

Underglaze-Blue Stem Cups of the Yuan Dynasty Excavated in Inner Mongolia and Related Issues

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Abstract

Inner Mongolia and Jingdezhen in Jiangxi Province, where underglaze-blue porcelains were fired in the Yuan dynasty, are separated by considerable distance. However, in recent years, the numbers of underglaze-blue porcelains discovered in Inner Mongolia compare favorably with those found in southern areas, a fact that has come to the attention of scholars. In this group of various underglaze-blue porcelains from the Yuan dynasty, the most commonly seen type is the stem cup. It clearly indicates that this vessel type was popular in the Yuan dynasty and circulated as far away as Inner Mongolia.

This study addresses several topics of research on Yuan underglaze-blue stem cups excavated in Inner Mongolia. After enumerating their identity in the excavations and organizing the relevant examples, it has been discovered that most of the stem cups in Inner Mongolia feature flaring mouths and curved bodies with only variations in terms of the appearance of stems: with bamboo-joint, decorated, and undecorated. The study then examines the function of these stem cups and their types as well as their means of transmission to reflect on the possibility of exchange with West Asia.

Keywords: Yuan underglaze-blue, Inner Mongolia, stem cup

(Translated by Donald E. Brix)