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MINIATURE PASTED ON AN ALBUM LEAF. "PORTRAIT OF A HOLY MAN"

INDIA, MUGHAL; 1620-1630

LEAF: 36.5 × 23.7 CM

The masterful portrait of an old holy man was probably made by one of Jahangir's court painters. The man resembles Shaykh Husayn Chishti, head of a Sufi order that enjoyed the Great Mughal's special favor.

His distinguished face – with bold, hooked nose, wise eyes, and finely delineated beard – bears witness to portraiture's high level during this period. The old man is simply clad in white, though with a gold-figured sash. On his shoulders is a plain brown shawl that could have been of the finest pashmina wool. What might resemble a pocket watch is undoubtedly a *qibla* compass, which can give the direction of prayer toward Mecca.

Published in:

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Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 104;

Joachim Meyer og Peter Wandel: *Sufisme: islams mystiske vej*, Davids Samling, København 2011, pp. 20-21;

Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art – Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2017, cat.no. 32;