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HANDLE OF A FLY WHISK, MADE FROM SEVERAL PIECES OF  
CARVED IVORY

INDIA; 2ND HALF OF 17TH CENTURY

L: 21.5; DIAM: 6.5 CM

In the miniatures of the Mughal period, the servants of noble personages carry fly whisks, but very few of them have been preserved today.

One type of fly whisk had a long handle with hair from a yak's tail, to gently brush away flies. This handle belongs to a different and shorter type that held long, colorful peacock's feathers. The servant could use this type of whisk not only to shoo away flies, but also to create a gentle, cooling breeze for his master.

The flower decoration on the upper part of the handle has remnants of the original paint. The bottom of the handle ends in a poppy-like bud.

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