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MINIATURE FROM A COPY OF KITAB AL-HASHAISH, AN ARABIC TRANSLATION OF DIOSCORIDES'S *DE MATERIA MEDICA*. 'AN ENGLISH CATCHFLY AND A GAZELLE'

IRAQ, BAGHDAD (?); 1224

LEAF: 32.5 × 23 CM

Illustrations for the Arabic translation of *De Materia Medica* have been considered by many to be among the first efforts by Muslim illustrators to add figurative elements that were not necessary for an understanding of the scientific text.

The plant that is shown is *Silene gallica* (the English catchfly). One could ask why Abdallah ibn al-Fadl has chosen to place beside it an animal that is presumably a gazelle, judging from the hooves and antlers. It has nothing to do with the plant and is also completely out of proportion with it. Beside the gazelle, the modest English catchfly looks like a tree several meters tall.

Published in:

Edwin Binney: *Persian and Indian miniatures from the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd, exhibited at the Portland Art Museum, September 28 -November 29, 1962*, Portland Art Museum, Portland 1962, cat.no. 10;

Ernst J. Grube: *Muslim miniature paintings from the XIII to XIX century from collections in the United States and Canada, catalogue of the exhibition*, Istituto Venezia e l'Oriente, Venezia 1962, cat.no. 3; *Islamic art from the Collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, 1966-1968*, [ed. Thomas C. Witherspoon], Washington 1966, fig. 16;

[B. W. Robinson et al.]: *Persian and Mughal art*, Colnaghi, London [1976], cat.no. 3:1;

*Art from the World of Islam. 8th-18th century*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 1987, cat.no. 103b;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 18;

Kjeld von Folsach, Torben Lundbæk and Peder Mortensen (eds.): *Sultan, Shah and Great Mughal: the history and culture of the Islamic world*, The National Museum, Copenhagen 1996, cat.no. 73;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 20 ;

Ahmed Djebbar (ed.): *L'age d'or des sciences arabes*, Institut du monde arabe, Paris 2005, cat.no. 108, p. 182;

Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 2;

Hossam Elkhadem: *À la découverte de l'age d'or des sciences arabes, catalogue de l'exposition itinérante*, Université libre, Bruxelles [2009], p. 99;

Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art – Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2017, fig. 25, p. 99;