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Rare Antique Silver-Mounted Chalcedony Stem-Cup

£1,450

A Rare Silver-Mounted Chalcedony Stem-Cup, the lightly-figured stone cup with silver rim and foot mounts

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SKU: B4521
Diameter: 5cm (2 inches)
Height: 6.4 cm (2.5 inches)
Year: Probably Indian, Circa 17th/18thC. The un-marked mounts possibly later









This small smoked-shade-tinged agate cup has, as its main defining characteristic, the fact that it was carved out, cup and foot, of a single mineral block that remains united. Agates are one of the various types of chalcedony, a type of quartz.

The identification of geographical origin for this type of piece - carved out of a single mineral core and without decoration - is normally a rather difficult task.

However, the chosen mineral type and its shape, suggest that this cup might originate from the north-western Indian Province of Gujarat. According to diaries of many travellers and traders that visited Gujarat in the 16th and 17th centuries, it was from that area that various objects originated, not only utilitarian but also of higher artistic intervention, carved out in various types of chalcedony. Amongst these can be found bowls, dagger and sword handles, seals, rings, etc.

Silver-mounted Indian chalcedony is also in the collection of Bughley House

Provenance: by descent in the Mundy family where it was always known as "Henry VIII's Egg-Cup"