



Arms and Armor from Iran

The Bronze Age to the End of the Qajar Period

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Normally, books on arms and armor seem to escape notice in the world of collectible edged weaponry – and justifiably so, for few titles that deal with arms and armor allocate more than cursory coverage to swords, daggers, and knives. Not so with this massive new book, for here the tables have been turned in the favor of those who admire the historical edged weapons of the world.

Arms & Armor From Iran contains 776 oversized (10-1/4" x 11-3/4") pages nicely printed on heavy coated paper stock, the majority devoted to Iran's historic swords, knives and daggers. Often overlooked here in the West in favor of Japan's famed swords, the edged weapons of the Middle East bear an equally fascinating history and tradition. The *khanjar*, *kard*, and *pešqabz* (also *peš kabz*) are each covered here in their own detailed chapters, along with the *qame* and *qaddare* (which favor the Russian *kindjal*). Iranian straight swords and the famed *shamshir* sabres are likewise dealt with in their countless variations. Earlier forms originating as early as the bronze age are covered as well, in similar detail.

Not only is there plenty of detail on the evolution and variations of each form of edged weapon, but things are taken a step further with coverage of crucible (wootz) and pattern welded damascus steel (including the identification and classification thereof), the many decorative techniques employed such as gold inlaying, overlaying, and gilding; the symbolism of decoration, blade inscriptions, and known makers and signatures. Likewise, the mace, bow & arrow, spear and javelin, and the armor we'd expect to see in a book of this nature are addressed, but the space devoted to swords, knives and daggers is impressive indeed.

Amazingly, the above represents only a quick overview of the book's first half: the second half is devoted entirely to full-color illustrations of the weaponry discussed in the first half of the book. Generally speaking, the overall photographs of each object have been made relatively small so as to accommodate several closeup images emphasizing features such as wootz steel, inlays, signatures, etc. – a move that is sure to be appreciated by most collectors. Finally, the book concludes with end notes, an index, and a very extensive bibliography.

The hefty price tag may scare away those with only a token interest, but at almost 11 pounds (!) *Arms & Armor From Iran* is a very hefty book – and clearly the definitive text on Iranian edged weaponry to date.

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