



Inv. no. Tex 32

FRAGMENT OF A PILE CARPET, WOOL ON A COTTON GROUND

INDIA, MUGHAL; C. 1600

H: 78; W: 67 CM

This fragment is one of about fifteen preserved from two large carpets that are presumed to have been made for the court of the Great Mughal Akbar. Each of them measured c. 960 × 380 cm. A grotesque, almost nightmarish world of animals and mythical creatures devouring one another is seen against a wine-red ground and between flowers and vases with bouquets.

The motif is not Islamic, but it is found in other Mughal art and was rooted in the local Hindu art tradition. Pile carpets, in contrast, came to India from the north with the Muslims, and fragments from the two carpets are presumably among the oldest that exist from the Indian subcontinent.

Published in:

- C. L. Davids Samling. Fjerde Del : Jubilæumsskrift 1945-70*, København 1970, cat.no. 7, pp. 248 and 255;
- Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 418;
- Kjeld von Folsach: *Fabelvæsner fra Islams Verden*, Davids Samling, København 1991, cat.no. 83;
- Steven J. Cohen: "A fearful symmetry: the Mughal red-ground 'grotesque' carpets" in *Silk and stone : the art of Asia*, London 1996, 3. *Hali Annual*, pp. 104-135, especially H;
- 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. 306;
- Daniel Walker: *Flowers underfoot: Indian carpets of the Mughal era*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, London 1998, fig. 24, p. 36 (the carpet as a whole);
- Christine Klose: "Fragments with animal grotesque design: a reconstruction of 16th century Indian carpets" in *Ghereh*, 18, 1998/99, pp. 7-19, fig. 2, no.11;
- Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 692;
- 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. 11;
- Gian Carlo Calza (ed.): *Akbar : the Great Emperor of India 1542-1605*, Fondazione Roma Museo, Milano 2012, cat.no. III.21, pp. 147 and 253;
- Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Fighting, Hunting, Impressing. Arms and Armour from the Islamic World 1500-1850*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2021, fig. 28, p. 82;