

Lime Pot from Cambodia

Asian Civilisations Museum

This brown glazed lime pot has a globular body with incised bands and an applied elephant head.

The elephant formed an important part in Khmer life. It was used as a means of domestic and military transport as well as in elephant fights for entertainment. The presence of lime pots in Khmer ware indicates the Indian tradition of chewing betel nut extended to the Khmer people.

Khmer ceramics have a variety of distinctive forms. However, only two types of glazes were

used. One was thin, pale green, usually translucent and finely crazed while the other varied from chestnut brown to olive-green and black and always mottled. Sometimes, these two glazes were used on the same piece.

Excavations show that brown glazed wares were produced by the late 10th century. Khmer ceramics are noted for their simplicity in design. Decoration was used in moderation thus allowing for the beauty of the forms to stand out. □



Brown glazed lime pot with incised bands and an applied elephant head from the 11th – 12th centuries, Cambodia. Collection of Asian Civilisations Museum, National Heritage Board.