



Folding Spetum

Date
about 1550

Primary Maker
Northern Italian

Medium
steel with bluing and gilding, wood with gilding

Description
Of steel, the head comprised of a long, slightly tapering double-edged thrusting blade with a pair of wide, shallow fullers per face. The base of the blade is secured into a short socket of rectangular section, and on the same rivet pivot a pair of curving, pointed

sickle-shaped blades. The socket is hinged on one face to a longer main socket also flat over most of its length, becoming oval below. The pivoted head is locked by a double press-operated catch and a locking catch. The head is made to fold back over the staff, with the side blades folding inward over the main blade. When fully operative, opening the head rotates the side blades outward. The socket and base of the blades are blued (now russet) with gold false-damascening (or gilt brass inlay?) in dense arabesque scrollwork. The head plugs onto, and is twice-riveted to, an original dark wood staff of oval section, with a tapering iron ferrule having a spheroid knop with quadrangular point. The staff is inlaid with a repeated, more open, arabesque motif that is gilded with paint or lacquer.

Dimensions
Extended: 206.5; Folded: 108.6 cm (81 5/16 x 42 3/4 in.), 5 lb, 1 oz (weight)