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FIGURE IN THE FORM OF A RAM, CAST AND ENGRAVED BRONZE

IRAN; 12TH-13TH CENTURY

H: 13.3; L: 14.5 CM

There are a number of small sculptures in the Islamic world in the form of animals that served as incense burners or aquamaniles. Many of them are lions or birds, often highly stylized, and the animal's shape and decorative vegetal ornamentation characteristically formed a synthesis.

This fat-tailed sheep, in contrast, was depicted very precisely; it is clearly a ram. A little eye on its back shows that the sculpture had a specific purpose that we cannot determine today. The artist, Ahmad, who signed his name on the animal's breast, covered its finely modeled body with a web of vegetal ornamentation, in full accord with tradition.

Published in:

Art from the World of Islam. 8th-18th century, Louisiana, Humlebæk 1987, cat.no. 93;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 310;

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. 43;
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Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 473;
Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom (eds.): *Cosmophilia. Islamic
Art from the David Collection, Copenhagen*, McMullen Museum of
Art, Boston College, Boston 2006. cat.no. 20;