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POEM WRITTEN IN NASTALIQ, PASTED ON AN ALBUM LEAF

(CALLIGRAPHY) IRAN; C. 1516

(ALBUM LEAF) INDIA; 17TH CENTURY

Muslim princes were avid collectors of the art of the famous calligraphers. This poem was pasted on a leaf in an Indian album that – judging from the margin painting – was made in the last quarter of the 17th century.

The beautiful *Nastaliq* script originated in Timurid Iran, but in time became the dominant script for copying poetry at the Safavid, Mughal, and Ottoman courts.

In a melancholy poem, the calligrapher Sultan Ali Mashhad (died 1519) bewails his old age and remembers his youth, when his hands brought him honor and gold. He was a master specifically of *Nastaliq*, and had been employed by the Timurid sultan Husayn Bayqara.

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Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat. 8;

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. 104;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat. 16;

Joachim Meyer, Rasmus Bech Olsen and Peter Wandel: *Beyond words: calligraphy from the World of Islam*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2024, cat. 49, pp. 186-187;