

Shamshir

A Shamshir is a type of sabre with a curve that is considered radical for a sword: 5 to 15 degrees from tip to tip. The name is derived from Persian shamsh+r, which means "sword" (in general).

Typical pre-Islamic Iranian blades used for warfare were straight (for example, see Acinaces). Curved blades in this period were used primarily for hunting, though examples of curved swords used in battle are present in Greek depictions of Achaemenid Persian soldiers. The curved scimitar blades became popular after the Mongol invasions. The sword now called "shamshir" was popularized in Persia by the early 16th century, and had "relatives" in Turkey (the kilic), Mughal India (the talwar), and the adjoining Arabian world (the saif). These blades all were developed from the ubiquitous parent sword, the Turko-Mongol saber.

The shamshir is a one-handed, curved sword featuring a slim blade that has almost no taper until the very tip. Instead of being worn upright, it is worn horizontally, with the hilt and tip pointing up. It was normally used for slashing unarmored opponents either on foot or mounted; while the tip could be used for thrusting, the drastic curvature of blade made accuracy difficult. Like Japanese blades, there is no pommel, and its two lengthy quillons form a simple crossguard. The tang of the blade is covered by slabs of bone, ivory, wood, or other material fastened by pins or rivets to form the grip.

The shamshir was similar in design to its contemporaries, the Indian Talwar and the Saif.

For history see Dao (sword)

Etymology

Although the name has been associated by popular etymology with the city of Shamshir (which in turn means "curved like the lion's tail") the word has been used to mean "sword" since ancient times, as attested by the Pahlavi word *šamšir*, and the Ancient Greek *σάμσιρ* (glossed as "foreign sword.")

"Shamshir" is usually taken to be the root of the word scimitar, though the Oxford English Dictionary considers this uncertain. Scimitar is now a more inclusive term.

Other appearances

Weapons named "shamshir" appear in several video games, including Dark Cloud, Fire Emblem, Golden Sun, Golden Sun: The Lost Age, Prince of Persia: Sands of Time, Prince of Persia: Warrior Within, Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones, Soul Calibur II, Diablo II, Lineage II, Children of Mana, and Dragon Quest VIII.