



14th International Congress on the Archaeology
of the Ancient Near East

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Protective Tools for the Living, Signs of Honor for the Departed; Collection of Iron Age Weaponry from Marlik in the National Museum of Iran

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Abstract

Weaponry flourished during the Iron Age, as local governments launched successive campaigns to gain access to neighboring resources and assets.

Marlik, a royal cemetery in Northern Iran, dating back to the late 2nd millennium BCE, is home to a collection of over 25000 items, making it one of the richest graveyards of the Early Iron Age in the Near East.

53 tombs were excavated at Marlik in 1962. Large stone slabs on the north side covered the special graves probably belonging to warlords, with several bayonets and daggers on either side. The artifacts found at these tombs include a variety of military equipment such as battle axes, daggers, spearheads, arrowheads, maceheads, and helmets made of bronze, brass, and stone, subtly crafted using hammering, engraving, stone carving, and metal casting.

The abundance and quality of these arms reflect the social status of the deceased individuals buried at these graves. Regarding the ritual use of these objects in burial practices, they should be considered crucial tools for guiding Marlik warriors into the afterlife. The current article, as an analytical descriptive research, aims to examine the techniques of manufacturing and decorating these arms and to classify them based on form, material, and usage.

Keywords

Marlik, Life and death, Weaponry, Burial rituals, Iron Age

Session

6. Life and death: Human behaviour and practices

Type of paper

Oral presentation