



ARABIC JAMBIYA

(جَنْبِيَّةُ جَانْبِيَّاءُ)

This is a magnificent *jambiya* from Asir, Saudi Arabia (for a similar example, see Elgood, 1994:79). According to Elgood (1994:77), one can find two types of daggers in Asir and both are called *janbiyya* جَنْبِيَّةُ. The first type is a horizontal sword knife similar to those which can be found in Hijaz as well and the second type consists of daggers that show a great variety of hilts. The latter types resemble superficially Omani daggers but show overwhelming decoration. The better examples of Asir daggers, according to Elgood, have a curved silver scabbard that has a large bulbous decorative knob at the end. This large bulbous knob is called a thūm ثُوم (literally garlic). The top of the pommel in most cases bears a raised decoration like cockscomb of four points of silver. The first type of a sword knife that has a large blade is also identified as Dharia dagger and the blade type of Beyd style (see *Weapons of Islamic World: Swords and Armour*, 1991:58-59). It is said that this type of dagger was/is carried by Bani Malik, Bani Shahr and Bani Qarn tribes (see *Weapons of Islamic World: Swords and Armour*, 1991:58-59). The following dagger comes from the Asir region in Saudi Arabia stemming from the middle/late 19th century. This is a sword knife or a long dagger. The silver-covered wooden scabbard has a thūm ثُوم at the end. The scabbard is covered with leather and then with silver plates. The whole scabbard plates are decorated with magnificent silver filigree showing floral design. The scabbard has one raised point/knob representing the ovary of a flower set in six filigree petals. The handle is made of silver filigree decorated with three raised points/knobs representing the ovary of a flower set in six filigree petals. The top of the pommel bears a raised decoration like cockscomb of five points. The blade of this dagger is truly unique as it has the typical shape of an Asir dagger with typical chiseled decorations in the middle of the blade as in most Asir daggers (for examples see *Weapons of Islamic World: Swords and Armour*, 1991:57, plate 28; 58, plate 34), but the blade of this dagger, unlike almost all Asil daggers that have a plain (high carbon) steel, has a magnificent Persian/Indian watered steel blade *fulād-e jōhardār* فولاد جوهر دار. For other examples of this type of dagger, see Stone (1999:313, 14) and Tirri (2003:91).



TYPE ARABIC JAMBIYA (جَنْبِيَّةُ جَانْبِيَّاءُ)

ORIGIN ASIR عسير, SAUDI ARABIA

PERIOD 19th CENTURY



TOTAL LENGTH 48,5 cm

LENGTH WITH SCABBARD 55,6 cm

LENGTH OF THE BLADE 35 cm

WEIGHT 514 grams

WEIGHT WITH SCABBARD 1138 grams

WIDTH OF THE BLADE AT THE BASE 6 cm

WIDTH OF THE BLADE IN THE MIDDLE 3,3 cm

THICKNESS OF THE BLADE AT THE BASE 3,6 mm

THICKNESS OF THE BLADE IN THE MIDDLE 3,4 mm

