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MINIATURE PASTED ON AN ALBUM LEAF. 'A PRINCE VISITING HIS LIBRARY'. ATTRIBUTED TO LA'L

NORTHERN INDIA, MUGHAL; C. 1600

LEAF: 38.7 × 25.5 CM

The miniature was made in the delicate *nim qalam* style, in which only a few elements in the pen drawing are supplemented with pale colors. The motif is quite unusual since it shows an interior. A prince is in the process of one of the occupations that was part of life at court: studying books in a library, aided by both pages and attentive librarians.

There are several related *nim qalam* miniatures with princes reading that have been attributed to one of Akbar's court artists, La'l. In other contexts and on signed works, he depicted young Akbar with physical features and in situations very similar to those in this miniature. It has consequently been proposed that this prince also could be a portrait of young Akbar.

Published in:

Sotheby's, London, 20/6-1983, lot 12;

Maggs Bros: *Oriental Miniatures and Illumination, Bulletin no. 40*,  
London 1986, cat.no. 81, p. 82-83;

Sotheby's, London, 26/4-1991, lot 62;

Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art  
– Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection,  
Copenhagen 2017, fig. 40, p. 153;