

= Khanjar =

A khanjar (Arabic : ????? , Persian : ????? , Turkish : Hançer) is a traditional dagger originating from Yemen . Worn by men for ceremonial occasions , it is a short curved sword shaped like the letter " J " and resembles a hook . It can be made from a variety of different materials , depending on the quality of its craftsmanship . It is a popular souvenir among tourists and is sold in souqs throughout the region .

= = History = =

Although it is not known when the Omani khanjar was first created , rock carvings epitomizing the dagger were found on gravestones located in the central part of the Ru ? us al Jibal region . These are believed to have predated the Wahhabi revival , which occurred in the late 1700s . They were also mentioned in an account by Robert Padbrugge of the Dutch Republic , who journeyed to Muscat in June 1672 . Historically , only men from the royal family could wear the khanjar . However , all civilian men were permitted to do so after 1970 , the year when Qaboos bin Said al Said ? the current Sultan of Oman ? overthrew his father Said bin Taimur and began to institute reforms to modernize the country .

= = Usage and symbolism = =

= = = Composition and manufacturing = = =

Depending on the quality of its craftsmanship , the Omani khanjar can be made using a variety of different metals and other materials . Gold or silver would be used to make khanjar of the finest quality (e.g. for royalty) , while brass and copper would be utilized for daggers made by local craftsmen . For instance , a sheath adorned with gold was historically limited to the Omani upper class . Traditionally , the dagger is designed by its future owner himself , with the craftsman taking into account the " specifications " and " preferences " stipulated by the former . The time it takes to manufacture a khanjar can range from three weeks to several months .

The most elemental sections of the khanjar are its handle and blade , with the material utilized in the former playing a significant role influencing the final price of the dagger . Bone ? specifically rhinoceros horn and elephant tusk ? was once the common standard , as it was " considered the best material " to make the hilt out of . However , with the international ban on the ivory trade , the usage of other materials ? such as wood , plastic , and camel bone ? has become more prevalent . Typically , the top of the hilt is flat , but the one designed for the royal family is in the shape of a cross .

= = = Custom = = =

The Omani khanjar is tucked underneath a waist belt and is situated at the front and centre of the wearer 's body . It used to form part of everyday attire ; however , it is now carried as a " ceremonial dagger " , and worn only for formal events and ceremonies ? such as weddings , parades , meetings , and diplomatic functions ? among many other occasions . Labelled a " ubiquitous sign of masculinity " by John M. Willis in the The Arab Studies Journal , the khanjar is a symbol of " manhood , power and authority " , as well as serving as a status symbol for the person wearing it . As a result , it is sometimes given by families to their sons when they reach adolescence , and is a common wedding gift to the groom .

Although the khanjar was originally created as a weapon to attack and defend , it is utilized solely for ceremonial and practical purposes today . The latter situation would occur in the desert , where it is used as a tool for hunting and skinning animals , as well as for slicing ropes . Because of this development , it is now considered a " social taboo " in Oman to pull out one 's khanjar from its

scabbard , since the only time men would do this would be to seek vengeance or to defend oneself .

=== Distribution ===

While the khanjar is most prevalent in Oman given its symbolic status there , it is also worn by men in Yemen and the United Arab Emirates , forming an integral component of " traditional dress " in those countries . It can also be found and is sold in other Gulf Arab states , such as the Souq Waqif in Doha , Qatar . The khanjar is a popular keepsake among tourists , and is the Sultanate 's best @-@ selling memento .

=== Other uses ===

==== Official government ====

As the khanjar is a national symbol of Oman , it is featured on the sultanate 's national emblem . It has been a symbol on the royal crest of the Al Said dynasty since the 18th century , which subsequently became the national emblem . It is also depicted on the Omani rial ? the country 's currency ? specifically on the one rial note , as well as on postage stamps issued by the sultanate . Furthermore , there are statues of khanjar on buildings housing government ministries and at various roundabouts throughout the country .

=== Commercial ===

The khanjar was previously shown prominently on the logo and planes of Oman Air ? the country 's flag carrier ? until it was removed under a rebranding in 2008 . The logo of Omantel also illustrates a stylized khanjar ; it was retained in the logotype 's motif after the telecommunications company merged with Oman Mobile in 2010 . Moreover , the perfume company Amouage ? which is owned by the Sultan of Oman and his royal family ? incorporates the dagger into the design of its bottles . The cap on its Gold for Men perfume bottle resembles the handle of a khanjar , complimenting the Gold for Women cap which evokes the dome of Ruwi Mosque .