



Chinese Blue-and-White Ewer Made for the Islamic Market 清青花执壶

China, Late 17th – Early 18th century, Qing Dynasty, Kangxi Period (1662-1722)

28cm high

外销伊斯兰市场

中国，17世纪晚期——18世纪早期，清朝，康熙年间（1662年——1722年）

高28厘米

Stock no.: A4906

This pyriform ewer is decorated with a violet-toned cobalt blue on white ground. Each side of the ewer is decorated with four floral sprays and a central tear-shaped floral medallion bordered by lappets and a lozenge pattern underneath. The neck with a bulbous drip guard is decorated in stripes and above and below the drip guard are upright and upside-down stiff leaves. The S-shaped spout is decorated with cloud motifs, terminating with a flower-shaped tip. The flat handle has hatched bands of painted decoration. A lid has been added to the ewer at a later date. Decorated with a fleur-de-lys at the centre of a wheel motif, it is likely a European addition.

This ewer was made during the Kangxi period (1662-1722) in China; however, both its form and decoration are based on Indian metal prototypes. A 17th-century Indian bronze ewer from North India, in the private collection of Dr Alvin O. Bellak, Philadelphia, USA, has similar decoration to our porcelain ewer specifically with regards to the upright and upside-down stiff leaf decoration on the neck and in the tear-shaped medallion on the sides of the ewer (illustrated in Zebrowski, p. 163, fig. 229). Zebrowski states that the Bellak metal ewer is the 'finest bronze ewer of this type' and was initially discovered in Syria, as were many other important Mughal period vessels.¹ This further demonstrates the important trading connections between the Middle East and China, which continued throughout the Mughal period to meet the needs of the growing export market.

See a nearly identical pair of Kangxi blue and white ewers in the Topkapı Sarayı Museum, Istanbul (accession no. TKS 15/3995), published in Krahl, p. 1007, fig. 2148. An iron-red Kangxi ewer in the Topkapı Sarayı Museum (accession no. TKS 15/3995) shares its form and decoration with the present example. Another similar iron-red Kangxi ewer is in The Victoria and Albert Museum, London (accession no. 240B&C-1876).

Literature:

Kerr, R. and Mengoni, L. *Chinese Export Ceramics*. London: V&A Publishing, 2011.

Krahl, R. and Ayers, J. *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapı Saray Museum, Istanbul: A Complete Catalogue, III, Qing Dynasty Porcelains*. London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 1986.

Zebrowski, M. *Gold, Silver and Bronze from Mughal India*. London: Alexandria Press in association with Laurence King, 1997.

¹ Zebrowski, p. 166