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INKWELL, BRONZE INLAID WITH SILVER AND COPPER

EASTERN IRAN OR AFGHANISTAN; C. 1200

H: 6.5; DIAM: 9 CM

Although astrology – the art of being able to predict events and man's fate by interpreting the position of the stars – did not readily agree with the doctrine of the one and omnipotent God, it has always played an important role within the Islamic cultural sphere.

The zodiac or some of its signs are depicted fairly often in Islamic works of art, especially on inlaid metal objects. This inkwell shows all 12 signs of the zodiac, each personified by a related planet: Aries by Mars, Taurus by Venus, Gemini by Mercury, Cancer by the Moon, Leo by the Sun, Virgo by Mercury, Libra by Venus, Scorpion by Mars, Sagittarius by Jupiter, Capricorn by Saturn, Aquarius by Saturn, and Pisces by Jupiter.

Published in:

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 321;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Fabelvæsner fra Islams Verden*, Davids Samling, København 1991, cat.no. 79;

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. 81;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 483;