



Shashka (saber)

Date

blade 1600s, hilt mid-1800s

Primary Maker

Austrian

Medium

steel, silver and niello (blackened silver alloy)

Description

Gently curved single-edged steel blade of triangular section and hollow-ground on both faces, with a rather bluntly curving tip. The back edge is flat for three-quarters of its length, becoming double edged at the "yalman." The blade may be a 17th century Austrian (Styrian) or South German product. Near the shoulder of the blade

are visible traces of an incised line that extends across the width of the blade. The hilt of silver plaques is typical of Caucasian pieces and is without a guard. It is outwardly beveled at the sides of the base, and is of more-or-less oval section. The grip proper is short, with a raised band covering the joint with the axially divided "bird's head" pommel that is rounded at its split end. The two-piece grip is soldered along the cutting edge, and slipped over the tang. The pommel and grip are held in place by means of a transverse, domed rivet. The grip is decorated in a narrow arabesque band of nielloed silver within similar framing. The ground is engraved with a zig-zag motif.

Dimensions

87 x 74 cm (34 1/4 x 29 1/8 in.), 1 lb, 4 oz (weight)