stoneware bowl shape of the Tang dynasty, the classic Yue ware tea bowl. The form was in use for a century or more, and was produced and exported in great quantities. Yue ware bowls of this type have been excavated both in China and abroad. The broad shallow foot ring in the shape of an archaic jade disc (*bi*) has become so firmly associated with the finds at Samarra in modern Iraq that it is often referred to as a Samarra-type foot, the bowls being known as Samarra-type bowls.

Similar bowls have been recovered from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, where they were found in three different strata: in the earliest, assigned to the Zhenyuan reign (785–805), they have spur marks on the inside due to firing in stacks; in the following two, assigned to the Yuanhe (806–820) and Dazhong (847–859) reigns, respectively, they are fully glazed on the inside due to firing in saggars.¹

Related bowls with a slightly flared rim have been discovered at the site of the Tang city of Yangzhou.² One example was excavated in the eastern suburbs of Xi'an.³ Other related bowls have been excavated in Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces.⁴ Similar unprovenanced bowls in China include one in the Yangzhou Museum in Jiangsu province,⁵ one in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum,⁶ and another in the Shanghai Museum.⁷

Outside China, Yue ware bowl fragments of 'Samarra' type have been excavated, for example, at Samara,⁸ at Fustat in Egypt,⁹ and at the ruins of the Heijōkyō Palace at Nara, now preserved in the Nara Research Institute of Cultural Properties.¹⁰ Further examples can be found in various Western collections, e.g. three bowls in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford from the Ingram collection.¹¹



No. 110 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ See Lin Shimin 1976, pl. 5, fig. 3; Lin Shimin 1994, figs 5 and 17, pls 1 A–D, 2 A–C; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 251, fig. 5(4) and fig. 6(1).

² See Wang Qinjin 1994, pl. 417, fig. 4(1).

³ See the exhibition catalogue *Gifts of the Tang Emperors* 1999, cat. no. 80.

⁴ They are published in line drawings by Kamei Meitoku in Wang Qingzheng 1996, figs 35:18 and 27, respectively.

⁵ See Yangzhou bowuguan 1996, pl. 68.

⁶ Illustrated in *Seven Thousand Years* 1994, pl. 159.

⁷ Published in Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 27.

⁸ Sarre 1925, pl. xxiii, fig. 13 (no. 206).

⁹ See Gyllensvärd 1973, pl.1:1 and 2 and fig. 1.

¹⁰ See Hasebe Gakuji and Imai Atsushi 1995, 100, fig. 16.

¹¹ See Tregear 1976, nos 176–178.



No. 110

111

Rounded bowl with *bi*-disc foot

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

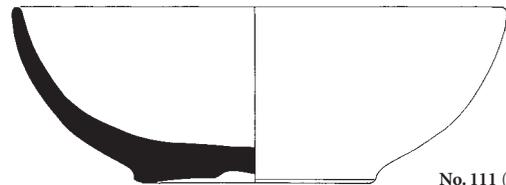
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 4.0 cm, diam. rim 12.9 cm, diam. foot 6.3 cm

The low, rounded bowl rests on a foot in the form of a *bi*-disc; this is covered with an olive-green glaze, like the rest of the bowl, but shows patches without glaze where it touched the firing supports. The bowl is plain. Thirty-four pieces of this type have been recovered from the wreck.

This rounded form, perhaps less easy to fire in stacks, is much rarer than the conical bowl shape above (no. 110). Different methods of firing, on a glazed or an unglazed foot, appear to have been employed at the same time.

A similar bowl is in the Shanghai Museum,¹ while one of somewhat deeper form, excavated at Ningbo, Zhejiang province, is now in the Ningbo City Museum;² another somewhat deeper bowl was found in the Dazhong period stratum (847–859) of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo.³ Compare also the line drawings of datable Yueyao bowls by Kamei Meitoku; the present type is most closely related to examples dated to the first half of the 9th century.⁴



No. 111 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Illustrated in Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 25.

² *Ibid.*, pl. 28.

³ In Lin Shimin 1976, pl. 5, fig. 3.

⁴ See Wang Qingzheng 1996, fig. 35:11, 14 and 17, for bowls dated to 804, 842 and 814, respectively.



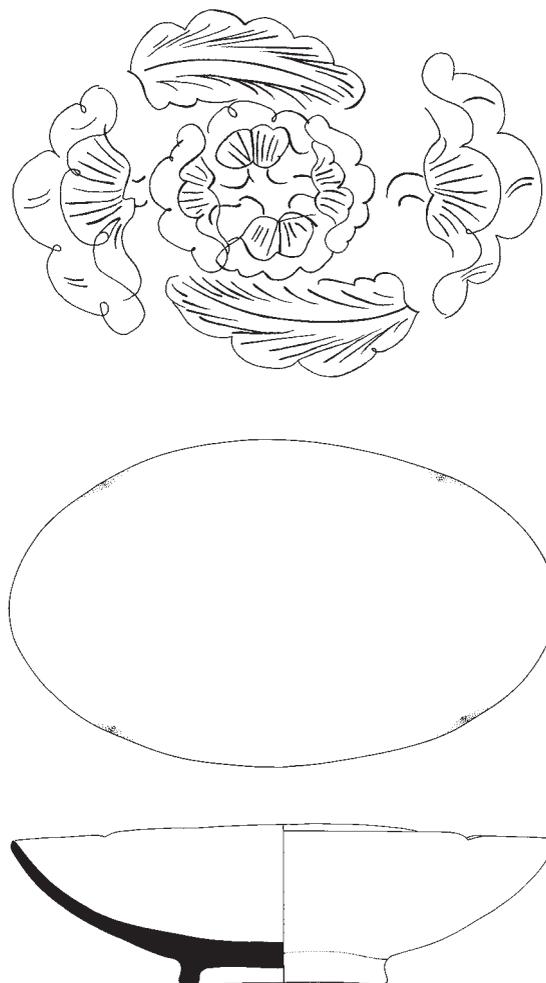
No. 111

Oval bowl with incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 4.2 cm, w. 14.2 / 8.6 cm, diam. foot 5.5 cm

The bowl was probably formed on the wheel and pressed into an oval shape but rests on a thick, straight-cut, circular foot. The rim has four tiny notches. It is fully glazed in olive-green, except for the underside of the foot, and decorated on the inside with an incised central rosette, consisting of four floral motifs reminiscent of lotus leaves, flanked by two elongated leaves, with two further floral motifs between them at either end of the bowl. The outside is plain. Three pieces of this type were found on the Belitung wreck.

A very similar bowl was recovered from a shipwreck in the sea near Ningbo in Zhejiang province;¹ others, with various closely related designs, have been excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum attributed to the Dazhong reign (847–859).² A fragment of a similar piece, probably excavated in China, has been published in a line drawing by Chen Wanli in 1937.³ A bowl of similar form has also been discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.⁴ Other bowls of this type, of unknown origin, are known from Japanese and Western collections.⁵



No. 112 Bowl shape and incised decoration (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Illustrated in Li Zi Yan and Chan Liang Zhu 1988, cat. no. 25.

² Illustrated in line drawings in Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 262, fig. 11 (1, 2, 4, 5); Lin Shimin 1994, figs 52, 53.

³ Chen Wanli 1937, 88.

⁴ Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 3, fig. 16.

⁵ Two are illustrated in the exhibition catalogue Degawa Tetsuro 1994, nos 12, 13; for a third see Sotheby's 1986, lot 153.



No. 112

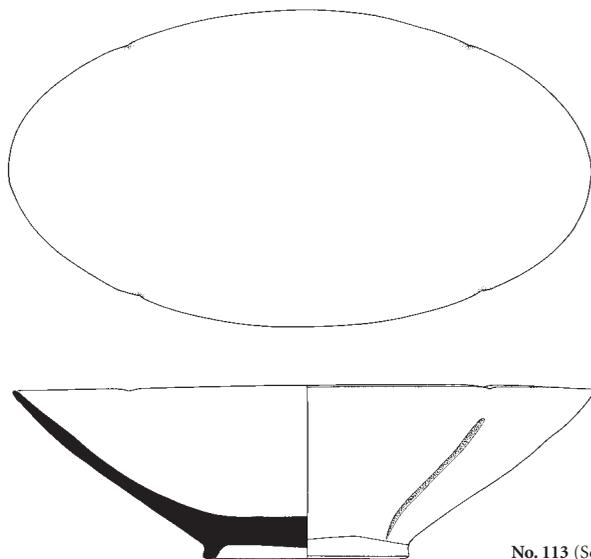
113

Oval bowl with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 4.6 cm, w. 15.2 / 8.4 cm, diam. foot 5.4 cm

The oval bowl, rests on a circular foot. The sides have four indentations on the outside, corresponding to tiny notches in the rim. The glaze has largely vanished, and the grey body shows slightly paler patches at the foot ring, probably from firing supports. The bowl is undecorated. Two pieces of this type have been recovered from the shipwreck.

Similar bowls with more distinctly lobed sides have been found at the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, in a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859);¹ another is in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum.²



No. 113 (Sc. 1:2)

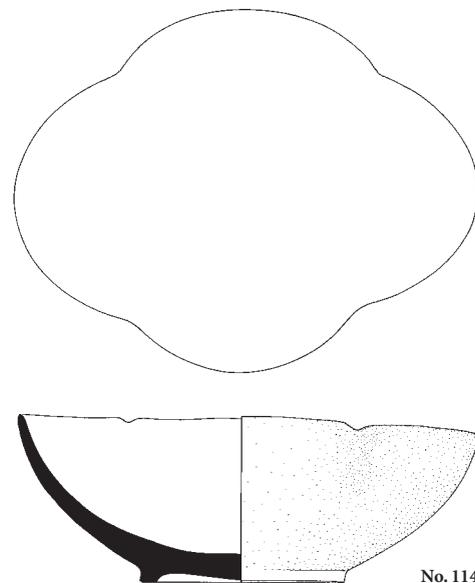
114

Quatrefoil-oval bowl

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 4.4 cm, w. 12.0 / 9.6 cm, diam. foot 5.3 cm

The bowl is of lobed, quatrefoil oval form, with a circular foot. Four pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

The present bowl is unusual in its very pronounced indentations. Quatrefoil bowl shapes, either delicately indented or deeply lobed, are ubiquitous in Tang stoneware and have a close relationship to contemporary gold and silver forms. But the shape does not necessarily copy a metalwork form, since the process of indenting is an obvious way of shaping a wheel-thrown ceramic bowl while it is still soft.



No. 114 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ See Lin Shimin 1976, no. 7, pl. 6, fig. 3; Lin Shimin 1999, pl. 24, fig. 80; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 262, fig. 11 (3).

² Illustrated in *Seven Thousand Years* 1994, pl. 157.



No. 113



No. 114

115

Large begonia-shaped bowl

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

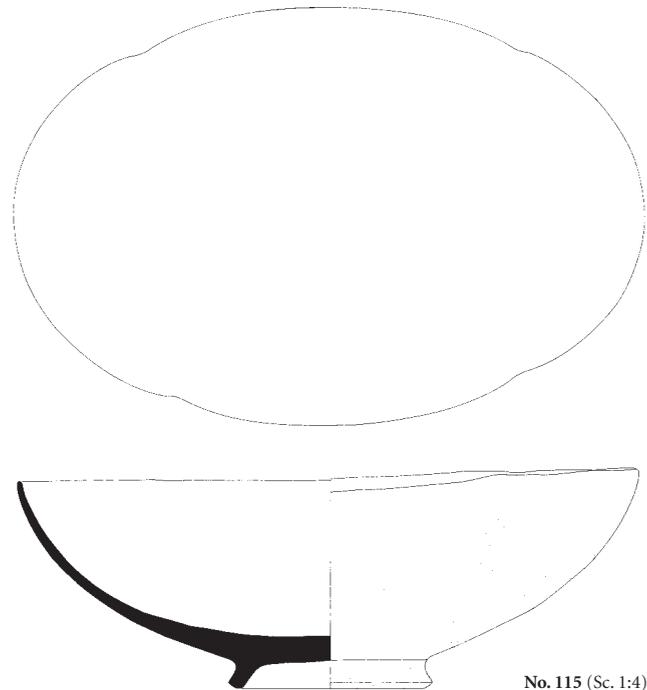
Green-glazed stoneware

Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 11.0 cm, w. 32.9 / 22.1 cm, diam. foot 10.8 cm

The very large bowl, unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung wreck, is of quatrefoil-oval form, with indented sides, and rests on a flared, circular foot. It is heavily potted, fully covered with a characteristic grey-green glaze, except at the bevelled foot-rim, and has no decoration. A patch of tactile bluish-green glaze remains on the outside of the bowl, well preserved through contact with sea-shells, whereas at the rim, where it adhered in a thinner layer, the glaze has been lost; on the concave base it has fired a more yellowish tone.

This begonia shape (in Chinese often erroneously called *haitang*, 'crab-apple', rather than *qiu haitang*, 'begonia' shape) was at the time popular not only for stoneware but also for gold, silver and stone. The present piece appears to be one of the largest such pieces in existence and its use is not known. A very similar bowl, also of this size, is preserved in the Shanghai Museum.¹ For much smaller silver and gold versions, also found on the Belitung wreck, see nos 5–7; a white marble bowl of begonia shape was recovered from the tomb of Li Zun at Xingyuan village, Yanshi, Henan province, who died in 845.²



No. 115 (Sc. 1:4)

¹ See Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 8.

² See Xu Diankui and Liu Zhongfu 1984, pl. 7, fig. 6 left and p. 911, fig. 9(6).



No. 115

116

Barbed quatrefoil bowl

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

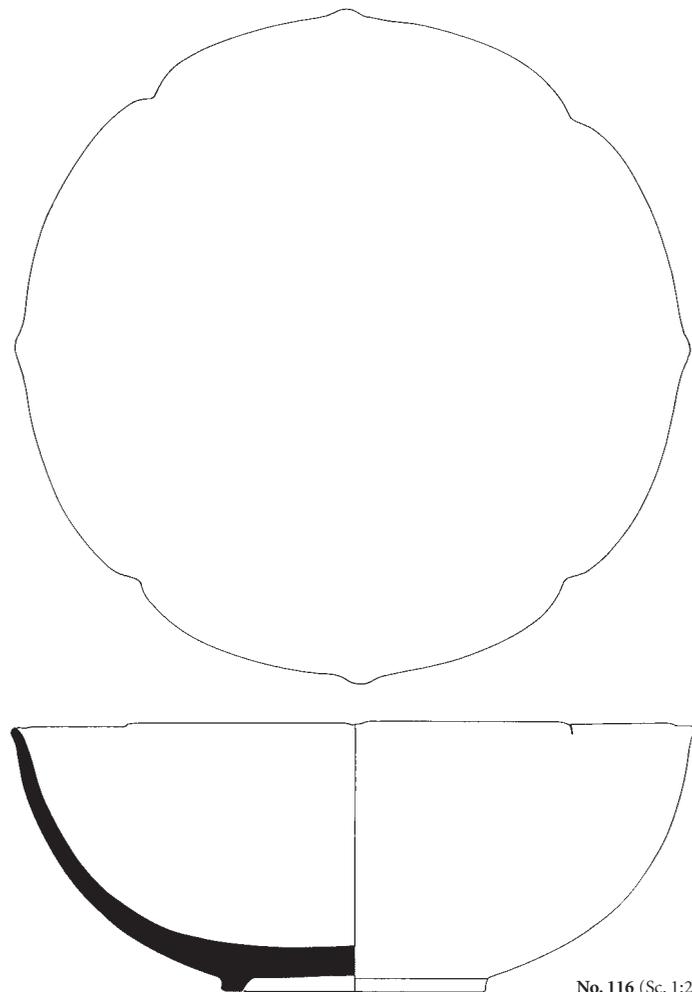
Green-glazed stoneware

Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 7.2 cm, diam. rim 17.9 cm, diam. foot 6.9 cm

The bowl is of barbed quatrefoil shape, the rim shaped in four bracket foliations, alternately pointing inward and outward, resting on a low, square-cut, circular foot. The piece has no decoration. It is unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung wreck.

This barbed pointed shape is an uncommon example of the Tang potters' manifold imaginative ways to manipulate the potted circular shape. In the Tang dynasty it was rarely used for vessels, where lobed, rounded edges were much more common, and the form does not appear to have direct counterparts in Tang metalwork. Although barbed outlines are found on mirrors, mirror and cosmetics boxes, and in textile designs, they are generally octafoil, more rarely hexafoil; compare various examples preserved in the Shôsô-in of Tōdai-ji in Nara, the repository of the personal belongings of emperor Shōmu, dedicated to the temple upon his death in 756, which also includes a barbed octafoil stone bowl.¹



No. 116 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ See *Shôsô-in no hōmotsu* 1992, pls 26, 28, 31, 102.



No. 116

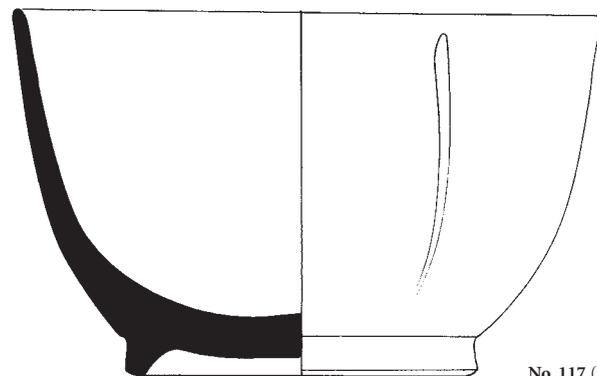
117

Cup with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 6.4 cm, diam. rim 10.3 cm, diam. foot 6.1 cm

The deep cup has straight sides with four indentations, rests on a straight foot, and is undecorated. It is covered with an olive-green glaze, and has unglazed patches from firing supports on the foot ring. Four pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

A piece of similar proportions but with incised decoration on the inside and lacking the indentations on the outside was excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859).¹



No. 117 (Sc. 3:4)

¹ Illustrated in a line drawing in Lin Shimin 1994, fig. 19.



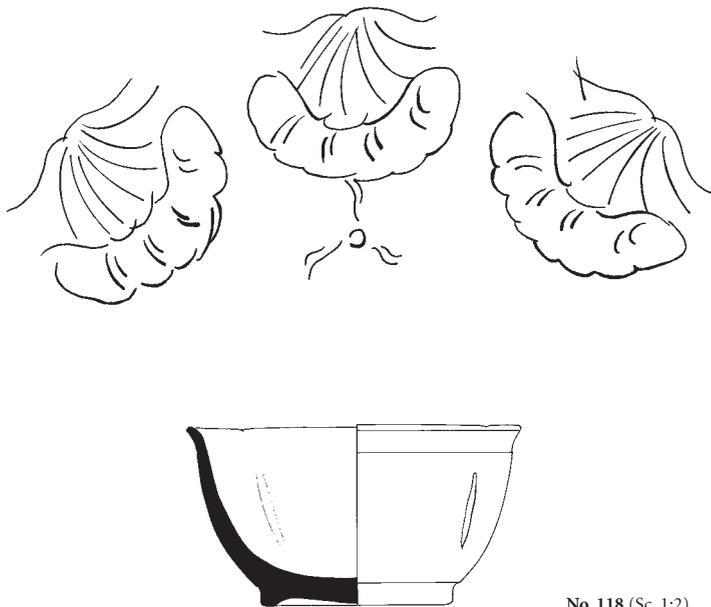
No. 117

118

Cup with flared rim, four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 3.8 cm, diam. rim 9.0 cm, diam. foot 5.5 cm

The deep cup has a flared rim with a groove underneath, and a straight heavy foot with broad shallow foot ring. The rim shows four tiny notches, the outside of the cup four indentations. The inside is incised with a floret surrounded by three pendant lotus-leaf motifs (cf. appendix V no. 6). The glaze is a light yellowish-green and leaves only the foot ring free, where faint reddish patches remain from the firing supports.



No. 118 (Sc. 1:2)

119

Cup with flared rim, four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 4.0 cm, diam. rim 8.8 cm, diam. foot 5.0 cm

The deep cup, with flared rim and indented sides, is similar to the previous example (no. 118), but has four pendant floral motifs incised on the inside. Seven pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.



No. 118



No. 119

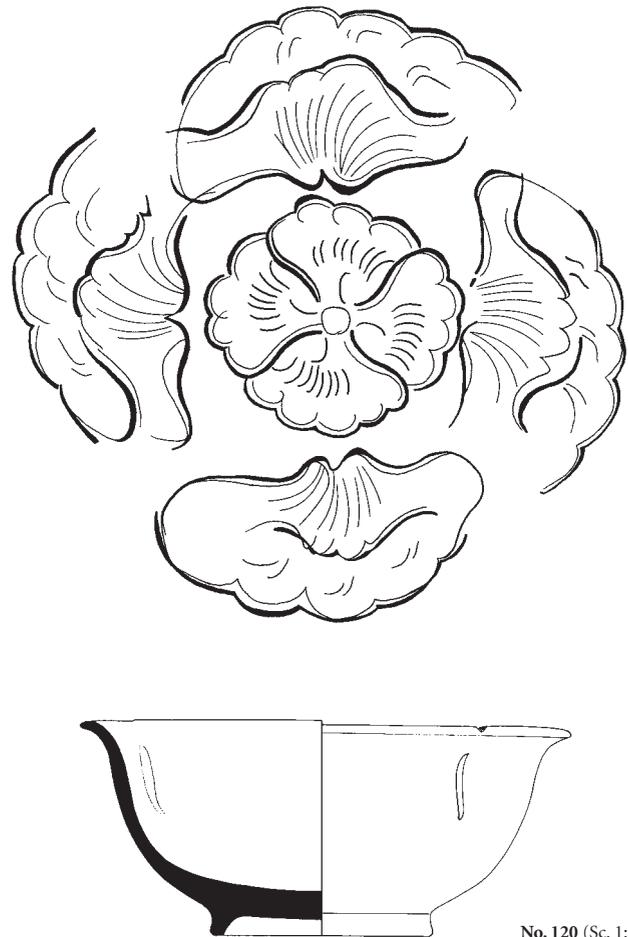
Bowl with flared rim, four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 5.7, diam. rim 12.8, diam. foot 5.8 cm

The deep bowl has a flared rim and a thick, straight-cut foot, slanting towards the inside. The rim has four tiny notches, and the outside corresponding indentations. The inside is incised with a quatrefoil floret in the centre, surrounded by four floral motifs of lotus-leaf shape. Eight pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

A very similar bowl was excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum attributed to the Yuanhe reign (806–820);¹ a bowl fragment with a similar incised design was excavated at Fukuoka, Kyushu Island, Japan.²

Another very similar bowl is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston;³ a related piece from the Ingram collection, probably without indentations, is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.⁴



No. 120 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Illustrated in a line drawing in Lin Shimin 1994, fig. 26.

² See Morita 1987, 39, fig. 1.

³ Illustrated in Kôyama Fujiô 1957, pl. 8.

⁴ See Tregear 1976, no. 118.



No. 120

121

Flared bowl with four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 5.0 cm, diam. rim 14.0 cm, diam. foot 6.8 cm

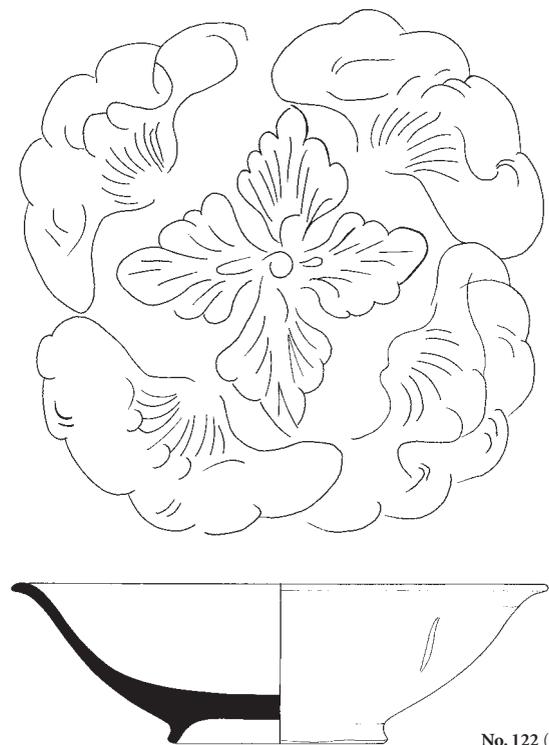
The bowl is similar to no. 120, with a flared rim with four notches and indented sides. It is incised in the centre with a floret surrounded by four leaves, and has four lotus-leaf motifs on the inner sides (cf. appendix V no. 9). Four pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

122

Flared bowl with four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 4.2 cm, diam. rim 14.0 cm, diam. foot 5.8 cm

The shallow, conical bowl has a flared rim, straight foot and four indentations on the outside. The inside is incised with a quatrefoil bloom surrounded by further floral motifs (cf. appendix V no. 7). The body material is finely levigated, with a fine-grained chalky texture, and has a very light cream-white to pale beige colour. The olive-green glaze does not cover the foot ring. Four pieces of this type have been recovered from the shipwreck.



No. 122 (Sc. 1:2)



No. 121



No. 122

123–125

Flared bowls with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

No. 123: Ht. 8.3 cm, diam. rim 25.3 cm, diam. foot 11.2 cm

No. 124: Ht. 7.5 cm, diam. rim 23.8 cm, diam. foot 10.6 cm

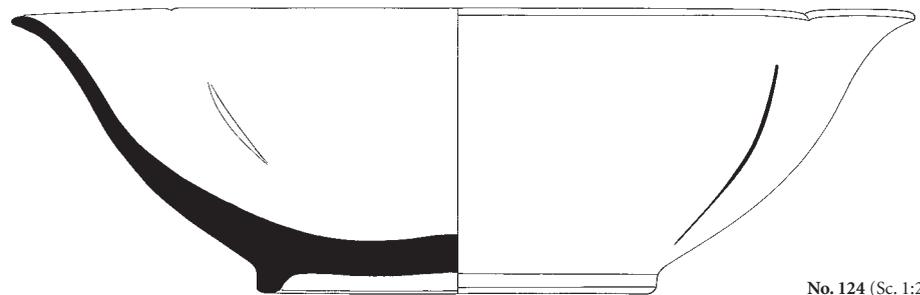
No. 125: Ht. 7.3 cm, diam. rim 23.8 cm, diam. foot 10.9 cm



No. 124

The large bowls have rounded sides flaring towards the rim and a well-shaped, straight-cut foot. The outside is indented four times, the indentations being just barely visible on the inside of nos 123 and 124, and the rim has four corresponding notches. The pieces are plain. The yellowish-green glaze leaves the foot ring free. On no. 123 the biscuit has fired brick-red and shows lighter patches from the firing supports. Eighteen pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck (one without notches on the rim).

Related Yue ware bowls with five lobes have been discovered at the site of the Tang city of Yangzhou in Jiangsu province.¹ Bowls, perhaps of this type, are depicted in the anonymous painting of a 'Palace Concert', where they are used, without stands, by palace ladies for drinking. The painting, which is in Tang style and has traditionally been attributed to the Tang dynasty, may, however, represent a Five Dynasties' copy, and the bowls in the painting may therefore depict a slightly later version, with a somewhat higher foot.²



No. 124 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ See Wang Qinjin 1994, pl. 417, fig. 4(15).

² See *Shimū hua zhi mei* 1988, no. 2.



No. 123



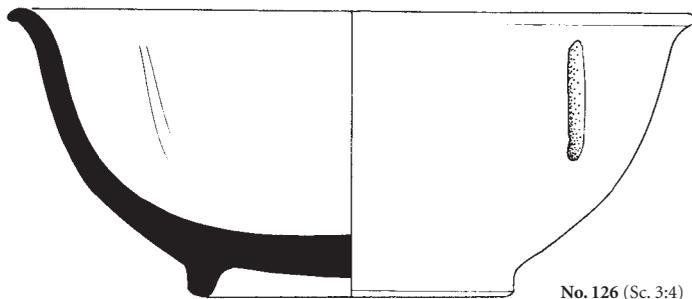
No. 125

126

Flared bowl with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 5.0 cm, diam. rim 12.0 cm, diam. foot 5.7 cm

The deep bowl, unique to the wreck, has a flared rim, and four indentations on the outside. It is otherwise plain. The olive-green glaze leaves only the foot ring free.



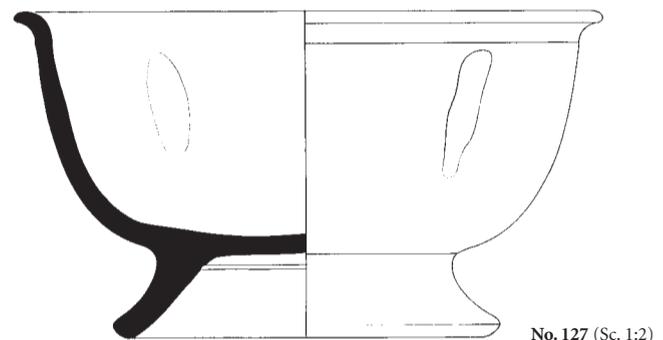
127

Flared bowl on a high foot, with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 8.6 cm, diam. rim 15.4 cm, diam. foot 10.1 cm

The bowl flares towards the rim and is supported on a high, flared foot. The rim is plain but the sides show four indentations. The bowl is not decorated. Two pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

Similar bowl fragments with incised decoration have been excavated at Samarra in modern Iraq.¹ Related fragments have also been discovered at Fustat in Egypt.² This type of bowl has also come to light at the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, in a stratum attributed to the Dazhong reign (847–859), often decorated with incised designs.³ A related bowl was discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.³



1 Illustrated in Sarre 1925, pl. xxv, figs 4 and 6, pl. xxiii, fig. 14; Lindberg 1953, pls 2d, f.
2 See Gyllensvärd 1973, pl. 2:3 and fig. 8.
3 See Lin Shimin 1994, pl. 2E, F, fig. 35, and line drawings in Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 252, fig. 6.
4 Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 3, fig. 14.



No. 126



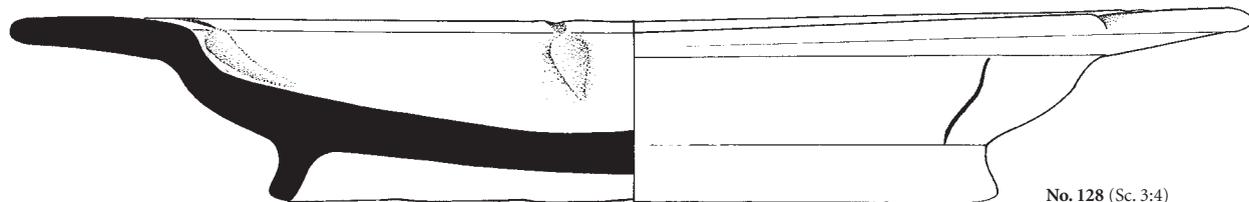
No. 127

Dish with flat, everted rim and five indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 3.3 cm, diam. rim 21.9 cm, diam. foot 12.8 cm

The shallow dish has low curved sides, a flat everted rim, and rests on a splayed foot. The rim has five indentations on top and the lip five notches, while the sides have five indentations on the outside and corresponding raised ridges on the inside. The piece is otherwise plain. It is evenly covered with a thin green glaze with radiating crazes on the rim, and the foot ring shows patches from firing supports. It is unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung wreck.

This dish shape is very rarely seen in Tang ceramics and recalls the shape of large parcel-gilt silver salvers with repoussé designs: two such dishes have been excavated in Inner Mongolia,¹ and a similarly shaped silver dish raised on three feet, is in the Shôsô-in of Tōdai-ji in Nara, the repository of the personal belongings of emperor Shōmu, dedicated to the temple upon his death in 756.²



¹ In Yang Boda 1987, pls 59 and 60.

² Illustrated in *Shôsô-in no hōmotsu* 1992, pl. 113.



No. 128

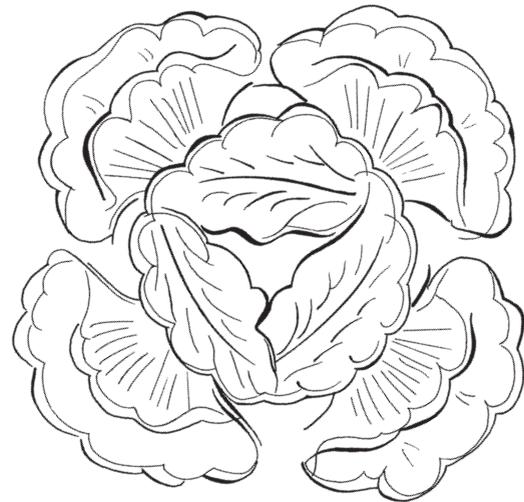
Dish with four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 2.4 cm, diam. rim 15.0 cm, diam. foot 6.1 cm

The dish is of shallow saucer shape, with four tiny indentations in the flared rim, and has an incised design on the inside, of three long leaves arranged in the form of a triangle, these surrounded by four floral motifs reminiscent of lotus leaves (cf. also appendix V no. 2). On the outside there are four indentations, with corresponding notches in the rim, and the thick foot is cut straight on the outside and slanting on the inside. Nineteen pieces of this type have been recovered from the wreck, fourteen of them being undecorated.

This and the following dishes (nos 130, 131) are very closely related, even in size, to a dish of pure gold with chased floral decoration also found on the wreck (no. 2). A very similar Yue ware dish, with a slightly different incised design, was discovered at Henancun, Huoqiaoxiang, Hanjiang county, near Yangzhou in Jiangsu province, and is now in the Yangzhou Museum.¹

Two similar dishes from the Ingram collection are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford,² together with two pieces without decoration;³ another is in the Art Institute of Chicago,⁴ two other pieces of this type are known from private collections.⁵



No. 129 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ See Yangzhou bowuguan 1996, pl. 69.

² See Tregear 1976, nos 116, 117.

³ *Ibid.*, nos 170, 196.

⁴ See Mino Yutaka and Tsiang 1986, cat. no. 45.

⁵ See Sotheby's 1979, lot 169; Sotheby's 1987, lot 235.



No. 129

Dish with flared rim, four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 2.8 cm, diam. rim 15.2 cm, diam. foot 6.2 cm

The shallow dish has a flared rim with four notches, four indentations on the outside, and a straight circular foot. The inside is incised with four leaves surrounded by two large floral motifs and further leaves in between. Six pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck, one being undecorated.

A fragment of a similar dish, probably excavated in China, has been published by Chen Wanli in 1937 in a line drawing;¹ another, probably in a private Japanese collection, has been exhibited in Tokyo 1988.² A related dish from the collection of the late King Gustav VI Adolf of Sweden, now in the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm, represents a slightly more developed version of this design and was probably executed slightly later.³



No. 130 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Chen Wanli 1937, 84.

² Included in Hasebe Gakuji et al. 1988, cat. no. 51.

³ Illustrated in Watson 1984, pl. 56.



No. 130

131

Dish with four indentations and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 2.0 cm, diam. rim 12.5 cm, diam. foot 5.3 cm

The small, shallow dish has a down-curved rim and rests on a short foot ring. The outside shows four indentations. The fine light grey body is thinly covered with pale green glaze and incised with a circular quatrefoil floret, surrounded by four heart-shaped petals and stylized lotus leaves. Another two undecorated pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.



No. 131 (Sc. 3:4)



No. 131

132

Square dish with rounded edges and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 2.5 cm, w. 13.3 cm, diam. foot 6.3 cm

The shallow square dish, unique among the ceramics recovered from the shipwreck, has a flared rim, rounded edges with indented corners, and rests on a shallow circular foot which curves towards the base. It is decorated with an incised quatrefoil flower-head, flanked by two similar flower-heads above and below, their leaves filling the remaining two sides (cf. also appendix V nos 3, 5). The incising is done with deep outlines and fine details. The outside is undecorated. The piece is fully glazed in a light olive-green tone, leaving the foot ring free, where ten reddish-brown marks remain from firing supports. Fourteen pieces of this type, all decorated, have been recovered from the shipwreck (see also nos 133, 134 and appendix V nos 3, 4)

Dishes like this and the following two examples (nos 133, 134) are otherwise extremely rare. Like the circular dishes above (nos 129, 131), they have two remarkably close counterparts in gold with chased decoration on the wreck, a type not otherwise known (nos 3, 4).

A similar Yue ware dish has been discovered at the site of the Tang city of Yangzhou in Jiangsu province;¹ and an undecorated dish of this form has been excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum attributed to the Dazhong reign (847–859).²



¹ Illustrated in Wang Qinjin 1994, 417, fig. 4(13).

² Illustrated in a line drawing in Lin Shimin 1994, fig. 39; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 258, fig. 9(1).



No. 132

133

Square dish with rounded corners and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 2.0 cm, w. 13.3 cm, diam. foot 6.7 cm

This dish is similar to no. 132, but incised with a square quatrefoil floret surrounded by four large multi-petalled floral motifs seen in profile. The foot ring shows fewer marks from firing supports.



No. 133 Incised decoration (Sc. 3:4)



No. 133

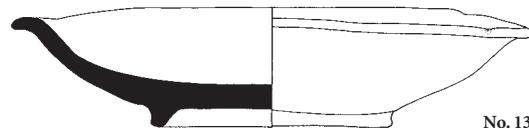
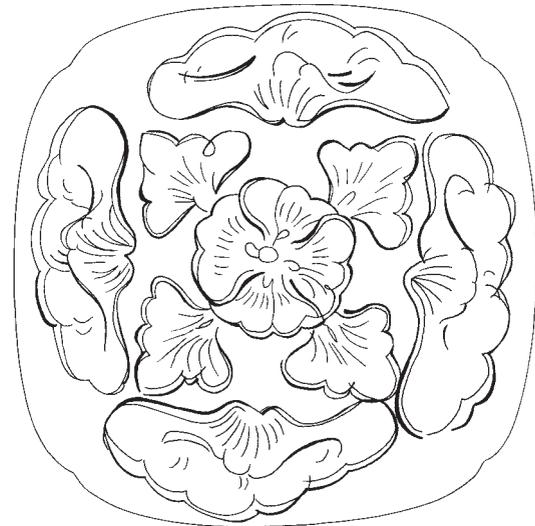
134

Square dish with rounded corners and incised decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 3.1 cm, w. 13.6 cm, diam. foot 6.3 cm

The dish is similar to nos 132 and 133, but incised with a circular floret surrounded by four triangular leaf motifs, with four floral motifs reminiscent of lotus leaves on the four sides.

A very similar dish was discovered among remains of the Tang city of Yangzhou at Sanyuanlu, Yangzhou in Jiangsu province, and is now kept at the Yangzhou Tang City Site Cultural Relics Protection Bureau (Yangzhou Tangcheng Yizhi Wenwu Baoguan suo).¹



No. 134 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ See Yangzhou bowuguan 1996, pl. 70.



No. 134

Pear-shaped ewer

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 21.4 cm, diam. rim 8.0 cm, diam. foot 9.7 cm

The elegant pear-shaped ewer rests on a broad shallow foot ring and flares towards the rim, below which a flat strap handle is attached, opposite a short polygonal spout. The piece is undecorated except for a thin incised line on the handle. The grey-green glaze is largely degraded. The body shows horizontal lines from turning, and inside the neck there are fine concentric lines from trimming with a tool. The base is glazed, the foot ring shows eight indistinct patches from firing supports. Three pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

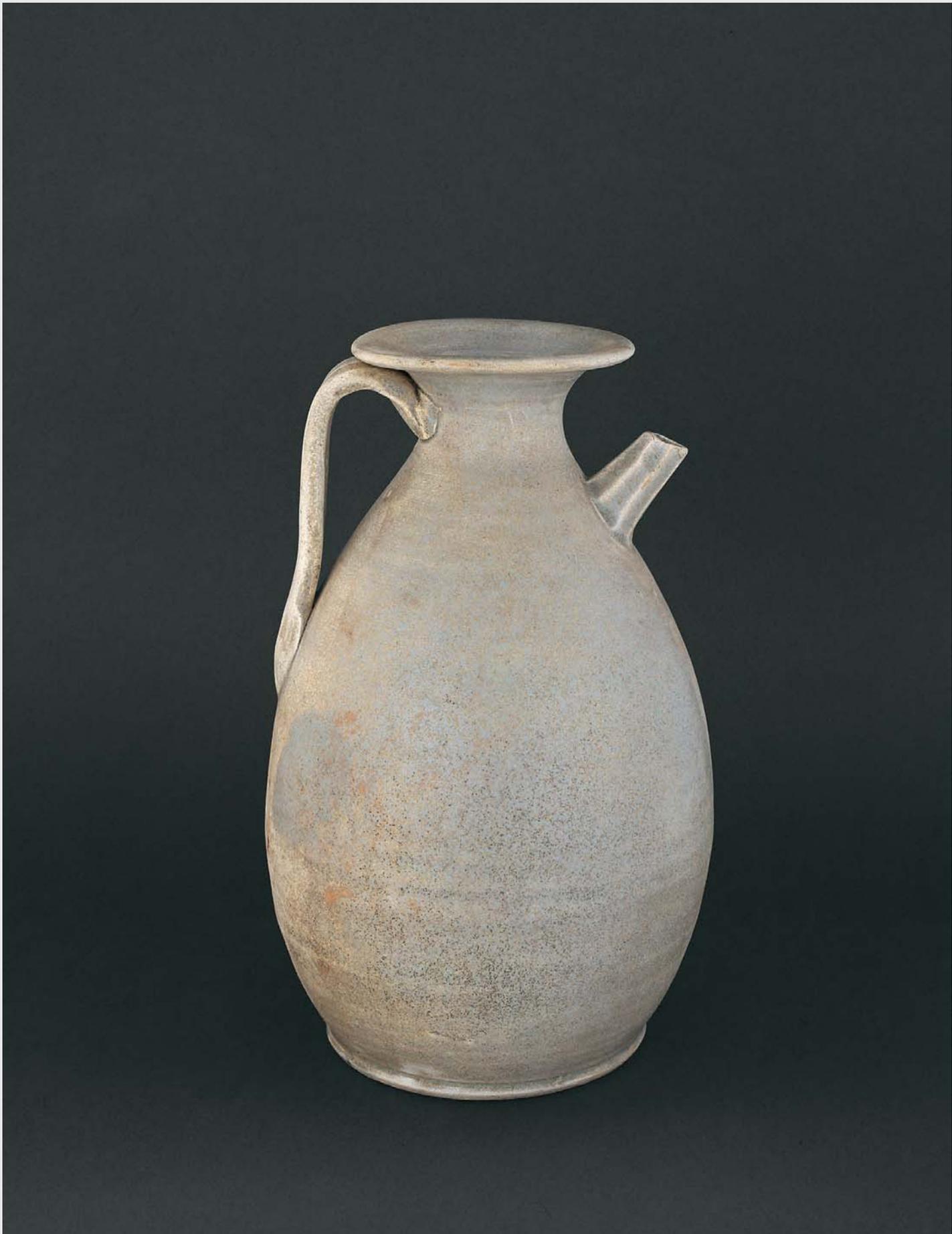
Two similar Tang dynasty ewers have been recovered from a Yue kiln site at Shanglinhu, Yuyao county in Zhejiang province;¹ another is in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum;² and a ewer of very similar proportions but of lobed form and with lugs at the shoulder was excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Yuanhe reign (806–820).³

A comparable ewer from the Ingram collection is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford;⁴ a related smaller piece of somewhat different proportions, with a broader neck and a broader foot ring, and with five distinct spur marks, dated to the fifth year of Yuanhe (810), is in the Palace Museum, Beijing;⁵ and another ewer of broader proportions, dated in accordance with 842, has been excavated from the Wu family tombs in Anhui.⁶



No. 135 (Sc. 1:2)

1 Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 3, figs 5, 8.
 2 Illustrated in *Seven Thousand Years* 1994, pl. 155.
 3 Illustrated in a line drawing in Lin Shimin 1994, 157, fig. 19.
 4 See Tregear 1976, no. 172.
 5 Illustrated in Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 10.
 6 Published in a line drawing by Kamei Meitoku (Wang Qingzheng 1996, fig. 35:15).



No. 135

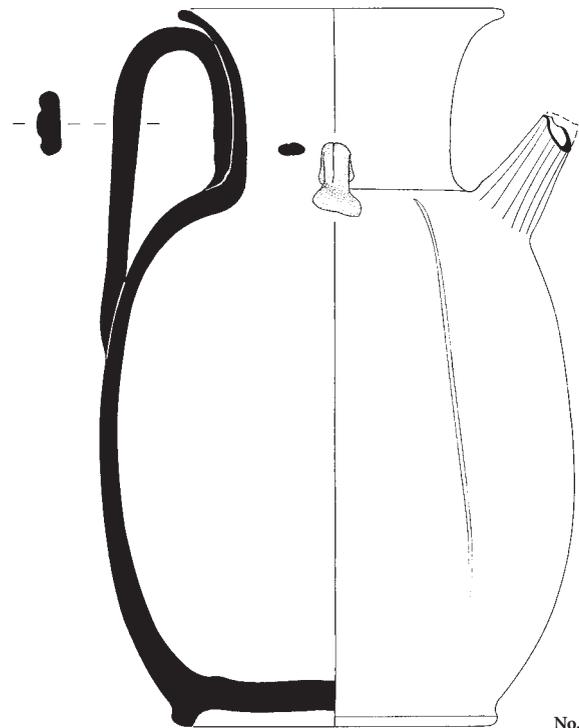
136

Ovoid ewer with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 19.0 cm, diam. rim 8.6 cm, diam. foot 8.6 cm

The ovoid body is of melon shape, with four distinct lobes clearly separated from the waisted neck, and rests on a shallow, finely-cut foot ring which merges with the domed base. Two delicate ring-shaped lugs, each with a carved vertical line, are attached to join neck and shoulder, and a short polygonal spout is attached opposite a strap handle with two deeply impressed grooves. The glaze has almost completely vanished, revealing the fine, pale buff body material. The piece is unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck.

Related ewers with and without lugs have been excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859).¹ A comparable ewer is also in the Tokyo National Museum.²



¹ Illustrated in line drawings in Lin Shimin 1994, fig. 46; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 254, fig. 7(6–8).

² Published in Hasebe Gakuji et al. 1988, cat. no. 48.



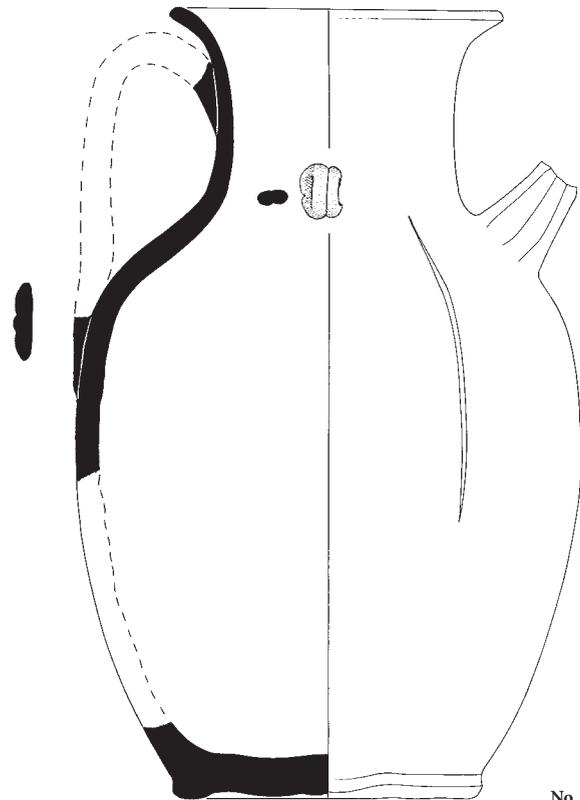
No. 136

137

Ovoid ewer with four indentations

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 20.9 cm, diam. rim 8.7 cm, diam. foot 8.1 cm

This ewer is unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung wreck. It is closely related to no. 136, but differs in several aspects, and is altogether less finely made, perhaps by a different kiln. The ovoid body tapers towards the waisted neck, is less clearly lobed, but has four indentations in the upper part, and rests on a wider, less finely finished foot ring. Two small double-stranded lugs are attached in the form of rings. The handle was missing and has been reconstructed. The olive-green glaze is thinly applied and largely covers the base, where small unglazed areas have fired brown.



No. 137 (Sc. 1:2)



No. 137

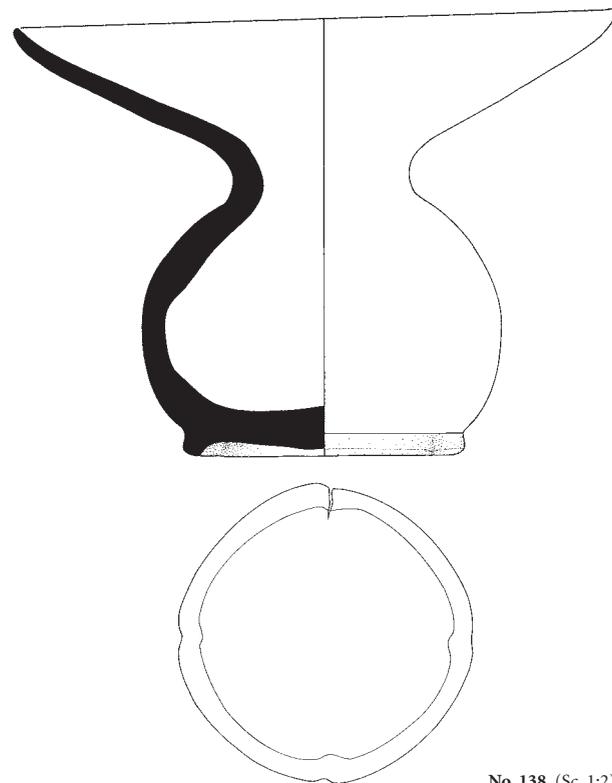
Slop bowl with quatrefoil foot

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 11.7 cm, diam. rim 15.9 cm, diam. foot 7.5 cm

This small piece, unique among the ceramics recovered from the shipwreck, has a rounded body with a wide foot ring, and flares into a wide funnel-shaped neck with a slightly incurved rim. The low straight foot has been finely cut into quatrefoil shape, and shows firing cracks on three of the four indentations. This quatrefoil shape is not taken up on any other part of the vessel. The glaze is of very light bluish-green tone and covers the base but leaves the foot ring unglazed, where the biscuit has fired a yellowish-buff colour.

The treatment of the foot on this piece is highly unusual, and is most likely not found on any of the reference pieces listed below. A Yue ware slop bowl has been excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859), together with a related piece from an earlier stratum, assigned to the Yuanhe reign (806–820).¹ A slop bowl fragment of similar form excavated from the ruins of Heijōkyō Palace, Nara, is now in the Nara Research Institute of Cultural Properties.² A similar piece from the Ingram collection is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford,³ with a companion piece from Zengjiazhuang, Huaian, recorded in the Nanjing Museum.⁴ A slop bowl in the Art Institute of Chicago, has been published together with several reference pieces, including a Yueyao piece from a kiln site in Yuyao county, and a silver slop bowl found together with a silver bar dated to 879.⁵

Related slop bowl fragments have been excavated at Fustat,⁶ and other complete pieces are in the Percival David Foundation, London,⁷ and in the Yamato Bunkakan, Nara.⁸



No. 138 (Sc. 1:2)

1 Illustrated in line drawings in Lin Shimin 1994, figs 49 and 27, respectively.

2 Illustrated in Hasebe Gakuji and Imai Atsushi 1995, pl. 8.

3 Illustrated in Tregear 1976, no. 165.

4 Ibid., mentioned on p. 59.

5 Illustrated in Mino Yutaka and Tsiang 1986, cat. no. 44.

6 See Gyllensvärd 1973, pl. 3:1 and fig. 11.

7 Included in the exhibition *Imperial Taste* 1989, cat. no. 2.

8 Published in Hasebe Gakuji et al. 1988, cat. no. 49.



No. 138

139

Large slop bowl

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

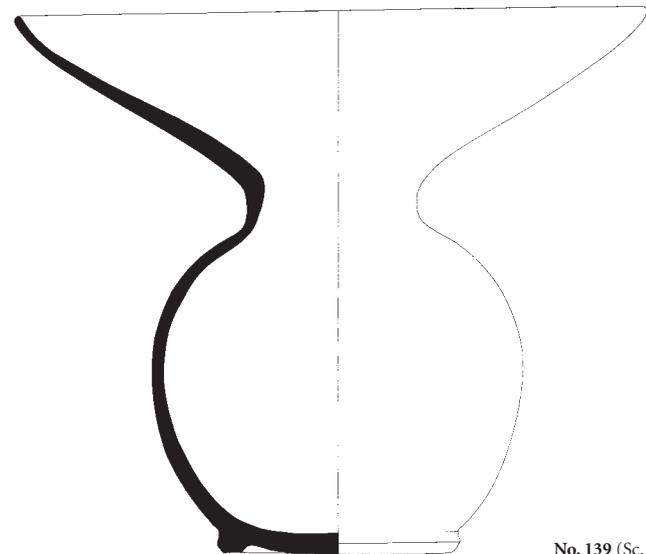
Green-glazed stoneware

Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 29.0 cm, diam. rim 33.2 cm, diam. foot 12.7 cm

This outstandingly large piece has an ovoid body, supported on a straight heavy foot with shallow foot ring and bevelled outer edge, and a wide funnel-shaped neck with slightly incurved rim (partly replaced). It is unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung shipwreck. The fine grey-green glaze fully covers the piece, including the inside and base, but excluding the foot ring, which shows only patches of glaze. There are fine spiralling lines on the outside, probably caused by a tool used for trimming. The glaze on the funnel-shaped part shows radiating lines of crazing both inside and out. The body is of fine cream-white colour.

A Yue slop bowl of this size appears to be unique. A piece of similar proportions but probably smaller size was discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.¹



No. 139 (Sc. 1:4)

¹ Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 4, fig. 4.



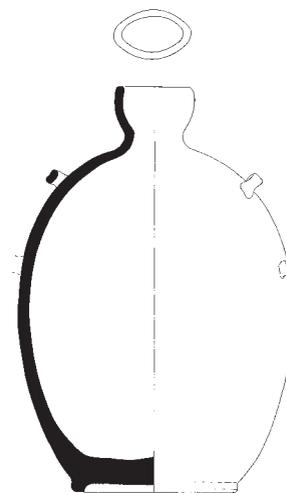
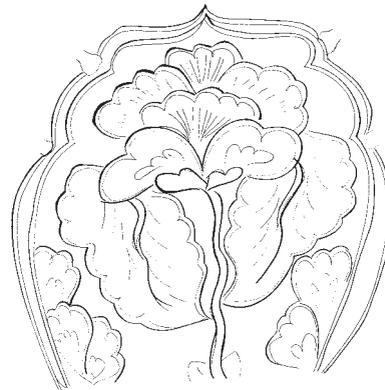
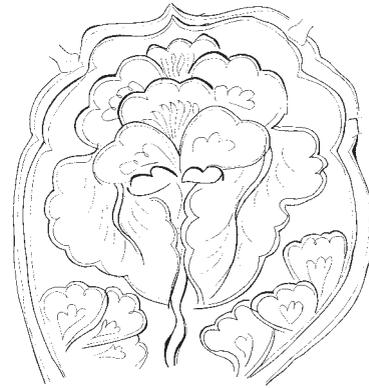
No. 139

Bottle with incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 21.5 cm

The bottle, unique among the ceramics recovered from the shipwreck, is of oval section but rests on a circular foot ring and has a small oval cup-shaped mouth. At the shoulder, the body is squeezed together and pointed on either side, where two pairs of finely made horizontal lugs have been attached for inserting a strap (two of them were broken and are replaced). The bottle is decorated on each side with a large incised flower, the bloom shown in profile with lush petals and the stalk flanked by two pendant leaves, all enclosed within a barbed panel, with two halved blooms at the base. The design is incised with double outlines. The foot ring is square-cut and shows eight reddish burnt marks from firing supports, while the base is glazed. The glaze is largely degraded but still shows several glossy olive-green patches.

The shape of this and the following bottle, no. 141, is rarely seen in Yue ware. A bottle similar to these two pieces was discovered together with a stopper of similar type as the example no. 142, in a tomb datable to 779 at Sanmenxia in Henan province.¹



No. 140 Bottle shape and incised decoration of both sides (Sc. 1:4)

¹ See the line drawing in Lin Shimin 1999, 262, fig. 10:2. This is probably the flask illustrated in colour in the exhibition catalogue *The Silk Road* 1991, 110.



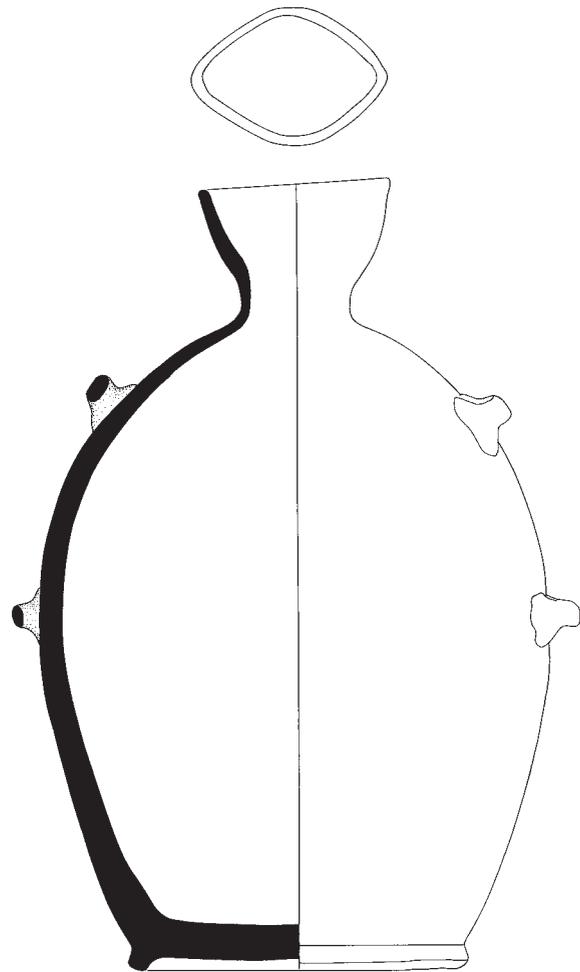
No. 140

141

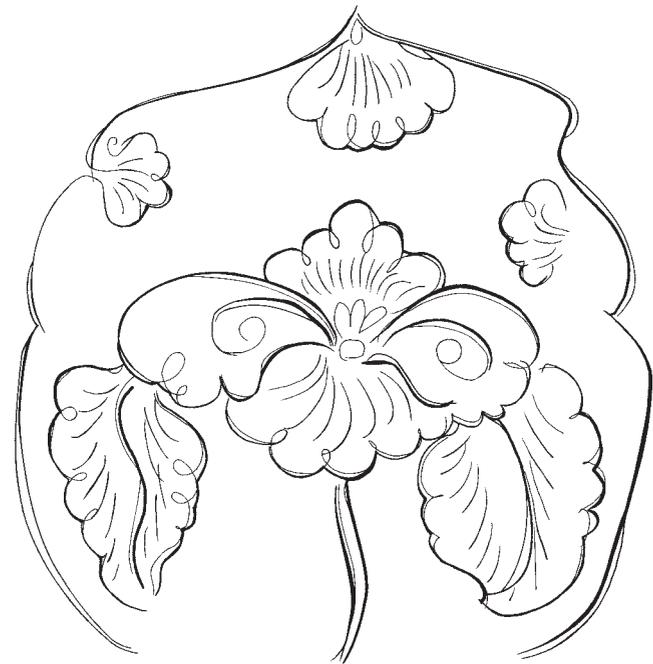
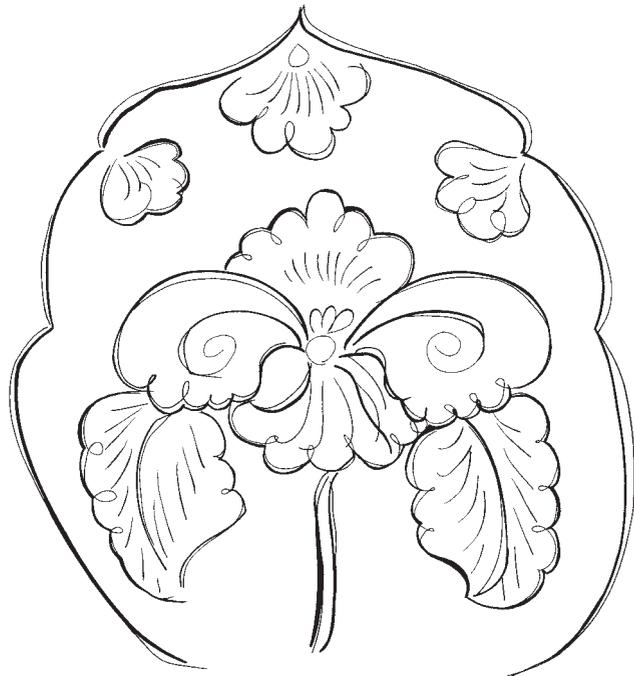
Bottle with incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 21.0 cm

The bottle is also unique among the ceramics recovered from the shipwreck and very similar to no. 140, but here the mouth is squeezed into a lozenge-shape. Both sides are incised with a flower with a large bloom with lush petals and two pendant leaves, enclosed in a barbed panel with three pendant floral motifs at the top, all incised with fine lines, with a more deeply carved second outline. Only some drops of a glossy, faint yellowish-green glaze remain. The base has a firing crack.



No. 141 Bottle shape without decoration (Sc. 1:2)



No. 141 Incised decoration of both sides (Sc. 1:2)



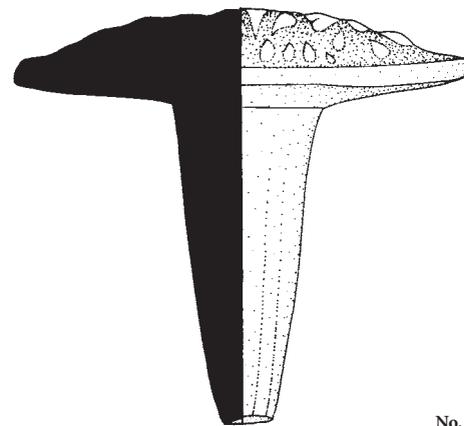
No. 141

Bottle stopper with moulded decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. 5.5 cm, l. 6.0 cm, w. 4.2 cm

This unique piece among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung wreck has a shallow domed top of rounded lozenge-shaped outline, decorated with a floral pattern in moulded relief, and a tall pointed stem below it. The pale grey body has only faint traces of greenish glaze adhering in the recesses between the design. The design consists of a small quatrefoil motif surrounded by four halved blooms and an enclosing band of individual petals.

The stopper probably belonged to a bottle such as no. 141, but does not properly fit that particular piece. Stoppers and other covers – except those of boxes, where an exact fit apparently seemed more important – were generally not packed together with the vessels and are therefore often difficult to match. That a similar combination would have been intended is suggested by the excavation of a similar bottle and stopper at Sanmenxia, Henan province.¹ Another related stopper with a phoenix head on top and a similar long pointed stem below has been discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.² Moulded decoration is rarely seen on Yue ware of this period.



No. 142

¹ See Lin Shimin 1999, 262, fig. 10:2; *The Silk Road* 1991, 110.
² Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 4, fig. 8.



No. 142

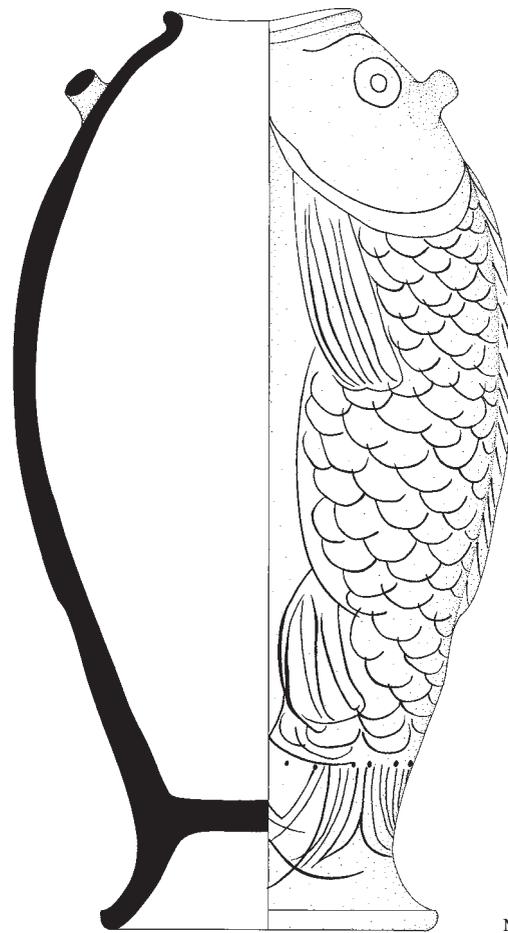
Ovoid twin-fish flask (*shuang yu guan*)

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 24.4 cm

The tall flask, unique among the ceramics recovered from the shipwreck, is of ovoid section and rests on a flared circular foot. It is shaped like a pair of fish, with a small oval mouth with rolled rim, a slight swelling to define the heads, an indentation between the two bodies, and applied fins below two lugs on the shoulder. The sides are incised to resemble two fish, with four eyes at the top, scales and fins below, and pointed tails at the base. The glaze has almost completely vanished.

This twin-fish shape is known from Tang silver, but was also made by many different ceramic kilns around this time, both in southern and northern China. Its exact purpose is not known, although as one of the signs on Buddha's footprints paired fish were a popular Buddhist emblem. A striking silver example in the form of paired fish trying to grasp a flaming pearl between them, with a swing handle, cylindrical neck and cover, was excavated at Chengzi, Chifeng, Inner Mongolia.¹ On ceramic versions, the metal swing handle would have been replaced by a leather strap, cord or ribbon.

A fragment of a similar Yue ware flask probably excavated in China, has been published by Chen Wanli in 1937 in a line drawing.² A well preserved example of the same type is in the Percival David Foundation,³ a miniature version from the Ingram collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.⁴ A celadon twin-fish ewer of much coarser manufacture has been excavated in Mei county, Guangdong province and can be attributed to the Shuiche kiln site nearby.⁵



No. 143 (Sc. 1:2)

The shape is also known from northern kilns, where it was made both in stoneware and in earthenware pottery. A white stoneware flask has been excavated at Jingxing in Hebei province.⁶ Remains of various twin-fish flasks of monochrome-glazed pottery have been discovered at the Huangbaozhen kiln site in Henan province, with amber, green and black glazes; some have two pairs of lugs at the sides.⁷ A *sancai* example has been excavated from the site of the Tang city of Yangzhou in Jiangsu province;⁸ another from the Eumorfopoulos collection is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.⁹

1 See Peng Qingyun 1994, 133, pl. 130.

2 Chen Wanli 1937, 71 bottom.

3 *Illustrated Catalogue of Celadon Wares* 1997, colour plate p. 14, no. 251; *Imperial Taste* 1989, cat. no. 1.

4 Tregear 1976, no. 193.

5 *Ceramic Finds* 1985, no. 74.

6 Illustrated in Watson 1984, pl. 142.

7 See Shaanxi sheng kaogu 1992, figs 36:5, 6 and colour pl. 9, fig. 92:18, and pl. 52:1.

8 See Liang Boquan 1997, pl. 203.

9 See Ayers 1980, pl. 49.



No. 143

Basin with four lugs

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

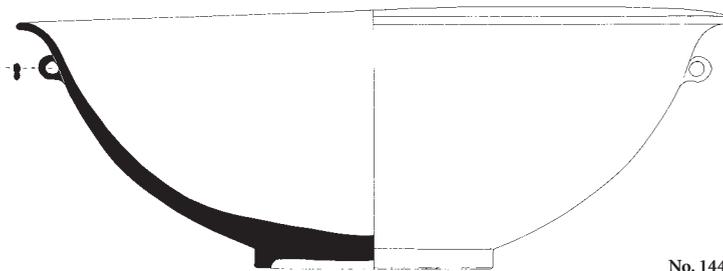
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. 13.8 cm, diam. rim 37.7 cm, diam. foot 12.6 cm

The very large basin is of wide, rounded form with an elegant flared rim, and rests on a small straight-cut foot with broad, shallow foot ring. Two pairs of small double-stranded ring-shaped lugs are attached on opposite sides below the rim. The piece is covered with a fine grey-green glaze, except for the foot ring, which shows a brown burnt patch. It is unique among the ceramics recovered from the shipwreck.

A similar basin, of somewhat different proportions, was excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859).¹ The elegant small rings serving

as lugs, to receive handles, are inspired by silver prototypes; they are very rarely found on ceramic versions. A parcel-gilt silver bowl of different proportions with two swing handles at the sides was recovered from the underground palace of the Famensi pagoda at Fufeng in Shaanxi province, which was sealed-up in 874.² This site also included a much smaller Yueyao basin of similar proportions but without any lugs, with a ring of spur marks on the glazed base instead of a foot; it was probably made slightly later than the present piece.³ Compare also a solid gold bowl of similar form but smaller size, also without lugs, excavated from Hejiacun near Xi'an in Shaanxi province.⁴



No. 144 (Sc. 1:4)

¹ Illustrated in a line drawing in Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 262, fig. 11(12).

² See Shi Xingbang 1989, pl. 1.

³ See Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 7.

⁴ Included in the exhibition catalogue *Treasures of Chang'an* 1993–94, cat. no. 34.



No. 144 Detail of two lugs



No. 144

145

Bowl with knobbed cover

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

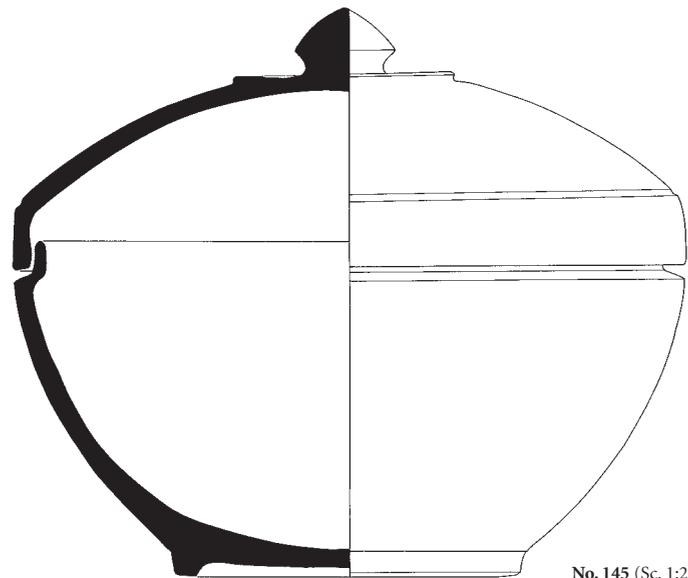
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. with cover 14.8 cm, ht. without cover 8.9 cm,

max. diam. 17.6 cm, diam. foot 9.1 cm

The rounded bowl has steep sides and a recessed rim, and rests on a wide straight-cut foot ring which curves towards the base. The large domed cover has angled sides which continue the curved outline of the bowl, and a pointed knob set onto a raised disc. The piece is undecorated but has an incised line to emphasize the angle of the cover. Reddish patches on both rims and the foot ring indicate the placement of spurs. The light grey body has only traces of yellowish-green glaze remaining. The piece is unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung wreck.

A covered bowl of very similar form was excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859),¹ together with another cover.²



No. 145 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Illustrated in a line drawing in Lin Shimin 1994, fig. 57; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 256, fig. 8(21).

² Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 260, fig. 10(18).



No. 145

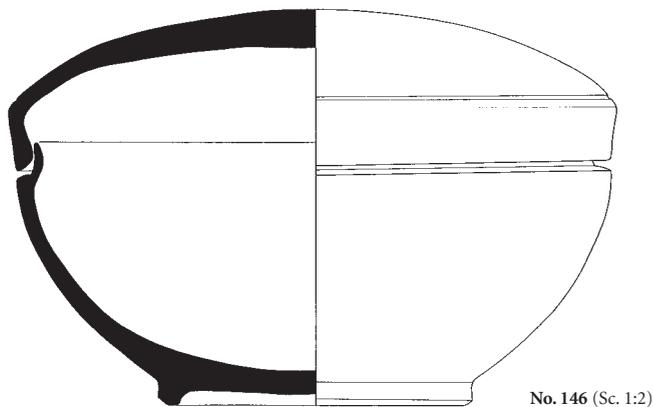
146

Bowl with domed cover

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. with cover 10.3 cm, ht. without cover 7.0 cm,
 max. diam. 15.9 cm, diam. foot 8.2 cm

The conical rounded bowl, unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck, rests on a broad shallow foot ring and has a recessed rim to receive a domed, angled cover which partly continues the curve of the bowl. The piece is undecorated but has an incised line around the cover. The unglazed foot ring and the rims of both parts show reddish patches from firing supports, the rest of the piece shows traces of a yellowish-green glaze.

Compare a covered bowl of similar form but slightly different proportions which was excavated together with a Yue ware box, a small box of northern white ware, and a gold and a silver box from the site of the Endô, the octagonal hall of the Ninna-ji in Kyoto, erected in 904.¹



No. 146 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Hasebe Gakuji and Imai Atsushi 1995, pl. 7; Degawa Tetsuro 1994, no. 14; *Temple and Shrine Treasures* 1992, no. 11.

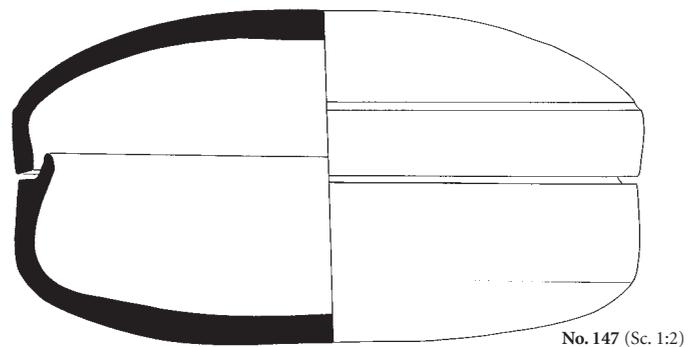
147

Box with domed cover

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
 Green-glazed stoneware
 Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
 Ht. with cover 8.6 cm, ht. without cover 5.2 cm,
 max. diam. 16.5 cm

The large, finely made box has straight sides, a recessed rim to receive the cover, and a ring of twelve obliquely placed spur marks on the rounded base instead of a foot. The cover has a well-rounded domed top and short straight sides. The fine, even grey-green glaze fully covers the piece, except for both rims, which show the fine light grey body and reddish-brown patches from closely spaced spur marks. Two pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

This form is based on a metal shape and was also made in white stoneware. A similar box has been discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.¹ A similar silver box and cover from the Hejiacun hoard, discovered near Xi'an in Shaanxi province, was found filled with medicine.²



No. 147 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 3, fig. 1.

² See the exhibition catalogue *Gifts of the Tang Emperors* 1999, no. 92.



No. 146



No. 147

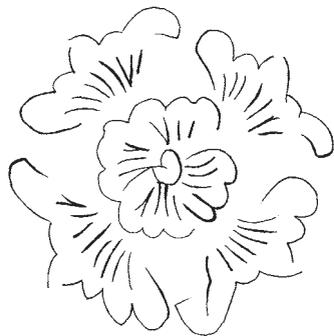
148

Miniature box and cover with incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. with cover 2.9 cm, ht. without cover 2.0 cm,
max. diam. 4.6 cm, diam foot 3.1 cm

The small piece has straight cylindrical sides, a small straight foot ring, and a domed cover. The top is incised with a circular flower-head with lobed petals surrounded by four lobed leaves. The glaze is almost completely missing, leaving the light grey body exposed.

Boxes of various sizes related to this and the example no. 149 have been excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859).¹ A similar box lid has been excavated from Maxitan kiln no. 30, a Yue kiln site of the late Tang, at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.²



No. 148 Incised decoration of the cover

¹ Illustrated in line drawings in Lin Shimin 1994, figs 54, 55; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 260, fig. 10(1–5).

² Illustrated in Lin Shimin 1999, 172, fig. 5(5).

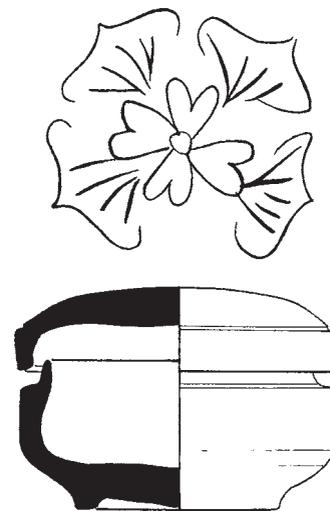
149

Miniature box and cover with incised decoration

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. with cover 2.7 cm, ht. without cover 2.0 cm,
max. diam. 4.2 cm, diam. foot 2.7 cm

This miniature box is similarly shaped to no. 148. These two pieces are the only vessels of this type recovered from the wreck. The top is incised with a four-petalled flower-head surrounded by four stylized pointed leaves. Foot ring and rims are unglazed, the rest of the piece shows remains of a grey-green glaze.

Similar box lids, probably excavated in China, have been published by Chen Wanli in 1937 in line drawings.¹ Another box of this type, but with a different incised design, has been excavated from the site of the Tang city of Yangzhou.² Small Yueyao boxes of this type are more often seen without a foot; three such examples, probably from private Japanese collections, were exhibited in Osaka in 1994;³ another is in the Shanghai Museum.⁴ Two other related boxes from the Ingram collection are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.⁵



No. 149

¹ Chen Wanli 1937, 6f.

² Illustrated in Yangzhou bowuguan 1996, pl. 72.

³ See Degawa Tetsuro 1994, nos 17–19.

⁴ Illustrated in Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 29.

⁵ Tregear 1976, nos 120 and 122.



No. 148



No. 149

150

Box with narrow opening and cover

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

Green-glazed stoneware

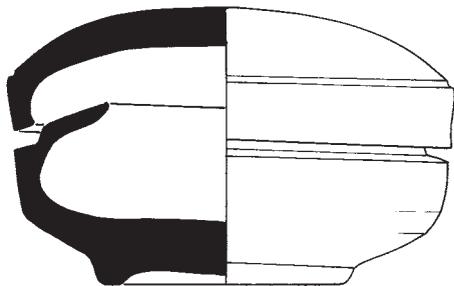
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province

Ht. with cover 3.5 cm, ht. without cover 2.3 cm,

max. diam. 5.8 cm, diam. foot 3.3 cm

The small box, unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck, has straight sides, a broad shallow foot ring and a domed cover, and is partly closed on the inside to narrow the opening. The piece is undecorated. It is fully covered with glaze except for the rims and the foot ring.

A very similar box from the Dazhong stratum (847–859) was excavated at Ningbo harbour in Zhejiang province.¹ Another with an incised design on the cover, probably from a private Japanese collection, has been published by Degawa as an oil box;² a related piece with incised decoration is in the Shanghai Museum.³



No. 150

¹ Illustrated in Lin Shimin 1999, pl. 24, fig. 82.

² See Degawa Tetsuro 1994, no. 16.

³ Illustrated in Wang Qingzheng 1996, pl. 30.



No. 150

151

Incense burner and cover with openwork decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. with cover 14.3 cm, ht. without cover 7.2 cm,
diam. foot 16.9 cm

The vessel has straight sides accentuated by two raised bands, flaring towards a wide foot; it has a curved bowl inside, its rim grooved to receive a cover. The steeply domed cover is pierced with a simple design of four halved floral motifs, the straight sides have raised bands, and the pointed knob is set onto a slightly recessed area on top. The piece is covered with a fine grey-green glaze, while the bowl has a ring of ten fine elongated spur marks on the underside, and both rims show brownish marks from firing supports. Two pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck. The exact match of bowl and cover on this and the following two pieces (nos 152, 153) can no longer be reconstructed.

Fragments of similar incense burners and openwork covers have been excavated from the site of the Tang harbour at Heyilu in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, from a stratum assigned to the Dazhong reign (847–859).¹ The lower part of a similar censer, lacking its cover, has also been discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.² A similar type of incense burner has been found in Fukuoka, Japan.³

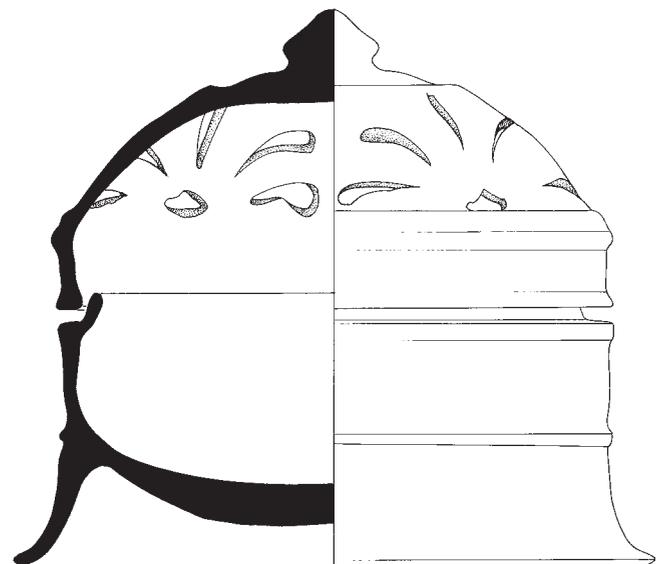
Compare also an incense burner carved of stone, similar in form but lacking a knob, recovered from the tomb of Li Zun at Xingyuan village, Yanshi, in Henan province; Li died in 845.⁴

152

Incense burner and cover with openwork decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. with cover 11.7 cm, ht. without cover 6.2 cm,
diam. foot 14.8 cm

The vessel is similarly shaped as no. 151, but has only one raised band around the sides, while the foot is pierced with four double-lobed openings. On the underside there are six larger whitish patches from firing supports, and on the rim similar reddish marks. The cover is not recessed around the knob, and the pierced floral motifs are more complex, with more petals, thus forming a true openwork pattern. The glaze which remains is pale grey-green. Four pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.



No. 151 (Sc. 1:2)

1 See Lin Shimin 1994, pl. 2D and fig. 56; Ningbo shi wenwu 1996, 256, fig. 8(19).

2 Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 4, fig. 6.

3 See Kyōgen kōkogaku kenkyūjo 1993, pl. 94, 67.

4 See Xu Diankui and Liu Zhongfu 1984, pl. 7, fig. 2, and p. 912, fig. 10(2).



No. 151



No. 152

153

Incense burner and cover with openwork decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. with cover 11.7 cm, ht. without cover 5.7 cm,
diam. foot 15.1 cm

The vessel is similarly shaped as nos 151 and 152, with two raised bands around the sides. The domed cover has a slightly everted lip, and is pierced with a simple five-petalled flower-head around the knob, surrounded by an openwork band consisting of one bloom and three double-leaf motifs. The underside shows a ring of six fine spur marks, and at the unglazed rims the biscuit has turned yellowish-beige. Four pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

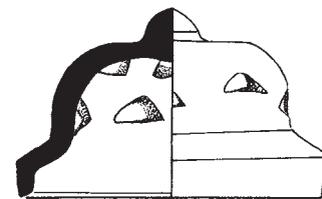
154

Cover of an incense burner with openwork decoration

Tang dynasty, mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Yue kilns, Zhejiang province
Ht. 2.5 cm, diam. 4.1 cm

The tiny cover, unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck, is of a steep domed form with a pointed knob, widening towards a vertical rim. The domed part is pierced with triangles, forming a quatrefoil motif around the knob and an uneven border below. The light grey body is now almost completely without glaze.

An incense burner in the form of a stem-bowl with a similar cover has been discovered at one of the Yue kiln sites at Shanglinhu in Yuyao county, Zhejiang province.¹



No. 154

¹ Illustrated in Jin Zuming 1959, pl. 4, fig. 3.



No. 153



No. 154

Bowl with *bi*-disc foot

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century

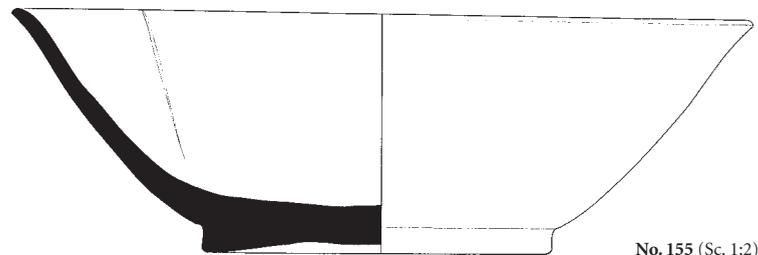
Green-glazed stoneware

Meixian or Chaozhou kilns, Guangdong province

Ht. 6.3 cm, diam. rim 19.6 cm, diam. foot 9.2 cm

The shallow conical bowl rests on a broad *bi*-disc foot. The inside shows four raised ribs but there are no notches in the rim, nor indentations on the outside. The piece is fully glazed in an attractive light, watery blue-green, including base and foot, but with four unglazed patches on the foot where it rested on firing supports. The translucent glaze has an overall crackle with a striking 'ice flake' effect in the centre. The unglazed patches have fired a pale beige, with yellowish marks where the firing supports touched. Two pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

A similar bowl in the Guangdong Provincial Museum, Guangzhou, has been attributed to the Beiguan kiln at Chaozhou,¹ and a bowl fragment excavated at Sham Wan village, Chek Lap Kok, Hong Kong, to the Shuiche kilns in Meixian.² Another bowl of this type but without ribs inside, attributed to the Meixian kilns, has been excavated from a tomb in Heping county, Guangdong province, assigned to the late Tang or Five Dynasties period.³



¹ Song Liangbi 1992, pl. 46.

² Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 94 bottom right.

³ Illustrated in a line drawing in Wu Haigui et al. 2000, 71, fig. 14(4).



No. 155

156

Bowl with *bi*-disc foot and indented rim

Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Meixian or Chaozhou kilns, Guangdong province
Ht. 6.1 cm, diam. rim 19.8 cm, diam. foot 9.4 cm

The shallow conical bowl is similar to no. 155, but has four indentations in the rim corresponding to raised ribs inside. The light green glaze has a more darkly stained crackle. Seventy-six pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

Other bowls of this type, but with four additional grooves on the outside, have been excavated from the Shuiche kiln site in Mei county, Guangdong province.¹

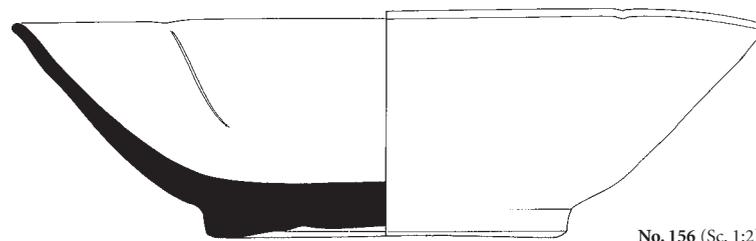
157

Bowl with four indentations

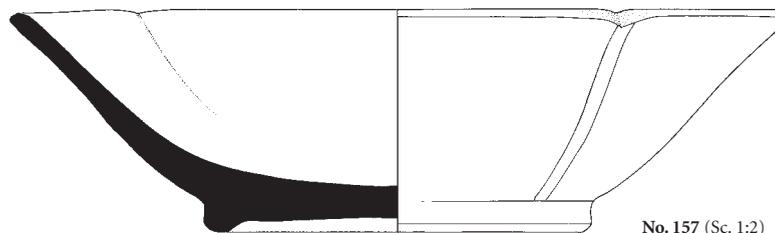
Tang dynasty, early to mid-9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Meixian or Chaozhou kilns, Guangdong province
Ht. 5.9 cm, diam. rim 20.4 cm, diam. foot 10.1 cm

The shallow, conical bowl has four indentations in the rim, corresponding to four deeply carved grooves down the outside and slightly raised ribs on the inside. It rests on a broad rounded foot ring which is higher on the outside than the inside. It is fully glazed including the foot, but has three large unglazed patches for firing supports on the base. The body is light beige, the glaze yellowish and strongly crazed. It is unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck.

Bowls of similar type have been excavated from the Shangbu kiln site on the northern outskirts of Chaozhou, as well as the Shuiche kiln site in Mei county, both in Guangdong province.¹ A similar bowl excavated from a tomb in Heping county, Guangdong province has been assigned to the late Tang or Five Dynasties period.²



No. 156 (Sc. 1:2)



No. 157 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ *Ceramic Finds* 1985, no. 78; Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 93 right.

¹ *Ceramic Finds* 1985, nos 2, 3 and 80; Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 93 left, p. 220, fig. 10.
² Illustrated in a line drawing in Wu Haigui, Yang Tingqiang and Chen Ziang 2000, 70, fig. 13(4).



No. 156



No. 157

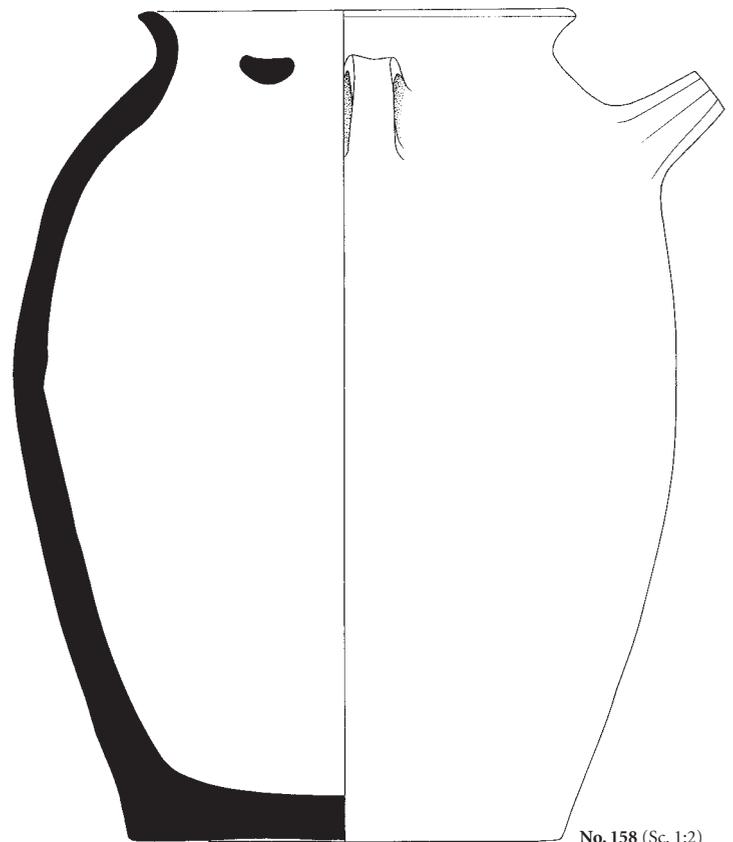
158

Ovoid jar with spout and two vertical handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Meixian or Chaozhou kilns, Guangdong province
Ht. 22.0 cm

The ovoid jar, unique among the ceramics recovered from the Belitung shipwreck, is thickly potted and very heavy. It rests on a flat base and has a flared rim, a short polygonal spout, and two flat loop handles vertically attached to the shoulder. The pale beige body is covered with a fine watery bluish-green glaze with a distinct crackle, except for the base where the biscuit is exposed.

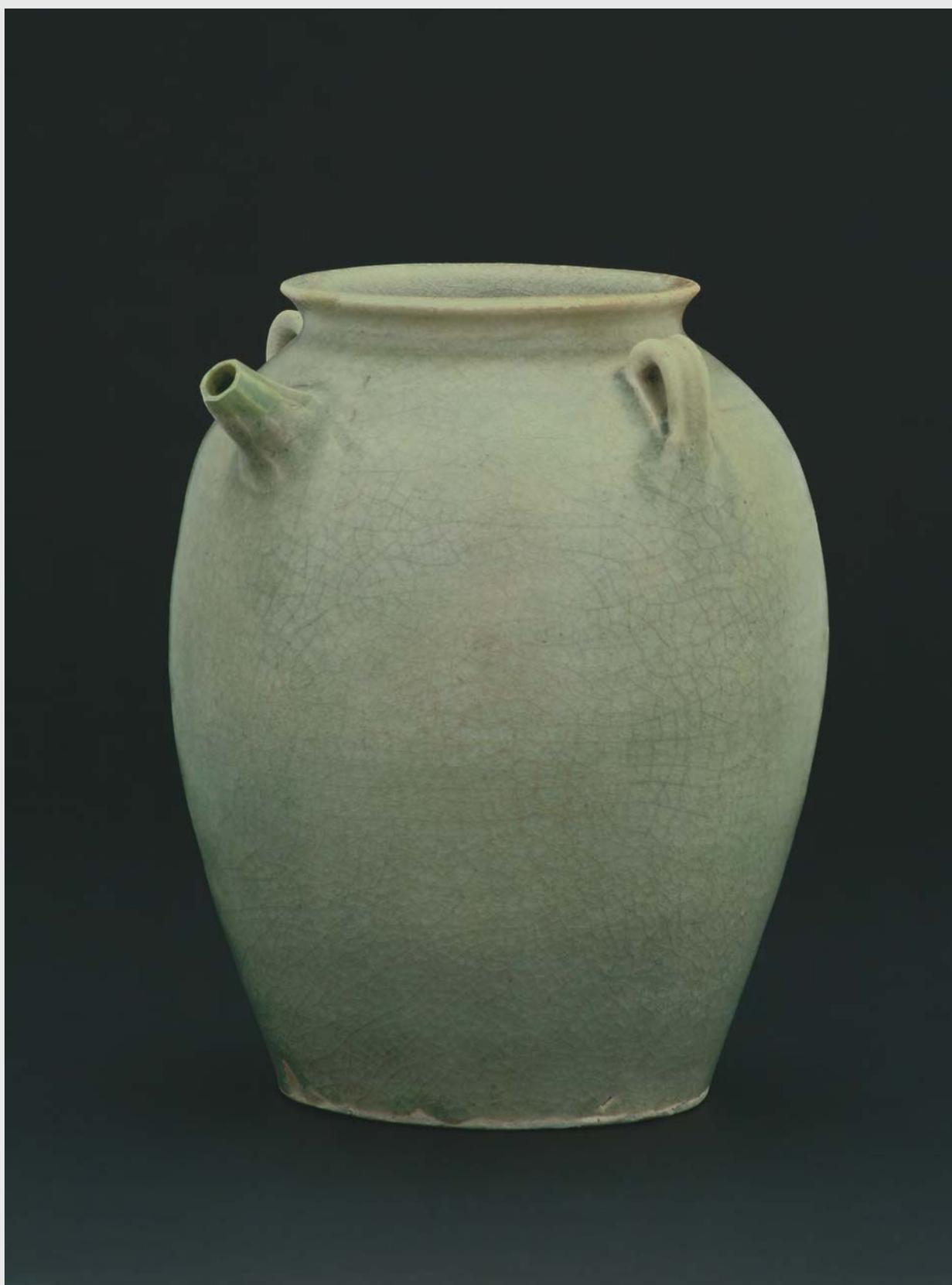
A very similar jar excavated from a tomb in Mei county, Guangdong province has been assigned to the Shuiche kiln site.¹ Two similar jars, one with a cover, have been excavated from tombs assigned to the late Tang or Five Dynasties period in Heping county, Guangdong province.²



No. 158 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Song Liangbi 1992, pl. 49; and *Ceramic Finds* 1985, no. 75.

² Illustrated in Wu Haigui et al. 2000, pl. 7, fig. 3, pl. 8, fig. 1, and in line drawings, p. 70, fig. 13(3) and p. 71, fig. 14(3).



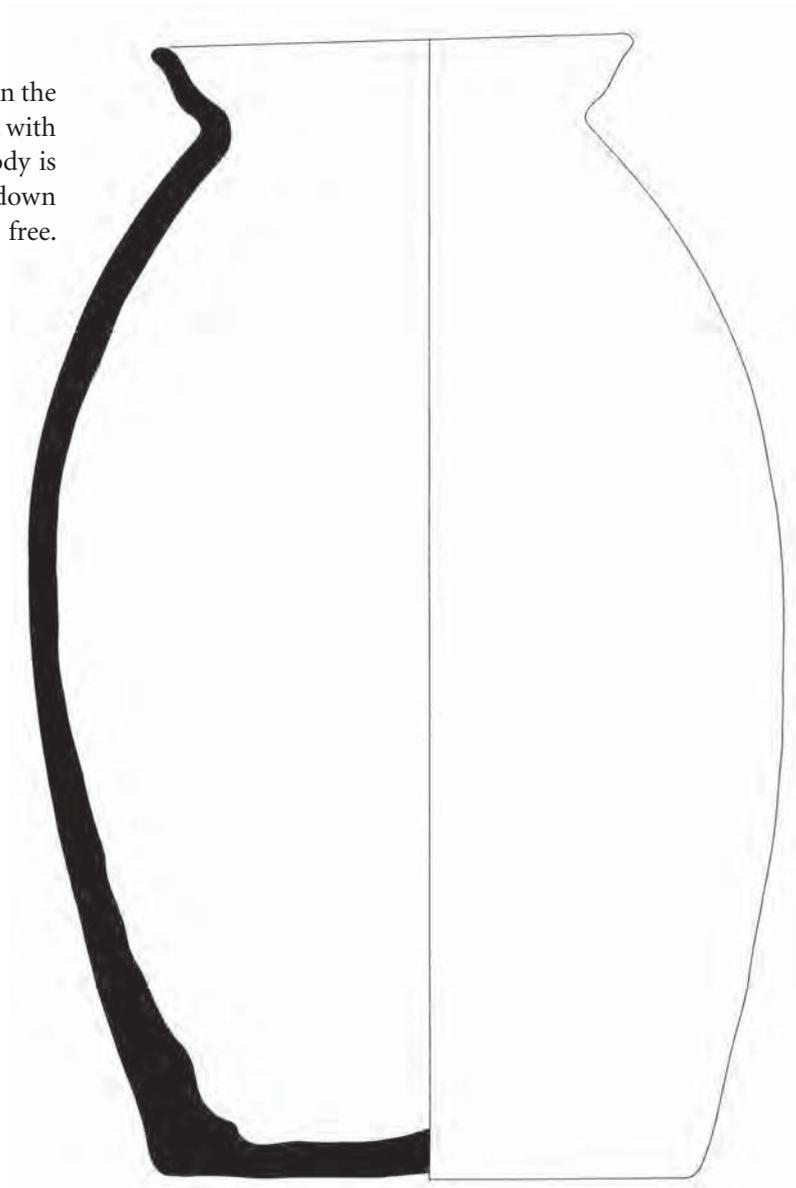
No. 158

159

Ovoid jar

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Meixian or Chaozhou kilns, Guangdong province
Ht. 30.3 cm

The tall ovoid jar is unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck. It is very heavily potted and has a flared neck with slightly everted rim and a flat base. The coarse buff body is covered with a crazed, light green glaze which has run down in tears and fully covers the inside but leaves the base free. The body has fired a slightly pinkish-buff colour.



No. 159 (Sc. 1:2)



No. 159

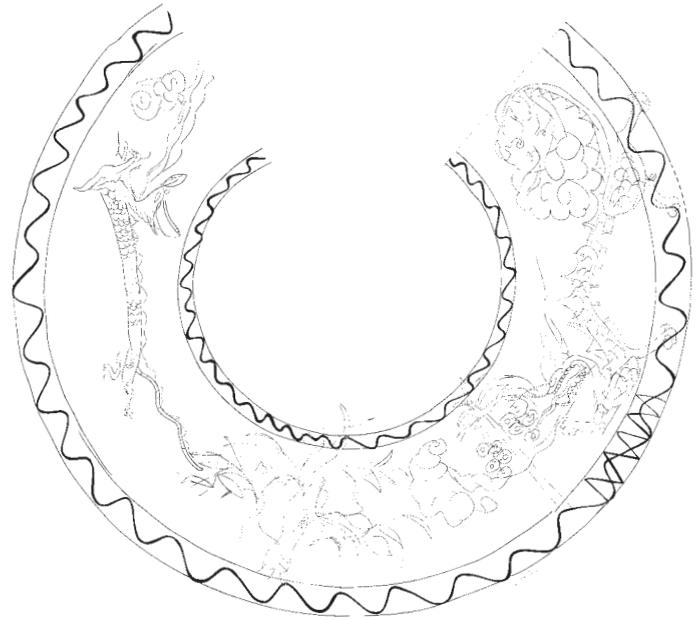
160

Vat with vent

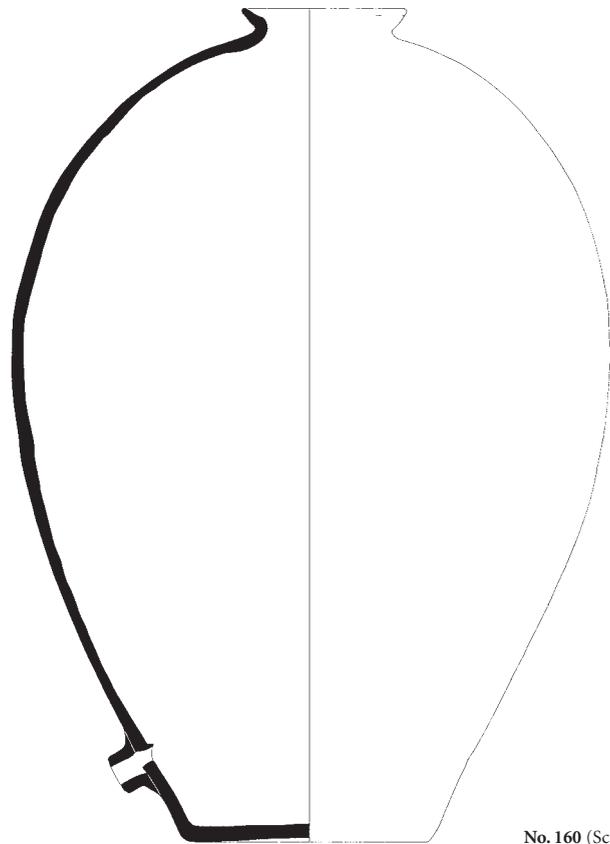
Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Perhaps Meixian or Chaozhou kilns,
Guangdong province
Ht. 88.2 cm

The very large ovoid jar, unique among the ceramics found on the shipwreck, has a very narrow everted neck with flared rim, and a flat base. Near the base there is a short tubular, downward pointing vent. The shoulder bears two incised wavy borders and a sketchily incised scene in between, showing a large running three-clawed dragon with open mouth, scaly body and spiky spine, and a smaller dragon among two palm trees; one tree bears coconut-like fruit, the other has long fronds. The yellowish-green glaze, which is strongly crackled, ends shortly above the base, exposing the yellowish-buff biscuit.

This massive jar with a vent for distributing liquids probably represents a water container for use on board rather than part of the cargo. The decoration with dragons, guardians of the fresh water supply, also points to this usage. Although the piece is so degraded that attribution to a manufactory is difficult, its neck is fashioned in a similar way to that on the jars above (nos 158, 159), and the whole piece is more finely made than the jars below (nos 161–166).



No. 160 Incised decoration of the shoulder (Sc. 1:4)



No. 160 (Sc. 1:8)



No. 160

161

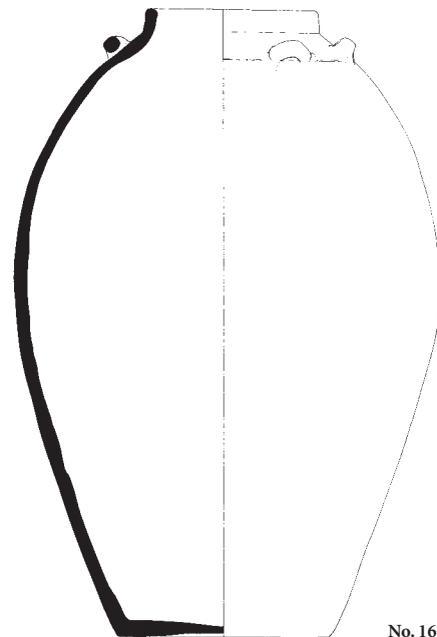
Ovoid jar with six horizontal handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 66.0 cm

The very tall ovoid jar has a short cylindrical neck and a flat base, and six horizontal loop handles around the shoulder. The light green glaze ends well above the base in an uneven line, leaving the light buff body exposed. The rim is also unglazed, probably for stacking in the kiln. 138 pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

Several jars of this type have incised inscriptions on the shoulder, written alongside the neck and meant to be read from above (see p. 366, fig. 15 and appendix IV nos 10–20). Certain inscriptions appear on more than one jar (e.g. appendix IV nos 13 and 15).

A very similar jar, but much smaller (47.5 cm high), obtained in Central Java, is in the Princessehof collection, Leeuwarden,¹ where comparable examples bearing Chinese characters are mentioned; another (50.0 cm high) has been excavated at Banbhore.²



No. 161 (Sc. 1:4)

¹ Harrison 1978, cat. no. 30.

² Published in Rougeulle 1991, 20, fig. 5:1.



No. 161

162

Ovoid jar with spout and four horizontal handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 33.7 cm

The ovoid jar has a rounded rim, a flat base, and four horizontal loop handles at the shoulder, with a very short spout between two of them. The yellowish-green glaze covers most of the inside as well as the outside and ends in an uneven line in the lower half, partly forming thick glassy drops. The coarse biscuit has fired a yellowish brown. The rim is unglazed, for stacking. Seventy-three pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.



No. 162

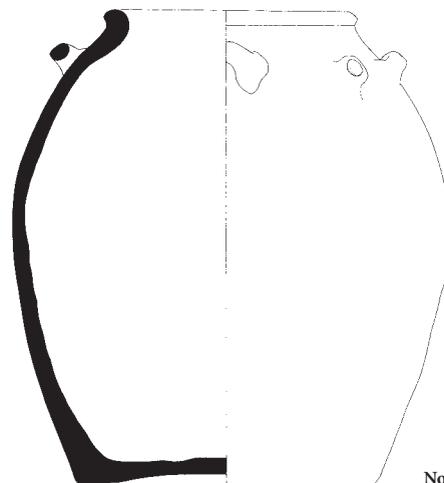
163

Ovoid jar with spout and four horizontal handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 21.9 cm

The ovoid jar has a flat base, a thickened rim flange, four horizontal loop handles and a short cylindrical spout at the shoulder. The glaze ends well above the base. 129 pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

A similar jar without spout has been excavated together with a bowl-shaped cover from tomb no. 13 in Chituling, Shixing county, Guangdong province.¹



No. 163 (Sc. 1:4)

¹ Published in Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 89.



No. 163

Globular jar with spout and four horizontal handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 18.4 cm

The globular jar has a flat base, and four horizontal loop handles evenly distributed around the shoulder, on two incised lines, with a short spout between two of the handles. The mouth has an outward curved rim flange (for the form cf. appendix VI p. 737). The yellowish-green glaze largely covers the inside and ends in an uneven line well above the base, revealing the buff stoneware body. The glaze has strongly shrivelled and adheres very unevenly, in some places in only a very thin, matt brown layer; in others, especially in the lower part and around the edge of the base, it has formed thick drops. 564 pieces of this type were found on the shipwreck.

Four jars of this type on the ship bear ink inscriptions, one reading '*chang*', written on the unglazed part (the jar held sideways with the left hand, the inscription written with the right), one '*tong*' (similarly placed, but written with the left hand; see appendix IV no. 8), one looking like a line of very quick *caoshu* ('grass script', again written with the right hand), and one might resemble Arabic script (appendix IV no. 7, if read horizontally, with the jar standing upright).

A storage jar of this type has been excavated from the site of the Tang city of Yangzhou in Jiangsu province, at Wenhelu, and is now in the Yangzhou Museum;¹ in the publication of this piece it is suggested that it is a product of kilns in Shantou, Guangdong province.²

¹ Published in Yangzhou bowuguan 1996, pl. 48; see above p. 85, fig. 5.
² Ibid., 159.



No. 164

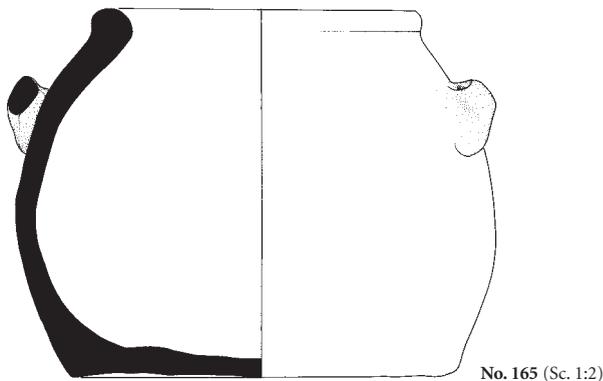
165

Small jar with two horizontal handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 9.7 cm

The small jar, of low, depressed shape, is very heavily potted. It has a broad rounded rim, a flat base, and two horizontally attached loop handles at the shoulder. The coarse grey body has fired brick red where exposed, and the thin olive-green glaze covers the piece unevenly, leaving rim and base free and ending half-way down the sides in a wavy line. The glaze has formed thick glaze drops, has shrivelled in places, and at the rim, where it was applied very thinly, covers the body with only a dark brown layer. The jar was fired together with others in a stack and has traces of the jar above it at the rim and a grey ring-shaped mark from the jar beneath it on the base. 173 pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

A similar jar has been excavated at the town of Sohar on the Gulf of Oman, from a site attributed to the 10th century.¹



¹ Illustrated in Rougeulle 1991, 20, fig. 5:4.

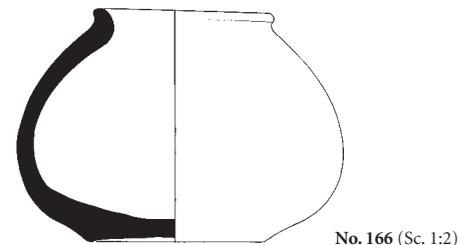
166

Jarlet

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 6.1 cm, diam. rim 4.7 cm, diam. base 4.6 cm

The piece is shaped like a bag, with its widest part near the flat base, and has a narrow rolled rim. The coarse grey body has fired brown to brick-red where exposed and is covered with a light green glaze on the inside and on parts of the outside. The rim and base are free of glaze, since the piece was fired in a stack, leaving grey traces on the rim and a grey ring-shaped mark on the base. The body has partly fired dark brown where it was covered with only a very thin layer of glaze. Thirty-seven pieces of this type have been recovered from the shipwreck.

Very similar jarlets have been excavated from tomb no. 13 at Chituling, Shixing county, Guangdong province.¹



¹ Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 99.



No. 165



No. 166

167

Large basin with six handles

Tang dynasty, 9th century

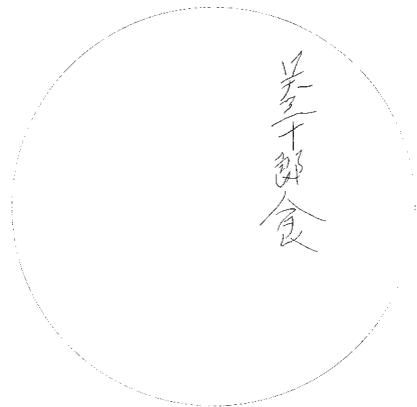
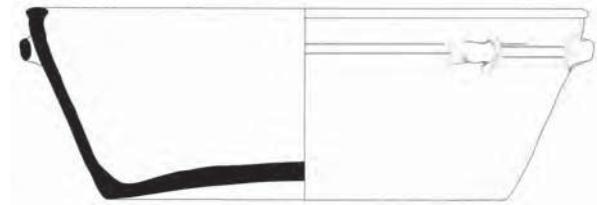
Green-glazed stoneware

Guangdong province

Ht. 20.2 cm, diam. rim 58.8 cm, diam. base 41.6 cm

The large vessel has tapering sides, a thick rounded rim flange, a flat base, and six horizontal lugs below the rim. The glaze covers the piece inside and out, but ends well above the base and also leaves the rim free. The olive-green glaze has shrivelled and adheres unevenly, forming thick drops in the centre. The body is yellowish-brown. The piece was fired upside down, standing on its unglazed rim and supported on a ring of thick spurs, which have left uneven marks. The upturned base also shows a ring of large patches from firing supports where another piece would have been placed during firing, as well as an incised inscription mentioning 'a supervisor of provisions' (*lang shi*). Eleven pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

Basins of this type would either have been fired rim to rim and base to base or with a smaller piece placed on top of a larger. Related basins (diam. *c.* 30 cm) without lugs and with incised or impressed designs are found in Philippine collections,¹ and a fragment is known from Xicun in Guangdong.²



No. 167 Basin shape and base with inscription (Sc. 1:8)

¹ Illustrated in Brown 1989, nos 98–101.

² Ibid., 48, fig. 3.



No. 167



No. 167 Base with inscription

168

Bowl-shaped object with everted, indented rim

Tang dynasty, 9th century

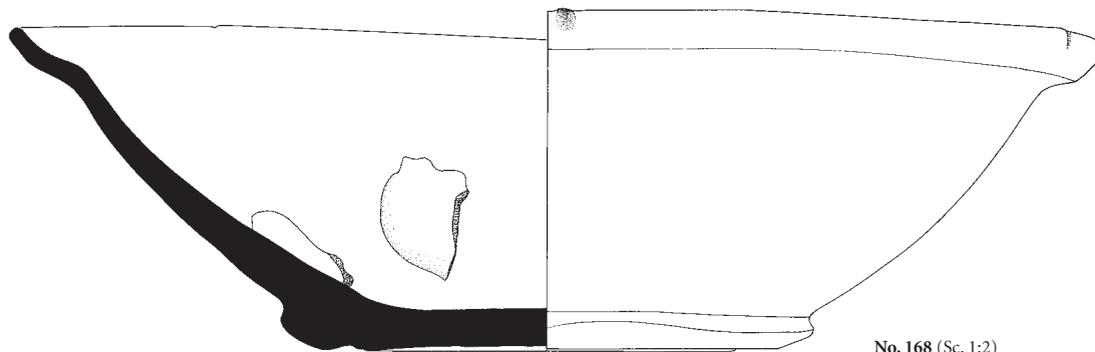
Green-glazed stoneware

Guangdong province

Ht. 9.1 cm, diam. rim 28.6–29.2 cm, diam. foot 14.1 cm

The bowl has conical sides, a wide everted rim with upturned edge and five sharp indentations, produced by indenting (not cutting), and a nearly solid foot, which is separated from the sides by a distinct groove. The broad foot ring is bevelled, the base only slightly recessed, with a distinct edge around it. The glaze covers the piece inside and on the upper two thirds of the outside, while the lower part of the outside and the base show the coarse stoneware body which has fired from grey to brown. Eight large lumps of coarse red clay from the firing supports adhere to the glaze inside, and the foot ring shows eight corresponding patches where the biscuit has fired a more reddish colour. The dark olive-green glaze has shrivelled in places and adheres in an uneven layer. Seven pieces of this type have been found on the shipwreck.

This bowl and the bowls nos 169 and 170 – and particularly the latter without foot – where no attempt was made to keep the glaze inside free of adhering clay, were probably not meant for use as bowls and may instead have served as covers for sealing the large storage jars. Related bowls from Guangdong kilns are also known with five square patches inside, which were left free of glaze to keep the supports from adhering.¹



¹ See Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 95A.



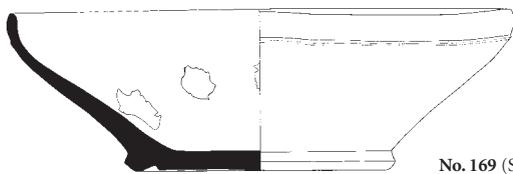
No. 168

169

Bowl-shaped object

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 8.5 cm, diam. rim 26.7 cm, diam. foot 14.2 cm

The bowl has conical sides with a slightly concave profile, a straight upturned rim and rests on a broad, nearly solid foot. There is a sharply indented groove above the splayed foot, the broad foot ring is bevelled, and the flat base surrounded by a sharp edge. The piece was fired in a stack and has on the inside eight lumps of dark red clay adhering from the firing supports of the next bowl. The piece is made of coarse yellowish-buff clay and covered with a thin yellowish-green glaze which leaves the lower half of the outside and the base free. Nine pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.



No. 169 (Sc. 1:4)

170

Bowl-shaped object without foot

Tang dynasty, 9th century
Green-glazed stoneware
Guangdong province
Ht. 5.6 cm, diam. rim 20.2 cm

The rounded bowl has no foot or base, is made of coarse brownish clay, glazed on the inside, but only near the rim on the outside, leaving most of the underside free. The inside has six thick knobs of red clay adhering from the firing supports of another bowl that was stacked inside it. On the underside are faint traces of similar supports, where the biscuit has fired a more reddish tone. 264 pieces of this type have been recovered from the Belitung wreck.

Pieces of this type may have been used upside down as jar covers rather than bowls. A jar with a bowl-shaped cover was excavated from tomb no. 13 in Chituling, Shixing county, Guangdong province.¹ A related bowl where the firing supports did not adhere but left similar rough patches was excavated at Sham Wan village, Chek Lap Kok, Hong Kong.²



No. 170 (Sc. 1:2)

¹ Lam 1985–86, cat. no. 89.

² Ibid., cat. no. 96A.



No. 169



No. 170