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MINIATURE PASTED ON AN ALBUM LEAF. 'A YOUNG PRINCE WITH A FALCON'

INDIA, DECCAN, BIJAPUR; C. 1600

LEAF H: 42.5; W: 27.5 CM. MINIATURE H: 11.4; W: 6 CM

With its glowing colors, lush vegetation, and elegant, slightly mannered way of depicting the character, this miniature is a good example of visual art as it developed in Bijapur under Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah (r. 1579-1626). Because of his strong personal involvement, many art forms flourished during his long reign, from music and poetry to painting and architecture.

One can detect a measure of influence from the Persian artist Farrukh Beg, who after a period at the court of the Great Mughal Akbar came to the Deccan, where he was active from 1590 to around 1605-1609 and developed a highly personal style.<sup>1</sup>

The painting has a poetic undertone and a lack of focus on naturalism, something emphasized by the rich use of gold — not only in the prince's costly garments and weapons, but also in the landscape and

the over-dimensional falcon's beak and eyes.

It is uncertain who produced this expressive miniature. A related painting in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin has an inscription with the name Abd al-Karim, but the colors in that work are more garish and the drawing style is harder.<sup>2</sup>

On the obverse is an 18th century painting of a tall and stylized marigold plant flanked by a pair of much smaller peacocks below and flying peahens above.

<sup>1</sup> See Milo C. Beach "Farrukh Beg" in Milo C. Beach, Eberhard Fischer, and B.N. Goswamy (eds.): *Masters of Indian Painting. Vol. 1: 1100-1650*, [Zürich] 2011, pp. 187-210.

<sup>2</sup> Linda York Leach: *Mughal and other Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library*, London 1995, vol. 1, pp. 405-407.