

Sharaf al-Zaman Tahir MARVAZI

Book title: **Taba'i al-hayawan** ca.1120

1. Arabic, first half 12th century, India Office Library, Ms. Delhi, Arabic 1949
2. Arabic, 13th century, British Museum, Ms.Add. 21.102

Ms.(1), fol.135a; Ms.(2), fol.89a-b.

It is of the build of a buffalo, but taller and short in the leg. The skin is smooth, not hairy, but scaly, made of scales raised from the epidermis and the chest (?0 with dewlaps on both cheeks. The haunches (of the animal) are big and the head flat-nosed and receding. The horn is on the tip of the nose, conical in shape, and bent backward towards the head. It is longer than a span. In the center of the upper lip, under the horn, it has something like the additional 'finger' of an elephant's trunk. The lower jaw is like that of the bull; it has two blunt canines inside the mouth. The nose resembles most closely the noses of beasts of burden. The ears protrude on both sides, like the ears of the donkey. Its eyes are almond-shaped (?) and set lower than is usual. Its tail is short, thick at the root when widening toward the end. Testes and penis are like those of the bull. Its hoofs are fleshy and resemble the feet of elephants; each has three toenails, white with a yellow tinge; the biggest in front, then two in a half-circle to the right and left.

fols. 134b-135a, 88b-89a

Its size is that of a horse and its habitat is on the Nile and the surroundings of bahr al-asamm (?). On its nose it has a single horn, like a sharp sword, with which it can split rocks by hitting it. Sometimes it attacks an elephant with its horn and kills it. The whole of the species consists of males; there are no females and no one knows how they come into existence and how they are born

Ettinghausen, p.75 note