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MINIATURE. 'A PRINCE HUNTING LEOPARDS'

INDIA, MUGHAL; 1590-1595

LEAF: 43.3 × 29.4 CM

Royal hunts often involved a massive entourage of men and tamed animals, all with their special functions.

This miniature shows an elephant, which was primarily used for tiger hunts, while various other servants hold falcons and hounds. Together with the blindfolded cheetah in the wagon, they were used to hunt birds, deer, and small rodents — animals of the type that are hiding on the right side of the watercourse.

In the center is the prince himself with an enormous blunderbuss, in the process of dispatching a couple of leopards. Above his head, a monkey has sought refuge in the treetop.

The illustrated biographies of Mughal rulers, such as the *Baburnama* and the *Akbarnama*, frequently feature hunting scenes. The literary work from which this painting comes is unclear, however.

Published in:

Toby Falk and Simon Digby: *Paintings from Mughal India*, Colnaghi, London 1979, cat.no. 9;

Dauids Samling: *Islamic arms and armour from private Danish collections*, Davids Samling, København 1982, p. 47, fig. 3;

Kjeld von Folsach: *The David Collection: a 24-year period: 1962-1985*, København 1985, p. 66-67;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat.no. 44;

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. 330;

Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat.no. 65;

Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniatures from the David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 73;

Zeba Hasan: *Indian miniature paintings: hunting scenes of the Mughal period*, Gurugram 2018, tav. 32, p. 82-83;