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BATTLE-AXE, IRON AND GOLD DAMASCENING

INDIA; C. 1800

H: 55; L: 13.1 CM

The short, elegant battle-axe (*tabar-i-zin*) comes from the Persian region, where it was already part of a horseman's equipment in the early Islamic period. Not all battle-axes were velvet-clad parade weapons like this one, however. As a passage from Firdawsi's *Shahnama* (Book of Kings) shows, a battle-axe was above all a serious weapon.

“Blows were dealt with battle-axes *tabar-i-zin*, clubs, and swords. A red mist rose from the river.”

(Firdawsi, *Shahnama*, 10th century)

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Ravinder Reddy: *Arms and armour of India, Nepal and Sri Lanka: types, decoration and symbolism*, London 2018, p. 122;