

AMIR MOHTASHEMI



Indian Helmet With Gold Inlaid Decoration

Circa: 17th / 18th Century

India, 17th/18th Century

Gold overlaid steel

37cm high, 20cm diameter

Provenance: Private European collection acquired in 1974

Stock no.: A4987

Of shallow domed form, this helmet is engraved with six concentric undulating bands. The applied finial at the top of the helmet is elaborately decorated with a circular band of palmette which is covered in koftgari. Beneath the finial is a band of inscription complemented by vegetal motifs applied using koftgari technique. Another band of inscription along the rim is made using the same technique. Slightly above the inscription band is a nose guard fitting and a plume holder, they both have palmette shaped finials with koftgari designs; the nose guard fitting finial is inscribed with "Yā Allah." The original chainmail neck guard is attached to the rim.

The inscription at the rim includes Qur'an, sura al-Baqara (II), verse 255, invocations to God, Qur'an, sura al-Saff (LXI), parts of verse 13 and the phrase: 'There is no youth as brave as 'Ali, no sword as sharp as dhu'l-faqar'.

The shallow form of the helmet suggests it is likely to have been produced in the 17th century, for a group of helmets sharing the same characteristics are now in the National Museum collection at New Delhi (61.678/7; 61.936a; 63.512; 77.17279.420e). Additionally, the delicate shape of the palmettes as

plume holder and nose guard fitting finials also match those at the National Museum. The engraved design can be compared to a 17th-18th century North Indian helmet at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ([29.158.50](#)).

Reference:

National Museum of India., G. N. Pant, K. K. Sharma, and National Museum of India. Indian Armours in the National Museum Collection: A Catalogue. New Delhi: National Museum, 2001.