

COLNAGHI



Adolf von Meckel,
The Moorish dog handler

Meckel

1889

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ADOLF VON MECKEL

(Berlin 1856 – 1893)

THE MOORISH DOG HANDLER

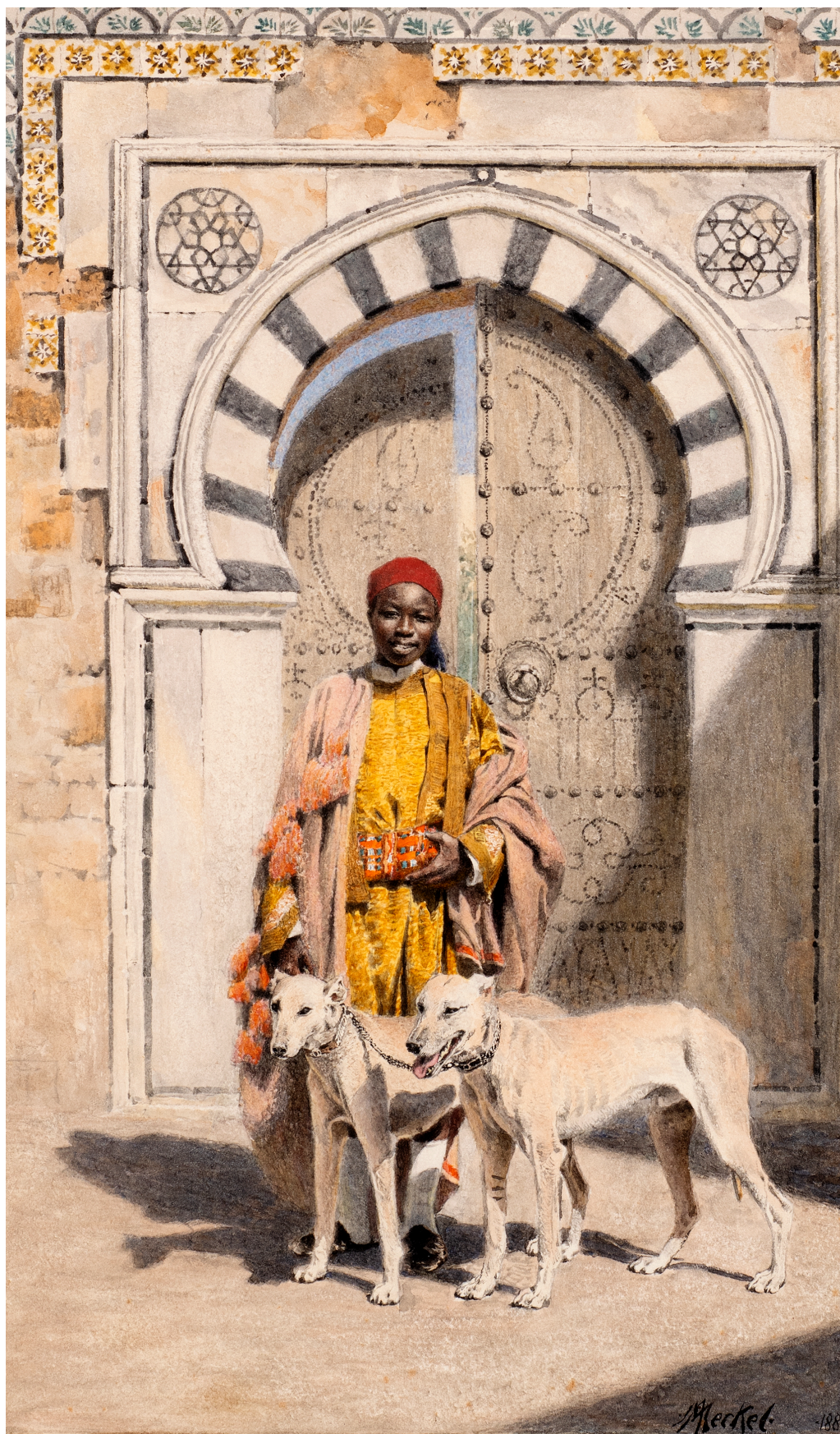
Signed and dated lower right: "A Meckel. 1889."

Watercolour on paper
30 x 18.7 cm (11 3/4 x 7 1/3 in.)

Provenance

With Martin Moeller & Cie, Salon du Dessin, Paris, 2013

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Adolf von Meckel (1856–1893) was born in Germany and spent part of his childhood with his maternal grandparents in St. Petersburg, following the early death of his father. Upon returning to his homeland, he pursued his artistic education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe, where he studied under the renowned landscape painter Hans Fredrik Gude. This academic grounding laid the foundation for his later travels and distinctive style.

In 1880, von Meckel embarked on a formative journey through Egypt and Palestine with fellow artists Eugen Bracht and Gustav Schönleber. These travels deeply influenced his work, leading to later expeditions through Algeria and Tunisia. The experiences and visual richness of these regions became a major theme in his oeuvre, as he captured vivid Orientalist scenes that resonated with European audiences. One such example is a watercolour dated 1889, depicting a young North African dog handler standing out boldly against the ornate doors of a building marked by distinctly oriental architectural features. This composition reflects von Meckel's gift for observing and portraying daily life with sensitivity and artistic flair. Orientalist subjects were highly popular with the public at the time, and von Meckel's work enjoyed considerable success. His paintings were exhibited at prestigious venues including the Royal Academy of Arts in Berlin and the Munich Glass Palace. Tragically, however, his life was cut short in 1893 at the age of thirty-seven, shortly after a personal setback involving the rejection of one of his works from the Great Berlin Art Exhibition. Deeply affected, he took his own life that same year. Following his untimely death, his work continued to be celebrated. Several posthumous exhibitions were held in 1894, most notably in Dresden and Munich, confirming his legacy as a talented and sensitive observer of the landscapes and cultures he so passionately portrayed.

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