

Meiping Vase 16C



Here is an item of Chinese ware made for the Chinese Muslim domestic market.

It is called a Meiping vase (meaning prunus (Mei) blossom (ping)). In fact, this one was probably a wine bottle and would have had a ceramic cover on top.

The Arabic calligraphy is of very high quality and has been designed to fit the space given. It has been written using a Chinese brush rather than the reed pen which is the conventional way of writing in Arabic. The quality of the writing indicates that the creator knew how to write Arabic rather than simply copying an image.

There are traces of gold around the middle band which have almost gone.

The text reads:

In the 1st square panel: "Thanks be to God"

In the round panel: "Intoxication be to the ..."

- A name – “Nu’aman” (possibly an Arab tradesman trading in china?) - so this was a commissioned piece.

In the 2nd square panel: "Goodness is in the pure..."

In the 3rd square panel: "The best of food is the permissible."

- A possible meaning could be that “the river of wine in heaven is more intoxicating”