



## Saif Sword "looted" Arab



8 500 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Metal

Length : 94.5cm

### Description

The saif is the traditional sword of the Arab world. The term derives from the Arabic word *saif*, meaning "sword," and by extension carries connotations of the warrior. Across the Arab world, edged weapons display a rich diversity of cultural expression, particularly evident in the decoration, construction, and symbolic motifs of their hilts and fittings. Our example represents an unusual and compelling intersection of two cultures. The Arabian Peninsula was under Ottoman rule from the 16th century onward and was the scene of numerous conflicts and uprisings, including the Ottoman-Wahhabi War (1811-1818) and, ultimately, the Arabian Revolt (1916-1918). This sword incorporates a captured Ottoman Damascus blade that has been remounted in a

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distinctly Arabic grip and scabbard. The hilt is made with warthog ivory scales (non-CITES) and adorned with 18-karat gold filigree of exceptional fineness and thickness, remarkably well preserved. The grip plates are secured with hollow gold rivets, while the hilt is further enhanced by gold wire wrapping and fitted with silver quillons, themselves decorated with a gold alloy. Swords like these were often offered as diplomatic gifts. The blade is a characteristic Ottoman military officer's blade, exhibiting a subtle Damascus pattern. It is further embellished with fire-gilded floral motifs and military emblems. Slender and gracefully curved, the blade conforms to the typical form of Ottoman officer's swords from the second half of the 19th century. The spine bears a cartouche that seems to read 'Acemoglu' (Ajamogluh) which is considered the most famous wordsmith in 18th century Istanbul. The scabbard consists of a wooden core covered in thin leather and mounted with silver fittings bearing the familiar scorpion (scorpion) motif. The silver chape is embossed with floral decoration and shows minor damage at the tip. The scabbard is fitted with two suspension rings. NOTE ON THE MATERIAL: These swords are generally mounted on camel bone scales with a characteristic white surface and segments of medullary cavities. Our example, upon analysis, reveals a very distinctive grid pattern on the dentine as well as longitudinal cracks. This object is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity attesting to its provenance. Condition: Good overall condition, some dents on the silverwork and leather, especially on the lower part of the scabbard piece.