Carved Ivory Tau-shaped Crozier Handle - Armenian (or Eastern Christian) Art

4 200 EUR



Period : Before 16th century

Condition : En l'etat

Material : Ivory

Description

Carved ivory "Tau" crozier pommel - Armenian (or Eastern Christian) art, 15th century - With CITES certificateDescription: Striking "Tau" (gavazan) handle of a bishop's crozier, finely carved from a single block of elephant ivory, attributable to the Eastern Christian tradition (Armenia, 15th century).The piece, characterized by a warm amber patina and the typical cracking of age (craquelure), extends from the central cylindrical shaft--adorned with bands featuring triangular geometric motifs and leafy tendrils -- branching into two curved arms that terminate in two facing serpent (or dragon) heads with wide-open jaws, well-defined teeth, protruding tongues, and scaly backs. Along the central axis and the volutes, there are plant-motif carvings and stylized palmettes.Iconography and

Dealer

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symbolism: Unlike the Western curled crosier, the bishop's staff of the Eastern Churches (Armenian and Coptic) takes the form of a Tau surmounted by or composed of two facing serpents. The iconography refers directly to the bronze serpent raised by Moses in the desert (Numbers 21:8-9) as a sign of salvation and spiritual healing, as well as to the wisdom required for pastoral leadership. Examples closely similar in style and chronology are documented in the collections of the Armenian Museum in Paris and the Treasury of San Lazzaro degli Armeni in Venice.Condition: Excellent overall condition, with a splendid antique patina, natural cracks in the ivory due to age, and slight traces of greenish oxidation in the carved recesses, evidence of long-term liturgical use and contact with metal elements of the original setting. Mounted on a modern display base covered in black fabric.Dimensions: 12 x 5.5 cm Period: 15th century Provenance: Armenian Art / Eastern ChristianityLegal Documentation: The object is accompanied by a valid CITES Certificate for free trade within the European Union: IT/CE/2023/MI/00522.